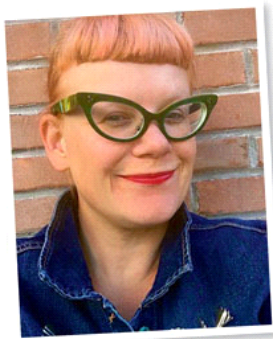


Kiss My Aster

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Burning Down the House

Amanda Thomsen



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I am a person that tends to burn out on jobs. Have you ever burned out on the job? If not, here is a pretty good recipe for professional burnout:

1. Give more than was asked of you and make your whole personality about your job
2. Eventually hit an insurmountable wall, can't get over it, around it or under it
3. Then visualize burning it all down.

That was me as an employee and I really wanted to make sure it wasn't me as a business owner, because I've already hit that first point super hard. I've been waiting for the wall or feeling like I want to burn it down. And it does come, occasionally, and I can notice the red flags when they're coming at me. Here are five solutions that are

working really well for me right now; they take the matches right out of my hands, and let me know if they're really cries for help in disguise.

Solution 1: I love it when my employees tell me I need a nap because I'm getting mean. I need to hear it, it's constructive. I am a sleepy person and I need a lot of it to be civil. I sometimes sleep my whole day off and I feel guilty about it but then, in the end, I'm all juiced up and I can't wait to get back to work. My body needs it—frankly my brain needs it. Don't feel guilty because of the things you should be doing; you are running a very weird marathon and you may need an unusual amount of rest. I call it "growing my niceness back while horizontal".

Solution 2: Being authentic with my customers has paid off in ways that sometimes make me cry a little, in a good way. The other day I posted to social media that I was having a really rough day and I received more than a handful of messages saying how comforting it was to hear that other people were struggling as well, out loud. It turns out we all want to connect but if we are always in happy selling mode it all turns into white noise at some point. I am currently making money while vocally having bad days, being frustrated with bureaucracy, shouting about injustices and mocking people who had it coming. The more I have a reputation for "telling it like it is" the more people boast about being "in" with me and it's a hoot. I don't want to lock the bathroom door to do my crying anymore, I'll do it right at the register.

Solution 3: Do you have a group chat with a bunch of friends that you contribute to daily? I have one and we all share NYT Connections every morning and then check in with things through the day. If someone is having a rough day, they may make a meme request to help turn it around. It's nice to have a mini-vent session or to hear about someone else's sucky day. Perspective is nice.

Solution 4: I'm at a point where I am so focused on my business that I'm practically useless at home. Sometimes I don't know what to do with myself and I make myself uncomfortable. I successfully use audio books to help break me out of my freeze mode, it's the carrot at the end of the household task stick. If I slip on my noise-canceling headphones I can visit another world while washing dishes, folding laundry and weeding. I love finding books that are 40-60 hours long that I can get really into it and have a healthy commute where I'm not already in work mode and also clean the garage. It beats the endless scrolling which I can easily fall back on.

Solution 5: Have I mentioned I have been watching all the seasons on The Love Boat in order to empty my head at night? Yes, to anyone that will listen. What is more polar opposite of what I do in a day than The Love Boat? It's so silly and calming. My mom wouldn't let me watch it when I was a kid even though I thought Vicki was so cool and lucky to have a real job. Sheesh, I wonder what happens when the captain's tween daughter gets burned out on her job? Maybe that happens in the 9th season but I'm only on season 5. **GP**

Amanda Thomsen is a funky, punky garden writer and author now with her own store, Aster Gardens in Lemont, Illinois. Her blog is planted at KissMyAster.com and you can follow her on Facebook, Twitter AND Instagram @KissMyAster.