

5<sup>th</sup> World **DEPRESSION CONGRESS**

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**How authenticity can stop you and your employees from burning out. A personal essay.****Nicklas Koenig**

Germany

After graduation I went on to study Psychology in Regensburg, Bavaria, Germany. Weird right? Normally I should have done something proper like Medicine or Law... Or Engineering. So I sit in my first lecture and I realize: there are 160 students. And not even 10 of them are boys. That's even more weird. But you know what? I didn't struggle to find my group of friends! We called ourselves „Minderheiten United“ which basically means „Minority United“!

My favourite Professor was Prof. Dr. Greenlee. He was a real Veteran if you ask me. He had these 28 year old slides mixed in American English, Latin and German about highly complex neurological circuits. And you know what? I think during his lectures I started losing vocabulary in all 3 languages ;)

After my third Semester I started applying for internships. I wanted to go into Economics or HR/Leadership/Change Management. The people's side of Business as it is often referred to. So I came up with 15 applications, 10 of them at BMW, some of them at Lufthansa and some of them at smaller enterprises.

Out of these 15 applications I did not even get accepted into the 2nd round of the assessment process once. By the way: a friend of mine got accepted because she met somebody who works at BMW at the gym. And I'm sorry to say that but she had way worse grades than me and studied communication at a Fachhochschule... like no disrespect but my level of knowledge and competence was clearly far beyond hers. And that's just being realistic- I don't mean to offend anybody!

So that was my experience with getting into the „open“ market : I didn't even get in! So I did what every young person would do in my situation: I worked in gastronomy to make a living and decided to go for what's left: the medical side of psychology.

Neurobiology is amazingly interesting. So what I did was I applied for an internship in a neuropsychological rehab clinic. One application, one direct response from the Professor in charge who told me that he was very happy about my application and when exactly I would like to start. So I had to tell him that I don't have time yet but that I could start in February 2020. Fast forward... I did the internship and as I slowly started to get a grip on what was going on COVID-19 struck. But if I learned one thing during these few weeks then it is that we know nothing!

Doctors know nothing while being very stressed out. Physiotherapists know nothing while being less stressed out. And Neuropsychologists know nothing with a bad consciousness. Compared to IT or Economics or Engineering we know nothing about Neuropsychology and the causes for different diagnoses and how to treat them. We treat them in oddly random and holistic ways and try to get the patients to the point where they actually realize that they have a problem. That's basically like catching a mean virus on your laptop and then having to live with knowing that you now have a virus on your laptop. Like the blue screen issue on Windows... What I found most astonishing about this is that we care more about the safety of our data or computer or pets than about our own brains. Let's change that. Please.

By the way:

There are two factors who are highly correlated to burning out that I remember from some of my lectures and I don't intend to have copyright on these findings. Firstly not being able to switch off and secondly not showing your REAL emotions in the workplace.

Who of you actually switches their phones off when they go to sleep? Raise your hands please. I'm gonna be honest I did it as a Teenager but I gave up long time ago. Everything is on the phone: sports, newspaper, stock markets, the family chat. So I'm not gonna try and tackle this factor but the OTHER one.

Not being able to show your real emotions at the workplace. Really?!

I'm personally trying to do it. It's a decision I make everyday. Some of my school friends already stopped. Most of them if you ask me.... To be honest I would go as far as to say about 60-70 percent of them. They do alcohol or drugs or fake it till they make it in order to survive in the work market. Like come on? What are you gonna do? Live a work life of lies and dishonesty to set traps for other people and thus make a lot of money? I'm not going to fake it till I make it! There is this app called „be real“. But we don't need an app for this! BE REAL. For the sake of your own mental health and trustworthiness and the people around you.

Thank you for your attention.

**Biography**

Hey, my Name is Nick and I have a scientifically approved IQ > 150. When I was just 17 years old I finished Bavarian High School with a GPA of 3.6 and as top of my year from the boys side.

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