



Burnt Out Online

A case study of YouTuber burnout

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<p>Abstract:</p> <p>The subject area of this research is YouTuber burnout. This is a qualitative case study of five YouTubers in their twenties and thirties who have openly talked about mental health problems online. The primary research question is “What are the causes of YouTuber burnout?”. Qualitative research methods combined with the case study were applied to collect information. Analysis was conducted from interviews, vlogs and video essays of the cases being transparent about mental health problems, primarily burnout. The discourse was analysed to find common factors between the cases. The most common feelings, reasons and solutions of and for burnout were measured. Furthermore, the themes were put through the lens of clinical professionals to validate the cases experiences of burnout. The results show that all of the common themes found amongst the cases correlate to burnout predictors noted by psychologists. The results of earlier research differed in the aspect of economics. YouTubers most often work from home, so the days get longer. The passion for their job and feeling of accountability towards their viewers tends to result in the feeling of too much pressure, which feeds the burnout. The findings suggest that emotional issues rise to the surface when all the basic needs in life are taken care of and there is seemingly nothing to worry about. The creators often do not understand why they feel miserable. Partly, since burnout is generally thought to happen amongst doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers, police officers and the like. But more so, because they do not have enough knowledge on the subject.</p>	
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<p>Sammandrag:</p> <p>Huvudsyftet med detta examensarbete är att undersöka varför arbetsutmattning bland YouTubers är så vanligt. Metoden är kvalitativ fallstudie. Arbetet analyserar fem YouTubers erfarenheter av arbetsutmattning för att svara på forskningsfrågan. Gemensamma känslor, orsaker och lösningar kopplades ihop både med tidigare undersökning och mellan de fem fallen. Resultaten visar att alla gemensamma erfarenheter bland fallen kunde reflekteras till kliniska studier om arbetsutmattning. Resultaten avvek från tidigare undersökning om YouTuber-arbetsutmattning då det kommer till ekonomi. YouTubers arbetar ofta hemifrån vilket innebär att dagarna lätt blir långa. Deras passion för jobbet och känslan av ansvar för att underhålla tittarna resulterar i känslan av för mycket press vilket gör arbetsutmattningen värre. Resultaten antyder att emotionella problem flyter upp då alla grundläggande behov är tagna hand om. Då det skenbart inte finns något att oroa sig över. Ofta förstår inte YouTubers varför de känner sig eländiga och usla. Delvis för att arbetsutmattning generellt tänks hända bland yrken så som läkare, sjukskötare, lärare och polis, men huvudsakligen för att de inte har tillräckligt med information om ämnet.</p>	
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<p>Tiivistelmä:</p> <p>Tämän opinnäytetyön ensisijaisena tarkoituksena on tutkia, miksi työuupumus on niin yleistä Tubettajien kesken. Työ on kvalitatiivinen tapaustutkimus, joka analysoi viiden Tubettajan kokemuksia työuupumuksesta, selvittääkseen yleisiä tunteita, syitä sekä ratkaisuja. Lisäksi kokemuksia verrattiin aiempien tutkimusten tuloksiin. Tulokset esittävät, että Tubettajien tuntemuksia voi verrata muihin luoviin aloihin sekä psykologien kehittämiin metodeihin työuupumuksen määrittämisestä. Tulokset erisivät taloudellisten vaikeuksien kohdalla verrattuna aiempaan tutkimukseen liittyen Tubettajien työuupumukseen. He työskentelevät usein kotona, joka johtaa helposti pitkiin työpäiviin. Intohimo työtä kohtaan sekä velvollisuuden tunne katsojia kohtaan kasvattaa liiallisen paineen tunnetta, joka taas pahentaa uupumusta. Löydökset esittävät, että käsittelemättömät tunneongelmat nousevat pintaan, kun asiat muutoin ovat hyvin. Kun silminnähden ei ole huolia. Usein tubettajat eivät ymmärrä miksi he ovat niin onnettomia, osittain yleisestä ajatuksesta, että työuupumusta tapahtuu julkisilla aloilla kuten terveydenhuollossa. Pääasiallisesti työuupumus johtuu kuitenkin tiedon puutteesta.</p>	
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INNEHÅLL / CONTENTS

1	Introduction	8
1.1	Background	8
1.2	Research question and purpose of study	9
1.3	Glossary of terms	9
2	Methodology	11
3	Earlier research	13
3.1	YouTuber burnout and burnout predictors	13
3.2	Burnout in the creative industry	15
3.3	Everything in moderation	17
4	Cases	19
4.1	Sean McLoughlin	19
4.2	Casey Neistat	20
4.3	Hannah Hart and Elle Mills	21
4.4	Lauren “Mykie” Mountain	23
5	Findings and Discussion	25
6	Conclusion	32
7	References	34
8	Appendices	37
8.1	Transcriptions	37
8.1.1	<i>h3 Podcast Highlights – Jacksepticeye On Positive Mental Attitude.....</i>	<i>37</i>
8.1.2	<i>Jacksepticeye - Positive Mental Attitude!.....</i>	<i>41</i>
8.1.3	<i>Casey Neistat on Abandoning Social Media, Using Anger, & More (Ep. 8 A Conversation With)</i>	<i>43</i>
8.1.4	<i>Hannahlyze This – Burnout (ft. Elle Mills)</i>	<i>45</i>
8.1.5	<i>taking a break ... but I'll be back (Glam & Gore, Mykie).....</i>	<i>48</i>
8.1.6	<i>Coming clean (Glam & Gore, Mykie)</i>	<i>49</i>
8.1.7	<i>Simply Nailogical On Money VS Fame, Balancing 3 Jobs, & Avoiding Drama Ep. 17 A Conversation With.....</i>	<i>49</i>
8.1.8	<i>What Happened to These YouTubers? A Deep Dive into Burnout</i>	<i>52</i>
9	Summary in Swedish – Sammanfattning på svenska	56
9.1	Introduktion.....	56
9.2	Tidigare forskning	56

9.3	Empiri	57
9.4	Resultat och diskussion	59
9.5	Slutsatser	60

Figures

Figure 1. Illustration of the path to burnout by Jay Holladay..... 13

Figure 2. Reasons in common. 26

Figure 3. Feelings in common. 26

Figure 4. Solutions in common..... 27

Figure 5. Connecting the cases to burnout predictors. 27

Tables

Table 1. Google search results..... 30

1 INTRODUCTION

It can feel discouraging as a Youtuber to get a video demonetised or realise how the number of views does not correlate with the ad revenue. The numbers do not match partly because 47 per cent of internet users use ad blockers (Malik 2019). Focusing on numbers gets especially devastating if you are at the brink of burnout and ads are your only stream of income. This research will showcase experiences, and through that, find and present solutions.

YouTubers seem to burnout when they have gotten to where they want to be. When they have achieved everything, they wanted. YouTubers are often seen as lazy when, in reality, they are overworking themselves. False knowledge has stigmatized burnout. Nevertheless, there has been a rise in YouTubers talking openly about mental health issues. With the knowledge that YouTubers share and the understanding of the viewers, the stigma slowly vanishes. And with the knowledge, burnout can be prevented in the first place.

1.1 Background

The idea of this study stems from seeing more and more YouTubers getting burnt out. When having personal experiences with burnout and knowing how bad it can be, this is worrying. I wanted to find out if and how it is possible to have a healthy work-life balance as an entrepreneur in today's fast-paced world where worth gets measured in numbers. A world where you must be active on many social media platforms to stay relevant. Or do you? Before getting to the if's and how's, we need to know the why's.

Burnout is researched a lot, but not in the creative industry. Statistics are anecdotal and talked about by creative professionals inside their communities. The rest do not even think that burnout happens to people who get to do what they love, and when they want it. Mental health issues need to more open discussion to erase the stigma around them. Doing what you love is not always as lovely as it seems.

1.2 Research question and purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to find out why YouTuber burnout is so common. The aim is to understand why it happens, how it feels, and what solutions there might be to prevent burnout in the first place.

Burnout is generalised to happen amongst doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers, police officers and the like, amongst so-called high-care roles (Forge 2017). That is since most of the research around burnout focus on these roles. There might not be statistical research on the subject, but inside the creative community, it is evident that burnout is common.

Being a YouTuber has become a dream job, and it is the first job of more and more young adults. What worries me is that we see more and more creators burning out. Thus, are the research questions as follows:

- What are the causes of YouTuber burnout?
- What does burnout look like for YouTubers? How does burnout manifest itself?
- Could burnout be prevented?

1.3 Glossary of terms

AdSense – Advertisement placement service by Google through which the publisher earns money when a user views or clicks on the ad.

Demonetization – When you are part of the YouTube partner program, and the ads on a video are restricted or wholly taken away. Therefore, you won't earn any money on that video. Demonetization is put in place when the video does not meet YouTube's guidelines and restrictions.

(YouTube) Partner Program – YPP for short, gives creators access to resources and features that a regular creator cannot access. Probably the most important being monetization. One can join the partner program when fulfilling the requirements. (Google Support 2019)

Patreon – A subscription-based service where fans pay their favourite creators a monthly amount of their choice in exchange for exclusive access, extra content, or a closer look at what happens behind the scenes.

Podcast – Originally the term described episodic series of audio files uploaded to a service where the user can download it to a personal device for listening (Lexico). In recent years the definition of a podcast has broadened as podcasts with video elements have become more and more common. A podcast series usually has one or more hosts who discuss a particular topic or current event. Podcast series range from completely improvised to strictly scripted.

Reaction video – a video where the YouTuber watches, comments and reviews other content such as popular videos, memes, articles and music.

YouTuber / creator – A person who continuously creates videos for YouTube.

2 METHODOLOGY

The method of case study is used since it can be an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon, in this case, burnout, within its real-life context, YouTube. Furthermore, the YouTubers experiences will be analysed in a descriptive and exploratory manner (PressAcademia 2018).

The sampling method is purposive sampling (2012) which is a non-probability sampling method. Furthermore, the sampling is homogeneous since the research question is specific to a particular group. The cases are around the same age, have the same occupation and have all experienced burnout.

With qualitative research, it is presumed that there will be multiple perspectives within the community (Patel 2011). Qualitative research methods focus on descriptions of individual experiences and beliefs by asking open-ended questions (Bhat 2018). The aim is to present cause, effect, relationships and connections between the cases and earlier research (Bhat 2018, Patel 2011, Ryan & Bernard 2003).

For a descriptive study, there is some existing knowledge from before. When doing descriptive research, the limitation is to a few subjects around the phenomena studied (Ryan & Bernard 2003). In this case, the subject is burnout, and the scope is limited to five YouTube-creators experiences. The descriptions are detailed and thorough and analyses connections between aspects of the study (Bhat 2018, Patel 2011). The research looks for themes that come up repeatedly and by more than one case. I gathered the data from spoken discourse in the form of interviews, video essays and vlogs.

Spreading the transcriptions and theory out on the floor and eyeballing it to find connections is called the ocular scan method (Bogdan & Biklen 1982). The ocular scan method is also called eyeballing, and it is a form of pawing. An interocular percussion test is done simply by looking at the data and waiting for patterns to hit between the eyes. Eyeballing might not be a very scientific way to do things, but it is considered one of the best ways to find patterns in qualitative data (Ryan & Bernard 2003).

The key-words-in-context method, KWIC for short, was used to find repetition of associative linkages (Ryan & Bernard 2003). The KWIC method was used in three phases of the research.

1. To identify the main themes of the experiences of the cases.
2. To identify subcategories, keywords, and physically sort them into piles of similar meaning.
3. To link the keywords to theory.

As KWIC was applied multiple times, is the method as well a technique called pawing. With pawing, eyeballing, the text is handled several times to get a proper overview of the data. The texts got overviewed in the three phases as described above and then handled multiple times in each phase. The identification started by using different coloured highlighters when analysing the content. From there themes, and further, keywords and phrases with similar meaning could get pinpointed.

3 EARLIER RESEARCH

This chapter presents earlier research about YouTuber burnout, burnout in general and other issues that can affect burnout.

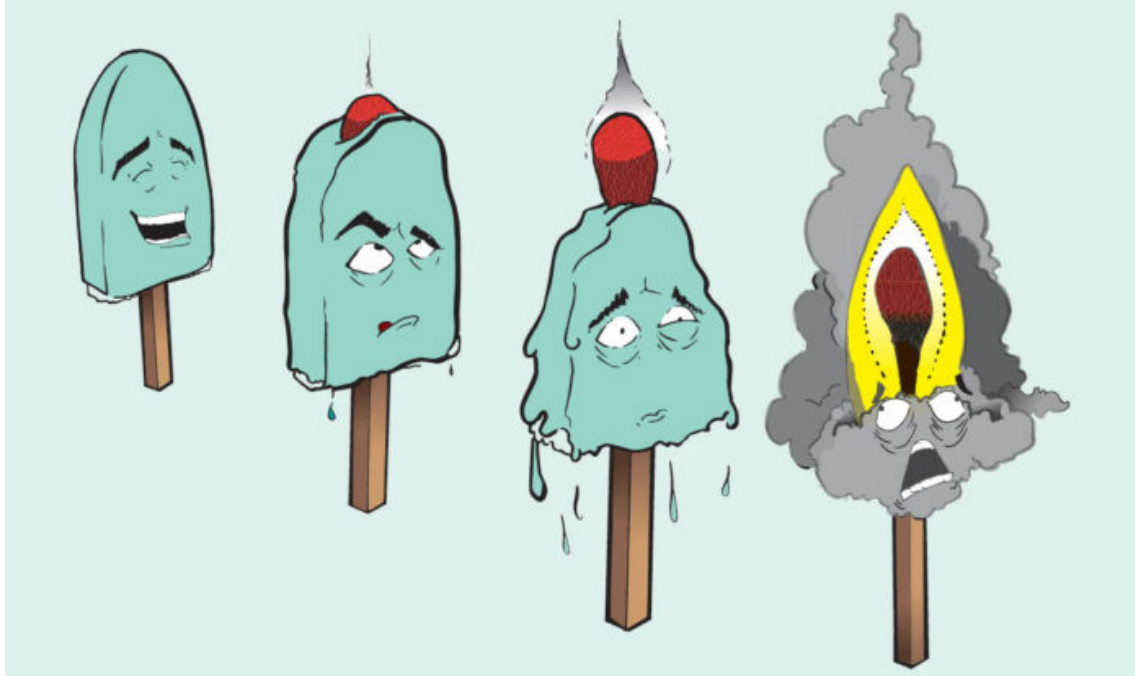


Figure 1. Illustration of the path to burnout by Jay Holladay.

3.1 YouTuber burnout and burnout predictors

Burnout is like a canary in the coal mine, and when I say that, it's because when you put a canary in the coal mine, what happens if the canary has trouble breathing, doing anything, then it's not going to survive in that environment. It's a warning sign. It's of a toxic work environment and what you do, or should be doing, is focusing on making the environment less toxic. But instead, what we are doing with burnout, even though it's a sign of a toxic environment, people are often trying to make the canary stronger, and tougher, and resilient – you can take any fumes in this environment if you're just you know strong enough etc.. This is not the way to solve the problem of burnout. (IT Revolution 2019)

Social psychologist Christina Maslach with colleagues' measure burnout in three dimensions. They are exhaustion, cynicism or a negative attitude toward your job, and inefficacy, which is the feeling of reduced personal accomplishment in your career. (PsychIRL 2020)

Maslach states that there are six indicators or predictors of when a person may burnout:

...workload (too much work, not enough resources); control (micromanagement, lack of influence, accountability without power); reward (not enough pay, acknowledgement, or satisfaction); community (isolation, conflict, disrespect); fairness (discrimination, favouritism); and values (ethical conflicts, meaningless tasks). (Maslach et al. 2005)

The following examples of how these indicators manifest in an individual is to show how YouTubers can slowly sink into burnout. One might not have education on the subject. Or one might not be self-aware when thought processes start to get abnormal.

A former YouTuber who goes by the name Laina, and first got famous for her character *Overly Attached Girlfriend*, explains that it is difficult not to feel the pressure to take on more work than you can handle. The pressure got to her despite being able to set her schedule. Laina started looking at the numbers and how others were surpassing her channel simply because they uploaded more frequently (PsychIRL 2020). Getting in the mindset of comparing numbers is tough because you do not know what happens behind the scenes of others, they might have editors and producers and a backlog of videos. Or they might be just as miserable as you.

The cases of PsychIRL (2020) talk about how they feel a lack of control, which is inevitable since they can never know how a video will perform. Lack of control is also one of Maslach and colleagues (2005) burnout predictors.

One creator who has found what the right amount of reward needed for her to feel accomplished is Bunny Meyer, known as *grav3yardgirl* on YouTube. She got advised to up her production quality to get more views. But she does not want that. She is content to interact with a smaller viewership. It is a sufficient social reward for her (PsychIRL 2020). Meyer seems to have learned this from her own experiences since she had the feeling of unworthiness and depression when she was focusing on numbers (Peraza 2019).

Communal support can easily feel impossible on YouTube since it is so vast. When seeing how it seems like others are in a more privileged position, the notion of community feels distorted. Larger creators have their contact person from YouTube, while smaller creators have a hard time getting answers and help (Rienks 2020). Both community and unfairness are burnout predictors (Maslach et al. 2005). Injustice often comes into play when starting to compare view and subscriber counts. Unfairness is also a valid feeling when a creator

sees how YouTubers are treated differently at conventions and events (Psych IRL2020), and by the varying amount of help and support different sized YouTubers get from YouTube (Rienks 2020).

Values are another predictor (Maslach et al. 2005), which quickly come to play when working a dream job. “Because you love it, your self-worth is probably more closely connected to it, and many entrepreneurs and people who love what they do, put in way more hours than your average forty-hour week here in the United States.” (DeFranco 2020). In his sentence about values, DeFranco happens to mention another predictor, workload.

Peraza (2019) claims in her study that the algorithm and fear of demonetization have a connection with burnout. Furthermore, Peraza states that YouTubers are not allowed to create the content that they want, and thus forced to make different content (Peraza 2019). Thinking this way will inherently make you more stressed. Focusing on numbers correlates to three of Maslach and colleagues (2005) indicators to when burnout is likely. Lack of control, lack of reward and the feeling of unfairness.

3.2 Burnout in the creative industry

We should not try to do more with less, but rather should come to terms with the fact that sometimes we may have to accept doing less, so that we can continue to do more for longer. [...] by preventing burnout, we might be able to accomplish more with less after all. (Forge 2017)

Burnout is a serious issue. There is a sixty-five per cent chance of damaging your health from the stress of overtime (McGuinness 2009). In 2015, a study into musicians found that job insecurity and career uncertainty correlates to lower life-satisfaction, higher psychological distress, overconsumption of alcohol, and the intention to leave the industry (Forge 2017). Burnout seems like an occupational hazard in the creative industry.

McGuinness (2009) explains creative burnout as a result of prolonged workplace stress. The symptoms are anxiety, depression, addictive behaviour, relationship problems and illness. Workers in the creative industry have accepted that overwork is normal and

inevitable, but also understand that it does not aid in productivity. It only crucifies morale. Unreasonable and unrealistic expectations are further causes.

Burnout amongst creatives is likely since it is their dream job. Creatives get to do what they love, so they should be grateful for that (McGuinness 2009, Forge 2017). Of course, they are thankful, but this way of thinking from others can be demotivating, which feeds the burnout.

Forge (2017) refers to an anecdote that there is an unusually high rate of burnout in the creative arts. It seems like the privilege of doing what they love makes them feel obligated to say yes to every offer. Even when already overworking.

The creative field is tricky since it is hard to differentiate work and free time. Forge (2017) explains that work-life balance feels redundant when work and free-time mostly are halves of the same whole. As a writer, is she working when reading a book, attending a writers' festival, or spending the weekend at a writing workshop? These situations could be considered unpaid work.

McGuinness (2009) encourages creatives to think if and how they contribute to their burnout – and if there is something, they can do about it. Their creative personality makes creative professionals more susceptible to burnout. It can show as obsession, which comes from the love and passion for their work. McGuinness says that this is great as long as it is not overdone. Working more leads to less productivity in the long run. Perfectionism, hypersensitivity, control freakery and the weight of expectation are other personality traits that increase the risk of burnout. It is advised for creatives to take an honest look through the list and see if there is something that applies and could be changed.

Burnout amongst creatives becomes an even bigger issue when their exhaustion starts breaking them psychologically. Losing the psychological connection to your work has implications on motivation and identity. This is especially hard amongst creative professionals since their work is often strongly connected to their sense of self (Leiter 2016). Forge (2017) explains that burnout is more so psychological distress than physical exhaustion for creatives. Increased disengagement and apathy towards the work that once

was dear increases indifference in personal values. Creatives' work forms the foundation of their identity. They have to sacrifice traditional rewards of labour to do what they love. In the creative field, there is rarely a certainty of financial security and career progression.

Burnout is a product of evolution. McGuinness (2009) describes it as follows:

[...]our 'fight or flight' stress response has evolved to help us reach peak performance instantly, to deal with immediate threats such as the proverbial saber-toothed tiger.

But the 'fight or flight' response did not evolve to help us deal with extended periods of stress, such as spending weeks working unpaid overtime for a demanding and unappreciative boss. In this situation, stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol start to damage the brain, blood vessels and other parts of the body, eventually causing a range of mental, emotional and physical symptoms.

The first step in addressing burnout is often the hardest. It is easier to keep feeding the beast. You do not get a real breather when you work from home. Most people can leave their work at the place of work. Creatives rarely have it. Freelancers also feel like they cannot say no to offers, so it is easy to take on too much. (Forge 2017)

3.3 Everything in moderation

A research (Glaser et al. 2018) condoned about the positive and negative effects of social media networking found that social media use for social networking effects negatively on depression and anxiety, especially when social media becomes an addiction. The study defines that social media is an addiction when it takes away from offline social interactions which in order often leads to depression and anxiety. The research did not cover YouTubers, regardless, a passion such as creating videos for a community can become an addiction too.

No socialising, depression and anxiety are not only symptoms of addiction (Glaser et al. 2018) but burnout as well (Maslach et al. 2005). Too much work does not give enough time for socialising and working at home, combined with no socialising leads to isolation. Not being able to feel satisfied and feeling disrespected are symptoms of both depression and burnout. In other words, they go hand in hand.

Research (Glaser et al. 2018) states that when there is a balance between online and offline social connections, the internet can have a positive effect on an individual's well-

being. When used in moderation, and more as a tool, social media can improve on existing social capital.

People tend only to post happy and positive things regarding themselves on social media. According to Danish psychology professor Svend Brinkman, forcing ourselves to be happy all the time could make us completely apathetic. Our feelings become commodities which in turn alienates us from our feelings (Hosie 2017). For YouTubers, this can lead to burnout. Making cheerful videos while feeling miserable does not feel genuine (Jacksepticeye 2018, H3 Podcast Highlights 2018). Brinkman fears that people soon will feel like they cannot discuss their worries and problems at all. He calls it the dark side of positivity. Thus, Brinkman encourages everyone to allow themselves to have negative thoughts and feelings because that helps us understand the world (Hosie 2017).

In another research, Maslach & Leiter (2016) have compiled a list of treatment and prevention methods for burnout. The recommendations include working less, taking more breaks, avoiding overtime work, utilizing relaxation strategies, promoting good health and fitness and developing a better self-understanding via self-reflection. These sound to the importance of moderation, and the importance of work-life balance. With too much work, other aspects of life will lack.

4 CASES

YouTube got first activated in February 2005, and in December 2005, YouTube officially launched. Eight million videos were watched each day (Jackson, 2011). Fourteen years later, in 2019, people watched 1 billion hours of videos each day which correlates to billions of views (Mohsin 2019). It's a massive industry, and it has gotten massive in a short time. In 2019, the number of creators making five or six-figure income grew by 40 per cent. The number of creators who have a million subscribers or more has increased by 65 per cent that year (The Try Guys 2019).

The sub-chapters have an introduction of the case before getting into the review of their experiences. All of the statistics are from Social Blade (2020).

4.1 Sean McLoughlin

Sean McLoughlin, known online as Jacksepticeye or only Jack, is an Irish YouTuber and actor, born February 7, 1990. He currently resides in Brighton, England. McLoughlin creates videos on video games, so-called reaction-videos, sketches and occasional vlogs. As of March 2020, he has 23.4 million subscribers, more than 12 billion views and around 4 500 uploads on his channel.

In an interview on the h3 podcast in August 2018, McLoughlin talks openly about how he burned out in 2017. He managed to change his mindset through therapy and self-reflection, but most importantly – positive mental attitude. This mindset of keeping a positive mental attitude got picked up by his viewers, and thus was born the movement of Positive Mental Attitude or PMA for short (H3 Podcast Highlights 2018, Jacksepticeye 2018). To this day, he has raised around three million euros to charities such as Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Crisis Text Line and The Trevor Project (Tiltify 2019).

McLoughlin explains that as he had gotten everything, everything he ever dreamed of career-wise, he also felt aimless, anxious, drained, exhausted and miserable. He is known for always being a positive and energetic guy, which added to the mix of feeling miserable

as he started worrying about letting people down. He also acknowledges that there will always be people hating and not understanding how these creators feel and what they are going through. Still, the fact is that when everything else is good and taken care of, the only thing that is left is emotional issues. (H3 Podcast Highlights 2018)

Positive Mental Attitude might sound like you should always think positively and try to be happy, and that is what will make you happy. That is not the case. McLoughlin says that it is about letting yourself feel the way you feel, to keep telling yourself that everything will be okay in the future and not to dwell on the negatives. He further explains that it does not matter if you feel horrible for one day, one week or one year. The thing that matters is that you keep pushing through and take it day by day. Eventually, the day arrives when you are happier again. (H3 Podcast Highlights 2018, Jacksepticeye 2018)

4.2 Casey Neistat

Casey Neistat is an American YouTuber, filmmaker and vlogger, born March 25, 1981. He is also the co-founder of the multimedia company Beme, which was acquired by CNN in November 2016. In 2019 he moved to Los Angeles after residing in New York since the early 2000s. Neistat has gotten most recognition for his daily vlogs that he started in March of 2015. His goal was to post every day for 300 days, which he accomplished by January 19, 2016. As of March 2020, he has 11.8 million subscribers, nearly 2.8 billion views and more than one thousand uploads on his channel.

In September 2019 Philip DeFranco interviewed Neistat on his podcast (A Conversation With 2019a). Neistat talks openly about his burnout and how he thought it only happened to weak people, and thus he thought that it would never happen to him. Neistat refused to acknowledge its existence for a long time. He refused to acknowledge its existence until he started to see how his bad mood affected the people around him. He realised how he was using his wife and kids for views. How his mind never shut down, and he was thinking of what the viewers want to see, how that day's video will be, how he will bind all the clips together and so on.

Three years before the burnout, when Neistat was about to start the daily vlogs, his friend said to him “don’t burn yourself out”. Fast forward those three years, and Neistat was as burned out as he could be. He explains that he was angry all the time, there was no socialising, he wasn’t present and hadn’t been for a long time. When he wasn’t working, he was pretending. In the end, he felt destroyed. (A Conversation With 2019a)

At the beginning of 2019, Neistat truly realised that he needs to have enough strength to be on social media. And so, he abandoned it completely. He realised that the audience would stay there, or not, and both are fine. He says that behind one negative person, there are one hundred persons who accept that everyone is an individual who has to do what they need to do. Seeing this gave him the confidence to stop and take care of himself instead of feeling accountable for entertaining millions. (A Conversation With 2019a)

DeFranco also has experiences with burnout and mental illness. Both him and Neistat have been active on social media since the early 2000’s MySpace age. MySpace was the biggest social media platform for a few years, and that was when your value measured in numbers started to become a big deal online. Then slowly, gaining value in numbers becomes an addiction. If you do not take time to self-reflect and take care of yourself, you will burn out. (A Conversation With 2019a)

4.3 Hannah Hart and Elle Mills

This subchapter presents two cases since the analysed discourse is between Hart and Mills, who both have experiences with mental health issues (Hannahlyze This 2019).

Hannah Hart, born November 2, 1986, is an American YouTuber, comedian, author and actress who currently resides in Los Angeles. She first got known for her YouTube series My Drunk Kitchen in which she cooks something while intoxicated. As of March 2020, she has 2.43 million subscribers, 331 million views and nearly 700 uploads on her main channel named MyHarto.

Elle Mills, best known by her YouTube-channel ElleOfTheMills, is a Canadian content creator born July 17, 1998. She was born in the Philippines and raised in Ottawa, Ontario,

Canada. As of March 2020, she has 1.85 million subscribers, over 160 million views, and around 170 uploads on her channel.

Mills was a huge YouTube fan growing up, and her dream was to be one herself. At 19 years old, her dreams came true, but she felt more miserable than ever before. Mills experienced her first anxiety attacks, and she turned to alcohol in an attempt to feel better. Alcohol just made her feel even worse, and it got to a state where she was suicidal. Mills was trying to make a better video every week which was not attainable. Instead, she was crying every night. Mills said yes to every invitation and offer. Therefore, she burned out.

Hart rationalises that no one can expect that a 19-year-old would have a healthy balance perspective between work and restoration. She adds that it would be essential to get more protection for artists and creatives in the entrepreneurial entertainment industry. Being a YouTuber is a dream job for some; for others, it starts as a hobby. Regardless, no one teaches about time management or work-life balance, and no one looks after you but yourself when you are your boss. Precautions could prevent burnout from being so prevalent.

Both Hart and Mills did not know what was going when they experienced their first panic attacks. Hart thought she had an allergic reaction and went to the emergency room where she quickly got diagnosed with a panic attack. She had never heard of it before and felt happy that at least it was not a nervous breakdown. Until it started to happen more regularly. Hart says that nothing feels lonelier than being around lots of people when you are miserable, to which Mills agrees.

Mills says that being on stage in such a state just feels unnatural, and it made her feel like an object. At this point, in the middle of a tour, she had a public breakdown. She had started drinking in the morning and went online, crying and ranting. Luckily her management, family, and friends stepped in, they saw it as a yell for help and cancelled the rest of the tour so Mills could start taking care of herself. Hart finishes the podcast by saying “Remember that it is a battery, and batteries need to be recharged”. (Hannahlyze This 2019)

4.4 Lauren “Mykie” Mountain

Glam & Gore is a YouTube channel run by professional makeup artist and beauty vlogger known as Mykie. She prefers to be called Mykie over Lauren Mountain, and thus, is she referred to as Mykie from now on. Mykie was born November 1, 1989, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and currently resides in Los Angeles. Mykie mainly makes videos where she either creates glam makeup or gory special effects makeup on herself while talking about a subject that the viewers have asked for, or that interests her. She has also travelled to many haunted places in an attempt to find out – are ghosts real? As of March 2020, she has 3.77 million subscribers, over 430 million views and around 240 uploads on her channel.

The last of April 2019, Mykie announced that she would be taking a break. In a lengthy video, she explains why and how. She had first thought about a break two years prior but did not start planning it until a month before she finally took the break. Her reasoning for postponing it for so long was a fear of negative criticism from her viewers (Glam & Gore 2019):

I don't think a break is a bad thing, inherently. I just know that a lot of Youtubers that have gone on breaks tend to get backlash for the break. I think that taking a break is really important for everyone, from work. I think that Youtubers are the kind of people that tend to work themselves into the ground, because for the most part they're entirely self-made and it comes from this drive within to do something that is very self-reliant, and while I think that that is a blessing in many ways, that I have that drive, it is also to my own detriment.

When going on break, Mykie had not taken an intentional one in five years. Around the holidays she works harder because she wants to put out big videos for Halloween and Christmas. Her normal workload takes the whole week, and from August until the end of October, she works double that amount to attain her goals. Mykie says that it destroys her to the point that she does not enjoy Halloween and her birthday anymore. She just needs a breather at that point.

Mykie had her first burnout in 2015. It manifested itself as panic attacks, debilitating anxiety and emotional eating. Even though she promised that it would never happen again, she has continued to overwork herself every year despite using coping mechanisms that she has learned.

She finishes off the video by advising aspiring YouTubers, which also serves as a reminder for herself. Mykie says that her biggest mistake has been that she did not have a backlog of films before things started to pick up. A few videos to get ahead is important because that way you can take a break when it is needed. You can have real weekends when you want them, which ends up invaluable if the channel takes off. A backlog of videos is also crucial since you can never know what life brings you. All of a sudden, you can find yourself in the hospital with your head split open. (Glam & Gore 2019)

In March 2020, Mykie made another video where she briefly talks more about the subject. She realised that her downfalls come from her way of working as a YouTuber from the very beginning. It was not sustainable due to her high demands and tight schedule. She speculates that her desires were so loud, since in the start of her YouTube-career, she wanted to do her very best for a competition, and that competition video got posted on the Glam & Gore channel. What made her feel worse was the feeling of not having anything more to teach her viewers. All of her time went into planning, filming and editing videos, so Mykie did not have time to further her expertise in special effects makeup. (Glam & Gore 2020)

5 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Due to having the dream job and sharing a lot of their personal life online, it can be difficult for YouTubers to stay happy. The creators easily overwork themselves since they work from home and continuously, mostly unconsciously, think about new video ideas. When inspired the days quickly get long and forgetting to take care of yourself is likely to happen. The feeling of responsibility for pleasing the audience and community keeps the creators going for too long, working themselves deep into that dark hole of burnout. The creators often forget about themselves.

Burnout is accepted in traditional creative fields (McGuinness 2009, Forge 2017), and the findings suggest that it is getting accepted amongst YouTubers as well. In the conventional fields, it is even seen as inevitable. When something negative that is likely to happen is accepted, it is even more likely to happen. Instead of slowing down when it would be necessary, creatives consciously push themselves over their limits. They burn out because they forget to recharge their batteries.

The feelings that the cases experienced translate to Maslach and colleagues (2005) burnout predictors. It is easy to recognize the early signs of burnout through awareness and self-reflection. Emotional issues that need addressing are common to come up during burnout. If there is anything positive with burnout, needing to solve the problems is good for personal growth.

To analyse YouTuber burnout amongst the cases, I looked for reoccurring keywords, which I then put into three categories: feelings, reasons and solutions. In the following charts, I present these themes and keywords of the cases' experiences. A keyword got picked when two or more of the cases had it in common.

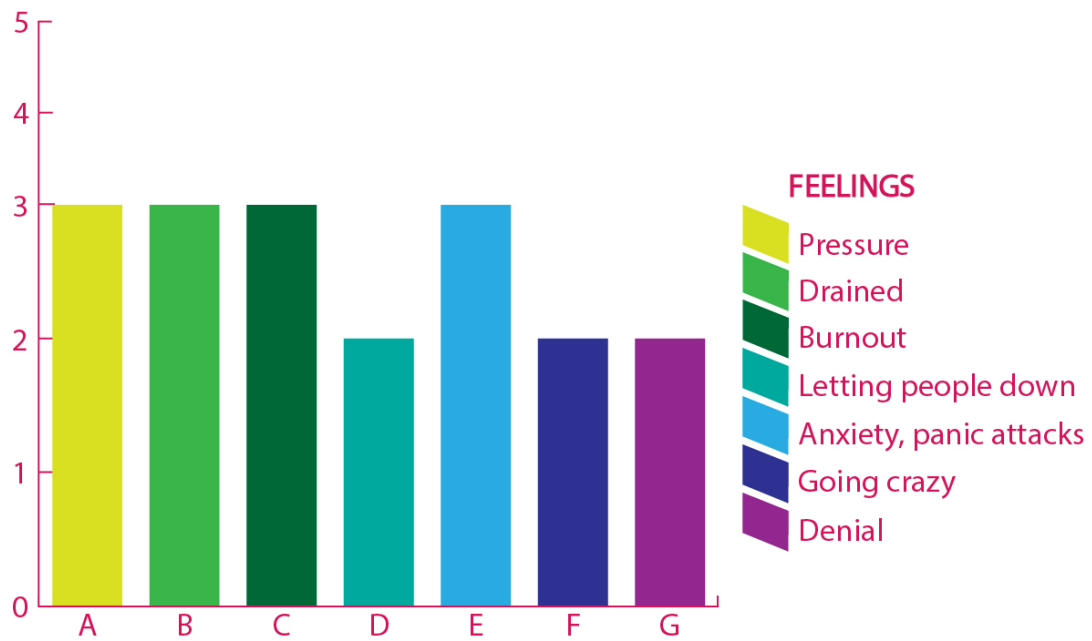


Figure 3. Feelings in common.

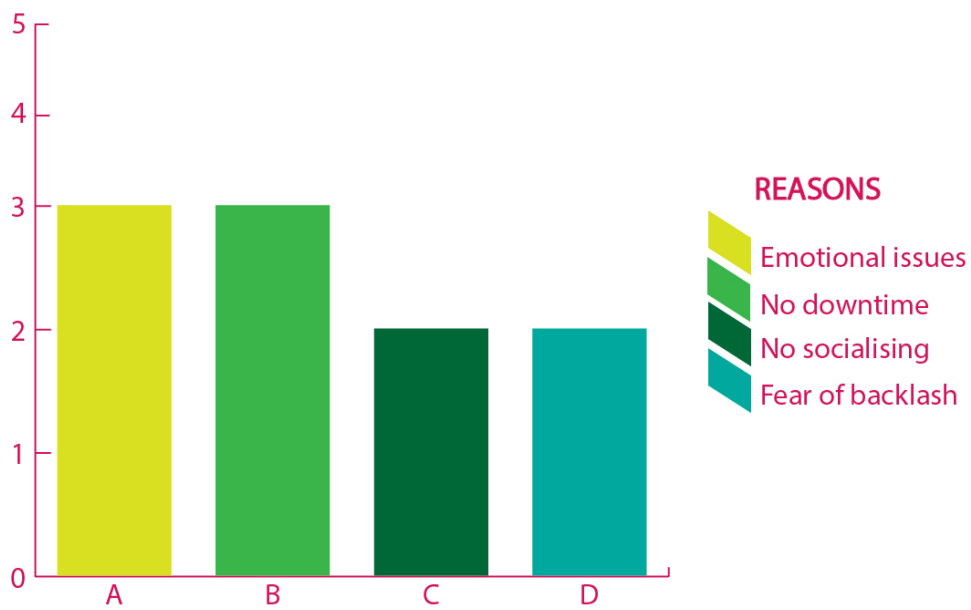


Figure 2. Reasons in common.

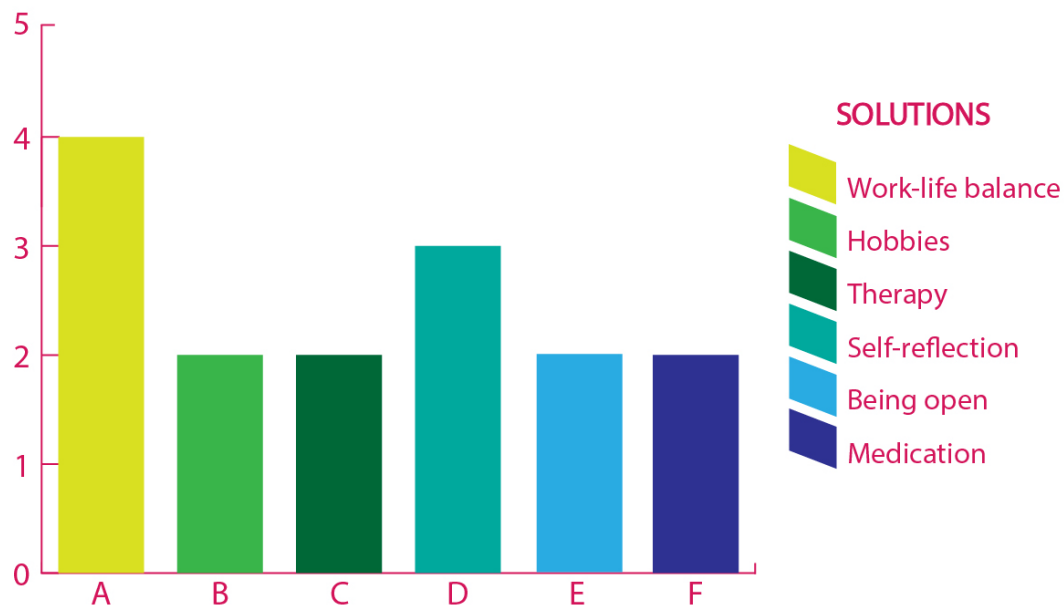


Figure 5. Solutions in common.

The most common feelings amongst the five YouTubers were too much pressure, feeling drained and burnt out, and anxiety that had led to panic attacks. Two had been in denial about the situation, which correlated to the feeling of going crazy. Two were also worried about letting people down. In the following diagram, I have connected the case feelings and reasons to Maslach et al. (2005) burnout predictors.

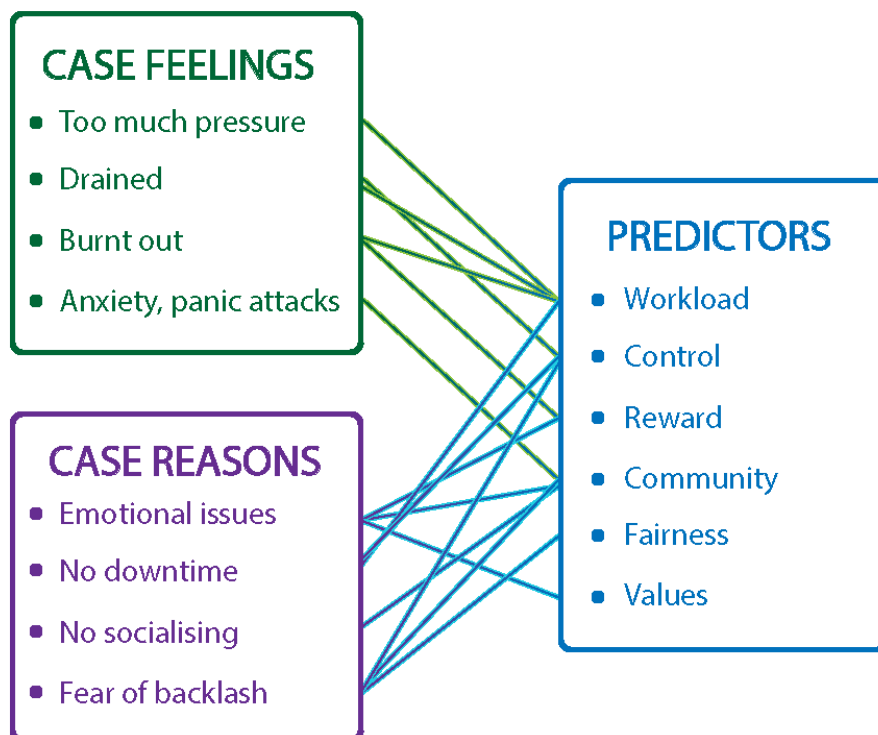


Figure 4. Connecting the cases to burnout predictors.

The cases had four reasons in common for burnout. The first one, emotional issues, comes from having everything else figured out and everything seeming to be perfect. When everything else is taken care of, only the emotional issues are left, and most people have them more or less, if not from before, from the quick fame they have gained. Lack of rewards, or in this case satisfaction that Maslach and colleagues (2005) describe being part of the reward prediction becomes an issue when YouTubers try to outdo themselves with every video.

Having no downtime is connected to the workload and control predictors of burnout (Maslach 2005). When working from home, you easily overwork yourself, which leads to not having any downtime. It is also easy to lose control when working with your passion job. No downtime also inherently leads to no socialising. Thus, no socializing connects to a third predictor of burnout, community.

The final reason, fear of backlash has to do with three of the predictors, control, community and fairness. There is no way of controlling criticism from others; someone will inherently be disappointed and vocalise it in the comments or on other social media platforms. Part of the viewer community being negative does not help when already feeling drained and anxious. There is also another community, the one YouTubers work for and with, which often seems invisible. And lastly, the community amongst YouTubers making videos in the same genres. It is easy to start comparing numbers which do not do any good, especially on top of a negative mindset from the burnout. These factors also give the feeling of unfairness.

There were six solutions or ways that had helped the YouTubers heal from burnout and stay healthy in the future. The first one is a work-life balance, which was the only thing that four out of five agreed on in this study. The need for work-life balance seems obvious when looking at the feelings, reasons and predictors, but no one looks at life through that lens all the time. Being self-reflective helps with maintaining a healthy work-life balance. A healthy work-life balance includes hobbies, so we see that the solutions support each other. Being open comes through self-reflection, and for the hardest times, there is the option of medication which is something no one should be ashamed of taking.

There was one reason I was expecting to see more, but no one of my cases mentioned it. Demonetisation. According to earlier studies (Peraza 2019), demonetisation and economic instability was an issue. I have found that it is somewhat of a cop-out—a way of not taking responsibility for your economics. If income stream a) does not work, go with b), or c), it is about continuing until something or some things work out. There are many ways of making money as a YouTuber besides AdSense (A Conversation With 2019b). The easiest one being affiliate links and partnerships. A ubiquitous way is selling merchandise, and when big enough, sponsors come into play. Some creators even start businesses in different industries. For example, Hila and Ethan Klein run a high-end clothing brand called [Teddy Fresh](#), and Cristine Rotenberg with Ben Mazowita run a nail polish company, [Holo Taco](#) (A Conversation With 2019b). I would not suggest that small YouTubers start their own business outside of YouTube until they have the time, money and following for it. The other mentioned income streams are applicable for almost any size of a YouTuber. Affiliate links being the easiest one.

Furthermore, Rotenberg mentions on A Conversation With (2019b) that many YouTubers are lying about their financial situation. She claims that they are downplaying it, which is affirmed by looking at the numbers. When knowing the view amount, it is easy to estimate how much ad revenue that video has made. Rotenberg further explains that these YouTubers are doing this to gain sympathy from their viewers.

Peraza's (2019) study sees the algorithm and demonetization as problems. But having other income streams connects to demonetization. When having those income streams, demonetization will not hit you as severely. Susan Wojcicki, the CEO of YouTube (The Try Guys 2019) says that people often think demonetization of a video correlates to restriction of the video, and not being suggested to others. Wojcicki opposes that there are two separate systems that videos go through. She further explains that if a video has violence in it, it will probably get restricted and demonetized, but that it is two different systems that make their analyses of the content.

YouTubers are known to be afraid of admitting defeat and taking a break because they are scared of the backlash. Luckily, YouTubers have started to get the courage to take a

break even though they might be scared. They understand their self-worth. They know that it is impossible to keep working yourself to the ground when you're already there. It is more important to be happy than anything else, especially as a content creator with so many eyes on you. Through all these examples we see, of creators taking breaks, we also know that it is not detrimental to their careers.

A quick Google search shows us the magnitude of mental health issues among online creators. I searched in incognito mode without logging in to Google, so the search engine is unbiased. The results were through Google, not YouTube, as preferred since

YouTube does not show the number of search results anymore. The results of the search from March 8, 2020, are shown in the table below:

Keywords	Results	Time
<i>YouTuber burnout</i>	858 K	0,48 sec
<i>Creator burnout</i>	3,3 M	0,47 sec
<i>YouTuber depression</i>	3,89 M	0,45 sec

Table 1. Google search results.

The results should not be analysed bluntly. It is important to remember that a lot of the results talk about the same people and situations in different mediums: news articles, videos, podcasts, blogs, and so on. With that in mind, the numbers are still high.

All of this is important in matters of answering the research question. *Why is it so common for YouTubers to get burnt out?* By knowing the feelings, reasons and solutions, we can not only find out why it happens so commonly but also how we could prevent it. With the knowledge of feelings and solutions combined with self-reflection and action when needed, this trend can stop.

Burnout happened due to passion for the cases' job, and in many cases, unresolved issues from the past. That passion led to overworking, which led to no socialising and isolation. No socialising and isolation are symptoms of depression but also factors in burnout. Moreover, through the YouTubers success, they had gotten everything they wanted in life and did not need to worry about money or anything when their burnout happened. Or so

they thought. Emotional issues, be it from childhood or recent tragedies that had not been dealt with adequately wanted to get resolved. The other path is being miserable all the time, but these YouTubers wanted to heal. They wanted to continue doing what they love but understood that they could not keep going the same way.

6 CONCLUSION

Let us go back to the beginning and give some final thoughts of the process. The research questions were:

- What are the causes of YouTuber burnout?
- What does burnout look like for YouTubers? How does burnout manifest itself?
- Could burnout be prevented?

The results showed that there are multiple causes for YouTuber burnout. The most common reasons are lack of free-time, emotional issues that had not been resolved and fear of backlash from their viewers. As a result of no downtime, another reason rose – no socialising. From reviewing earlier research, I expected to see economy as a problem, but that did not come up amongst the cases of this study. However, all the results could be translated into clinical burnout research.

YouTuber burnout happens due to not enough information on the subject. Gone through burnout myself, I understand how easy it is to dismiss the early symptoms, especially if you have not experienced it before. That is when changes to prevent it from getting worse should happen. A re-evaluation of everyday life is better to do sooner than later. The healing process will be shorter and more manageable when burnout is recognised early on.

The best methods proved to be KWIC and pawing. Using KWIC, it was easy to get an overview of the data to pinpoint themes. When combined with pawing, I could eyeball through the literature to make comparisons, connections and pick up on keywords, phrases explicitly with similar meaning.

Although the number of YouTubers in the sample was small, sufficient data was produced to make some limited generalisation possible. The cases' experiences were sufficiently similar to identify raw data themes that were common amongst the YouTuber's. The findings can be generalised to other YouTuber's in their twenties and thirties who have more than a million subscribers, and who are their boss, i.e. they do not work full-time for a company that produces content to YouTube.

There are limitations, or conflicts, with the generalisation as well. When compared to earlier studies, it seems like generalisation should not include beauty vloggers. Studies regarding beauty vloggers concluded that economic instability also is a cause of burnout. Opposing economic issues, I found bold statements with good arguments that many are lying about their financial situation to gain sympathy from their viewers. I find this concerning since this is a misuse of trust towards the viewers.

Inside the creative communities, burnout is talked about a lot, but the statistics are anecdotal or homogenous with small sample sizes. Burnout is generally researched amongst ‘high-care’ roles, so we can confidently assume that the rates are high in those fields. Thus, further research could be made to see how common creative burnout is, not only inside the creative industry but also compared to other industries.

I would also like to see YouTube take some responsibility for their creators. After all, the creators are the reason YouTube is such a vast industry. You can find tutorials and guidelines on how to grow your channel and audience, what to consider when making a thumbnail, and so forth. But nothing on, e.g. work-life balance, schedules or tips on how to maintain your sanity.

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8 APPENDICES

8.1 Transcriptions

8.1.1 h3 Podcast Highlights – Jacksepticeye On Positive Mental Attitude

S: Sean “jacksepticeye” McLoughlin **E:** Ethan Klein **H:** Hila Klein

0:00 E: I’ve noticed you said in a video, that 2017 was the worst of your life, and that really stuck out to me. I was like whoa, I don’t know if you want to talk about that, but I was really curious, like what was going on in 2017?

S: There’s a lot of stuff, a lot of like YouTube stuff and everything, trying to figure out what I wanted to do. Like that thing of like climbing the hill and then getting there and be like, what else can I do? And feeling very aimless. There was a lot of stuff with people in my life that had changed very drastically. A lot of friendships, a lot of stuff like that that had just gotten very weird, and then by the end of the year, I just felt so drained and exhausted and miserable. I didn’t really know what was going on and that’s why the whole like PMA thing started because I was going into this year (2018), I was like I’m going to make it positive. I’m going to change my mentality and just work towards a better me.

E: So what does PMA mean?

S: Positive Mental Attitude.

E: And what is that?

S: It’s just something that kind of gets thrown around to be like “keep a positive mental attitude”. And to me, it was something that I could just keep saying to like remind myself to be happier.

E: Like a mantra or something like that.

S: Yeah, not to dwell on that bullshit that was happening that really meant nothing in the grand scheme of things. And then because I kept saying it a whole bunch, my audience obviously picked up an edge, and then it’s become a whole movement on my channel.

1:19 E: So, you feel that you were able to wilfully change your attitude by just consciously forcing yourself to be more positive?

S: Not exactly. Because I don't think that's healthy. And that was the whole point of it I was worried that people would be like "yeah, just go out there and be happy, if you're happy then nothing gets you down".

E: I appreciate that it's more complex than that.

S: Yeah, it's about like, it's going to sound so hooey, it's about trying your best to get to a positive attitude.

E: Putting in the work to get out of the hole.

S: Yeah, so for me it was a lot of like starting to go to therapy. Like reflecting on things, easing up on my work life and just having a better balance with my mental health. And coming to terms with it, because for the longest time I was like, everyone sees me as the positive person, but if I show any sign of like I'm sad, then I was worried that I was letting people down. And then that creates anxiety and things like that, so I was like, I'm just going to be open, honest because I'm going crazy.

E: It's got to be a burden to be like that positive, happy, energetic guy.

S: Yeah, and then especially when there are people coming up to you being like man, there's no drama on you and you're so happy all the time and people have nice things to say about you all the time. That's just way too much pressure for any person. And it's not true, I don't feel like, I'm not that all the time. Nobody is perfect. So, then just trying to reconfigure my brain again. I should get to a better place. And because it was a lot of stuff that meant nothing, with a lot of tiny things that kind of build-up that means nothing, and then you get miserable about them for no reason. And then, because I have so many people come to me talking about their mental health all the time. I figured that let's do something better with it. That's why we started doing the monthly charity streams and then this (PMA) is like the hashtag for it every time and trying to turn some things into a positive. Trying to work for a better life. Who has time and energy to be miserable?

E: Me, sadly. No, I'm in the same headspace as you are. I really like what you said. It's not about like hey, I'm happy now. You have to like make the changes that you know you need to make to get there.

S: And I think a lot of YouTubers suffer with that because they have everything they need, technically. Or everything they've always wanted to have.

E: It's like, I have no reason. And worst of all, a lot of the fans or people who watch are like, very judgmental about like "what the fuck do you have to complain about".

S: And that's the thing when your finances are taken care of and you're your own boss and you're doing a job you love. All that's left is emotional issues. All the things that there's left to worry about, that's all in here (points at his head with index fingers), and your brain, there's a lot of shit to you that is not useful at all.

E: And on top of that you have millions of people that have an opinion about you that you've never met.

S: Yeah, and you have to be their advocate for their mental health a lot of the time as well and keeping, making sure they're entertained, and keeping a check on them and making sure that people are okay. That's why after a while it gets you, but yeah, it's nobody can go out there and just be like okay, I'm going to be happy today. Because you're a fucking psychopath if you do that. But as long as you're trying, like if you have a shit day, it's fine, sit in the shit day. Allow yourself to feel shit. Get it out of your system and move on to the next day. If that's shit, keep going. If you have a shit month, a shit year, keep going. Eventually, that day will arrive when you're happier. And that's like the thing people always say, like people get bullied in high school and then they grow up and it's like "yeah, that really meant nothing, did it". I mean it will leave some scars if it's bad enough, but then at the end of the day it's like no, you kept going, you kept fighting and you're at a better place in your life.

E: God bless. I love it. No, I've been seriously, I've been legitimately depressed for like probably two years and just now I'm starting to address it. And that's part of why we're not posting videos on h3 (Ethan and Hila's main YouTube channel) because we're just doing too much shit and I was like working every day, and it was getting between me and Hila (Ethan's wife), and then hobbies. Your free time and your leisurely time are mixed up because you work from home, and it's just so bad. You know you can only take it for so long before you're like, I'm just going to disappear forever or I'm going to address this.

S: And I think that that's the problem with YouTubers is that when you're on that treadmill, and you're constantly working towards it, it feels like if you fall off you're never going to be able to get back on again.

E: It's really not true.

S: Yeah it's not and you can see channels like Shane Dawson who had like huge popularity a few years ago, kind of, he didn't disappear or anything, but it's definitely not what it used to be. And now it's fucking huge again. I mean the biggest he's ever been.

Same with Philly D, he was big, went down, now he's huge again.

E: That's great, but those guys stayed active. The one that always blows my mind is Jon Tron, he doesn't even post a video for a year. You know what I mean. And he comes back and everybody is still there. You know, excited, first content. So, it's very much that that myth has been busted.

S: Yeah, that's why a lot more YouTubers are talking about it now, they feel like they can take a break.

H: When you take a break it's really hard to get back to it. That's one thing that like, when you're in that treadmill, like the chase, when you post a video every week, or at least we used to do once a week, it's kind of like, it's just the routine and then once you break it, it's like even harder to get back to it.

E: Or the problem for us is that you're always chasing like a feeling or a time of like how it used to be, instead of just embracing like, all right, shit's different now.

S: And I mean that's still the same for the audience. The audience are still chasing the old you, and I think they either mature with you or they leave and shit all over you. So, you could've just, I mean you've been doing it for how long at this point?

E: I don't know, five years. Yeah, five years.

S: Every person changes like is it every three years so.

E: So, I think part of what's really important for us is just to be like, okay, that era is done. Like it's a whole new era now. We would keep, we've always been like man, I can't do this anymore, but okay now, I really need to get back into doing that again. And then it's just like this never-ending cycle.

S: Yeah, it's all about finding balance, any stuff that makes you happy outside of your channel as well. That was like the thing talking to in therapy I realized that I don't do anything outside my channel. I don't do anything physical, everything's, everything I do is mental. Even if I play video games, it's still like keeping your brain on, you need something to let your brain shut the fuck up every now and then.

E: That's something I've been thinking a lot about too. You need a wholesome activity to do

S: Just distract yourself

E: In the fucking real world like, dude, what do you do? Do you have any hobbies outside of working games?

S: Well, now that I've come here (to LA) I've just been hanging out with people a lot

more. Like, living in Brighton, and I hadn't left my house in like two weeks because I don't need to. And I have to keep my videos going, and then when I came here, I finally had people to hang out with day-to-day. There has just been, I've been hanging out with people all the time, but it has just cleared my head completely. Well, not completely, not totally clear, but yeah, compared to what I was, I'm so much happier and then it makes it easier to get back to your videos. And if you hate the way you're doing it, then that's a sign that something has to change. Yeah, schedule changes or your methodology changes or what you're actually doing changes. And the bottom line is, if you're not happy doing the old version of you that the audience wants, then it's not worth doing. So, you might as well do what makes you happy and if the audience leaves, they leave, and if they stay, they stay. You got to make yourself happy first.

E: It's a tough pill to swallow, but it's the truth.

S: And something that a lot of people don't want to swallow.

8.1.2 Jacksepticeye - Positive Mental Attitude!

2:37 When I started off the year, PMA, the idea behind it was I had a terrible 2017. I had one of the worst years of my life and I decided you know I'm not going to let that defeat me. I'm not going to just sit in my sadness. I'm not going to let that defeat me. I'm going to figure out what was wrong. I'm going to figure out what I want to do, move forward and get some goals and objectives in my life, and I was going to go forward with a positive mental attitude. That's something that I kept saying to myself. It was something that I took upon myself to keep reminding myself of. It was for me more than anything. And I kept saying it over and over again because I wanted to keep myself in that frame of mind. To keep myself in a positive attitude, to appreciate the smaller things, take the victories I could when I got them and just pushed forward in the year with a better mindset, and not dwell on all the negatives that were happening around me, and not let those get me down, but to just think about the positives and move forward that way, and the craziest thing happened because as soon as I started saying that everybody else followed on board and everybody else loved it so much that it became somewhat of a movement not only in the community, but I've started to see it in so many places all over the internet now, because you guys out there keep promoting it everywhere, and you guys are out there promoting positivity and that's fantastic. That's the best thing that I could ever ask for because I'm

always trying to promote positivity and PMA. And the fact that you guys have taken it on board and made it a community thing and have started to spray it worldwide means so much to me and I really appreciate that. Thank you. And thank you for being nice to each other, as well, in the middle of that because it's easy to be out there and to be at each other's throats and to dwell on the negative things and to be attacking each other. But it's a lot harder to go out there and spread positivity to actually be nice and actually be a force for good in the world, so, good for you. Now I have people coming up to me at conventions and coming to me at tours and everything, chanting PMA at me when I'm on stage or coming to the signings at conventions and getting me to write it on the wrists, because they want to get PMA tattooed and because they heard it from me and they, they liked the positive vibe that I give off. And they wanted it in my handwriting, and that's something that I never ever want to take for granted and something that I never ever want to forget because PMA is something that's so much more than just trying to be positive all the time. The whole point of PMA isn't to just go out there and be happy no matter what's happening to you. Just be happy and if you're happy, everything will be fine. That's not what it is. And I never wanted it to become like satire or a parody or a cliché or anything like that. I want it to be something that's taken seriously. I want it to be something that people realize that PMA is about waking up at the start of the day thinking about some positives and trying your best to get through that day in a positive frame of mind. If you slip through that, if something bad happens, you're allowed to feel that, you're allowed to feel bad. You're allowed to make yourself feel your emotions, but the important part is that you try your best to get back to a positive mental attitude. Sometimes it takes a long time, sometimes it's the next day, but as long as you're trying that's what PMA is all about, to try and be the best version of yourself. Because that's what you deserve, it's what we all deserve. It's what people in general deserve, is to be happy and to find their happiness and to be the best versions of themselves. So, PMA is something that I strongly believe in, it's something that has helped me a lot so far, and by your stories and the stuff that I've read and listened to you in person. It's meant a lot to you as well.

8.1.3 Casey Neistat on Abandoning Social Media, Using Anger, & More (Ep. 8 A Conversation With)

P: Philip DeFranco **C:** Casey Neistat

24:04 C: Burnout is something I've never subscribed to. Meaning that I refuse to acknowledge its existence.

P: The thing that everyone's like we need to take this seriously as we continue to burn-out all we talk about.

C: To me, burnout was something that happened to weak people. And I remember calling, this was way back in 2015, the leading investor of Beme. I remember calling and saying him, I'm starting a daily vlog. And it's going to be great for the company, but I want you to know that this isn't going to be a distraction. This is something that I do constantly with the company. He said to me, don't burn yourself out. And I remember being just like, who do you think you're talking to, man. I'm Casey, I don't burn out.

OK, so cut to three years later, **A:** I was as burned out as anyone could ever be. What burnout looked like for me – I was just kind of angry all the time. Angry at anyone. I realized that I hadn't socialized. I hadn't sat down and talked to my wife, I hadn't had a relationship, I hadn't been present in a lot of time. I try to avoid new agey terms like present and shit like that, and self-care. But the reality was: all I was thinking all the time was my work. 24/7. So, when I wasn't doing my work I was pretending. Like the time we hung out, we first met, and you came by my studio. All I was thinking about then was lie, okay. How do I parlay this into my episode for today? That doesn't mean that I wasn't happy to meet you or be around you, but the reality was that was what was going on. And I started to push that on my kids, like hanging with my kids – how can I make this moment something vloggable. Hang out with my wife: How can I make this vloggable without her knowing. I started to go fucking crazy.

P: It makes those experiences also pretty hollow.

C: Exactly. And then it starts to make you hollow. So, 800 episodes into the vlog or whatever, it had destroyed me. And then I very foolishly started 368, both the company and the vlog, like two weeks after sort of parting ways with CNN. Like I gave myself no downtime. And at the end of it, I left myself destroyed. And I realized that sort of in the spring of this year when I had a handful of months left before moving to California, that

you know I need to have the strength, I realized that social media audience, they're going to be there for 6 months or a year, and if not, then that's okay too. And that was probably an audience I shouldn't hang on to. And like, for every kid on Twitter who's like, You're a jerk for not uploading. There are 100 people behind that jerk who are like, we do accept you as an individual and you do what you need to do. And with that maturity and that understanding came a kind of confidence to stop and be like what do I want to do next. So, like this transition moving out here, the last couple of months has been purely about being present, about being there for my kids, being there for my wife who's having a tough time with this move. And just trying to understand it. And that's starting to settle now. And looking ahead, I'll never stop being excited about YouTube. I love the satisfaction, I love the immediacy of making YouTube videos, that's how I started my career five years before YouTube was born, and I'll continue to make short videos on YouTube until the day I'll die. But right now, I'm looking at much more sort of methodical long-term projects.

29:30 C: Jesse Wellens talked me into going out to Burning Man this year. Because he loves that, it's a big deal for him. For me, it's not something that I ever was particularly interested in, but I went out for a day, just for hanging out with him. And I had a wonderful time. More so than anything it was just spending time with a friend, in this weird place. And it was the most cinematic beautiful, awes., and I had a wild experience that you'd never believe. And there's like certain, something feels so good about not running to Twitter. And something feels so good about the fact that I don't have a picture from there for Instagram. Something feels good about the fact that when I was packing to go out there, I didn't pack a video camera. ... that pleasure in not sharing it means that I was doing it just for me. ... now I know how to do these things just for myself.

31:24 C: This is like some of the PTSD of what it means when you live your whole life being like what can I share at this exact moment. How can I get my wife prompt enough so when I swing my camera and point it at her, she says something witty? When your brain lives in that world exclusively for so long, you start to go fucking nuts.

31:59 P: I came up during the MySpace age where it was like a big deal of who was in your top eight. And then they changed the number that you can have there and now it's a big deal because all of a sudden there was this, and I feel like maybe that was kind of one of the first steps of there is this thing online, that shows you your value. The number of friends you have, how many of those friends have you as a top friend. All of a

sudden you start gaining value from that. Then there are these whole systems, I remember I was like what's a Facebook, what? Okay I have to use a .edu to get this and I'll be able to connect to more people, but even there it was still just kind of an extension of *I want to matter*.

8.1.4 Hannahlyze This – Burnout (ft. Elle Mills)

E: Elle Mills **H:** Hannah Hart

8:28 E: For me, I was still stressed during that time (before getting famous, at the end of 2017), but I felt even more pressured because I was just a huge YouTube fan growing up. Because all of a sudden having all these people that I look up to, talking about me. That was like “I have to impress them even more” before it was like trying to gain audience. And now it's like impressing people that I look up to.

H: How terrifying.

E: Absolutely terrifying.

8:53 H: Nobody really mentions the pressure that comes along beside that moment (when you get famous). Because a lot of attention doesn't mean a lot of stability. It doesn't mean like “oh, you've arrived here, omg, here's a gift basket of everything you're going to need to know so you don't have a nervous breakdown”. Instead, it's like “you're in the great game now”.

14:35 H: There's the creative labour, which is “how do you continue working in a creative field”. The mental labour of “fuck, I have to edit this”. You know, but the emotional labour is what you encountered next. Which was “wow, I have all this attention. I have all this attention from people I respect.

E: Yeah, so after the coming out video, that's when I really went into “I have to top myself every week” and so I drained myself.

17:33 E: With YouTube, it wasn't just the videos anymore. Yeah, that's when the tour started happening. Interviews, conventions, events, award shows. For me, like, watching YouTube growing up, that was the dream. I'm like, ooh that seems like the lifestyle I want. And all the opportunities started coming for me after that. And I said yes to like every single one. Which was dumb, because

H: But you also didn't know any better. You can't ask a 19-year-old to have a healthy balance perspective between work and restoration. That's one of the things that concerns me about this industry. Very few credible representatives are looking after kids.

18:35 E: It was intense, and I felt like I could handle it because I felt that I was waiting for that. That's when everything started to crash. During high school and middle school, I was very fortunate, I didn't have bad mental health experiences. I had experienced being nervous but never like a nervous breakdown. 2018 was when I started experiencing all of that (panic attacks). I had my first panic attack on tour, and I was so confused cause I was alone. I didn't understand what was happening. I was crying, shaking, like, I don't understand what's happening.

H: If you feel comfortable, I'd love to, if you could walk us through that a little bit because panic and anxiety all feel different for everybody. Did you know it was a panic attack? What physically, what happened?

E: So, I was sitting in the hotel room, I had met everyone at the show, and we went back to our hotel room. My mom and brother were there. I remember just sitting there and I was feeling that I'm at the verge of tears. My vision became foggy. I felt like I was in a dream. Tingling everywhere. And I started shaking. I knew I was about to cry, so I was like, I got to leave the room because I don't like my mom seeing me like that. So, I went downstairs to the lobby, and I remember just shaking, I was like what's happening? What's happening? And I was trying to text people that like, I texted my friends Shannon and Dodie, they had experienced stuff like that, and so, I was like what's happening, because I feel like I knew it was something along the lines of anxiety or something like that. And I don't know what's happening, what's happening? I started hyperventilating, and my friend Corinna, she was a special guest on tour, she experiences anxiety. And so, I was trying to get her attention. I was like, she's not answering, she's not answering. I remember freaking out and by the time I got to her room, I just balled, balled and then, it stopped. And I felt like exhausted and tired, so I was just sitting there. I felt like defeated.

20:45 E: That started happening more regularly, and then it got to the point where I was like, I definitely was crying every night.

H: Aah, don't you hate, and I don't know if people, you guys experiences, don't you hate when you have anxiety or get panic attacks, and you get, I remember in the very

beginning, when I first, and I don't get anxiety, like, "I don't have anxiety". I mean, I can feel anxious, but it's not my resting state. When I first had a panic attack, I thought I was having an allergic reaction, and I went to the ER. And they were like, "no, you have a panic attack". And I was like, interesting. Never heard of it. I hadn't. I was like oh 'kay, well I'm not having a nervous breakdown, I'm not like in a psychotic state, so, I guess it has to not be that. But, when they start happening more regularly, even after you know it's happening, there's almost that feeling of knowing it's coming. And you're like "fuck, fuck fuck fuck" cause that's almost as distracting as the anxiety attack. Cause you're like, do I see it in the corner "oh god, don't look in the corner".

22:03 E: Playlist Live was the big one, where I was bad, bad. It feels like such a blur now, but I know like that's where I was very suicidal. And it was not, bringing that atmosphere, I don't know how to explain that.

H: Nothing feels lonelier than being around so many people.

E: Yes, and like, the hotel rooms, and being around people. Like, when we went on stage and feeling like an object. It doesn't feel natural.

23:09 E: I was drinking there (Canada), that's when I went home, I had like a very public breakdown. And that day I experienced the worst panic attack I've ever experienced. And I like blacked out. And that's when everyone kind of like, my management, and my family and friends, kind of like said, you have to cancel the rest of the tour, you're not doing anything for like a bit.

H: What happened, what do you mean by public?

E: I started drinking, in the morning, I was alone. And I just got drunk. And I snapped, and I made a video. And I said, basically you know along the lines of, I haven't seen it in a while, but it was like, something along the lines of like "Fuck. This. I was like, why am I so unhappy, this doesn't make any sense. I've just reached my goal, why am I so unhappy".

24:47 H: I as a mental health advocate would like to see more protection for our artists and creatives in this industry.

31:11 H: Remember that it's a battery, and batteries need to be recharged.

8.1.5 taking a break ... but I'll be back (Glam & Gore, Mykie)

7:42 The actual break that I'm going on has been planned for about a month now. Where I knew that this is when it was going to happen. However, I've been thinking about taking a break for something like this for about two years now. Let me start by saying that I don't think a break is a bad thing, inherently. I just know that a lot of Youtubers that have gone on breaks tend to get backlash for the break. I think that taking a break is really important for everyone, from work. I think that Youtubers are the kind of people that tend to work themselves into the ground, because for the most part they're entirely self-made and it comes from this drive within to do something that is very self-reliant, and while I think that that is a blessing in many ways, that I have that drive, it is also to my own detriment.

8:24 The fact of the matter is that I haven't taken a real break in five years. I tend to work harder on holidays because I feel like I need to put out a really big video for Christmas, especially Halloween. I have not been able to enjoy Halloween in the way that I really used to enjoy Halloween in about five years because it is now my busiest time of the year and not the most fun time of the year. And that's okay, because work is tough, and it takes that to do something like this job. But I think that trying to do my regular workload which already takes up a full week per video. And then trying to double it, with even bigger and better videos for Halloween usually just completely destroys me by the end of Halloween. I usually don't enjoy Halloween day-night, itself. I rarely enjoy my birthday as my actual birthday which is the day after Halloween, because I'm just so focused on (deep exhale) an exhale after August, September and October is over because I do start filming and planning for Halloween as early as August, sometimes a little bit earlier. So that's kind of two or three insane months and then my birthday is the day after it's over, so I just kind of decompress. And I don't know if you guys have noticed, but every year around the same time I am very late on a video, between my birthday Nov 1st and somewhere around Thanksgiving. That has never really been a planned break, that's been like a desperately need to breathe break. Because three Halloweens ago in 2015 it started with a panic attack that turned into debilitating anxiety for a few months because I overworked myself. I promised myself I would never do that again, and I have found a lot of different coping mechanisms to avoid that happening again, but I can sense that I'm getting to that point yet again especially after the fall and my injury. Losing all of my fitness progress,

emotional eating again, lots of other things are going on in my life that unfortunately, I can't talk about.

11:20 If I could give any advice to an aspiring Youtuber right now. I think one of the biggest mistakes I've made is I didn't have a backlog of films before things really picked up. If you can have a few extra videos to get ahead, so that you can take a real break and a real vacation, have real weekends when you really want them, that ends up being invaluable if your channel would to ever take off. And that's something I could've known ahead of time, and because of that, I've been in this constant race from week to week. And anytime something has come up, like, splitting your head open, it throws a huge wrench in an already very demanding job. I don't want pity and I don't want to complain about my job, I love my job.

8.1.6 Coming clean (Glam & Gore, Mykie)

5:04 Basically, I started out my channel doing things that were completely not sustainable for a week-to-week upload schedule. I left no time, not only for like a work-life balance but not even like a work - basic personal care balance. And I think part of that is that I competed in the Next Face Awards so early on in my journey on YouTube. So, I was competing and putting my all into this competition, because you know you get one shot at that, and I was going above and beyond and not sleeping and not eating and not showering a whole lot. Because I wanted to win. I think that both my audience that I built everything on and I came to expect needing to top that, or at least match that level. And I tried to do that for a couple of years until it absolutely destroyed me. And then eventually I just decided that I wanted to have fun with it, and also try to find a little bit better work-life balance. It is still not very good, but it's better. I also felt like I've taught every technique I knew how to teach at that point. Also, demonetization, what the fuck. That's been better too, luckily.

8.1.7 Simply Nailogical On Money VS Fame, Balancing 3 Jobs, & Avoiding Drama | Ep. 17 A Conversation With

B: Benjamin Mazowita

C: Cristine Rotenberg

P: Philip DeFranco

1:08:00 B: Like even with the demonetization stuff like I brought up again. Like, there are so many YouTubers who complain about demonetization all the time. I think that they are doing it in like a really cynical way and they would never tell their audiences, like, how much money they're actually making, right.

C: Yeah, sometimes they hide really how good they have it, just so they can gain sympathy, and I'm speaking generally like as a trend I have seen.

P: I can't believe you just did the vocal version of a subtweet, I can't believe you threw out that shade. No, yeah,

C: We see that because we know how much money a lot of these people are making. Again, we can just compare views, and we know how much they're making. But yet, they're complaining like how am I supposed to put food on the table, and they seek sympathy from their audience. Thing is like, dude, you have millions. But you're not open or transparent about that fact with your audience, so your audience just feels sympathy and feels like YouTube is robbing you of everything, which is far from the truth.

P: Yeah, I think that one of the main concerns that I, I won't come, I won't shit talk, because one – I definitely complain. For me, it's always like the suppression or lack of promotion that sometimes associated, even though it's two different systems. Regarding monetization and recommendation.

C: And transparency too, like I'm not saying that we shouldn't complain about the transparency issues or lack of communication, and of course there is merit to that. I'm just thinking specifically of some people who've said that YouTube's going to make them broke or they're going to be on the street. When that is so far from the truth.

P: I'm like, I'm trying to go through my catalogue *thinking noises*

C: Extreme examples, like I'm not thinking of you.

B: But like look at any time YouTube tweets or posts something on Instagram right, look at all the comments, right, it's a bunch of young kids freaking out and getting mad at YouTube. Why are they doing that, it's because the creators they watch and love and respect, are telling them that YouTube is fucking them over. And is that really a fair assessment of what's going on here. It's not that YouTube's perfect, like, we're not coming to this from like a Hale corporate perspective, right. But at the same time, I think I said it before, right, like there are so many people who have become millionaires of this platform that in no other walk of life would probably have come to that same success. How many, like, DIY girls who are just making their room look cute or like, you know

making their shirt into a crop top have become millionaires off of this platform.

P: Yeah, I mean I would say the counterpoint to it would be that there's a large benefit for YouTube, right, that even if a video has been demonetized it's still eyeballs that are on the site that hopefully will stay, and it's, I get what you're saying but it's like

B: They want your content to be monetized.

1:10:42 B: But you know, it's the long-term health of the platform they (YouTube) care about if they could monetize every video on the platform, of course, they'd do it because that's in their financial interest.

P: Sure, but then it's like yeah, to then see it from their point of view it's anytime there's monetization on something that even remotely shouldn't, they get hit by like the Wallstreet Journal, they get hit

C: Exactly, now they have to be far more conservative which I understand from like their business perspective that they had to do that.

P: Yeah, I think, yeah, if you're a creator, even if you have one to ten thousand subscribers you got to, especially at that point, because you might even be able to do better conversion numbers, like, you need to have some other stuff, right. I mean before Holo Taco, did you guys even do merchandise?

C: Yeah, we did a ton of merch actually.

P: Yeah, like that's a that's suck like an important thing, sponsorships are hard for some

C: Affiliate links too were big for me. I think that in beauty you see that way more.

Like, affiliate links, so I've always had that for five years after using nail polish products from whether it's Amazon or other companies that I have the affiliate relationship with. I just have a link and get a small commission.

P: Can the Amazon stuff actually move numbers? I've seen people do it, I've never tested it.

C: Yeah, I use it, but I use it extremely passively, like, I'm never like, shop the Amazon link. But like, I will put my camera equipment, just say like this is the camera I use, like, here's affiliate links. It's a small source, but it's, yeah, I see people buying like tea mug warmers because of me. Because I have an Amazon favourites page you can put together. So, it's like holo slippers, tea mug warmers, like nail oil on there, and people like buying all that from Amazon because of me.

8.1.8 What Happened to These YouTubers? | A Deep Dive into Burnout

2:52 One of the leading researchers on burnout, social psychologist Christina Maslach and colleagues measure burnout based on three different dimensions. The first dimension is exhaustion. *“It is like running on a treadmill and like it just keeps going faster and faster, and sometimes you need to slow down and you aren’t able to slow it down.”* (clip from an interview with Elle Mills). The second is cynicism or a negative attitude towards your job. *“What’s going on, why is being a YouTuber so fucked up?”* (clip from an h3 podcast, Ethan Klein). The third is inefficacy, where you have the feeling of reduced personal accomplishment in your job. *“My videos, I’ve just been very stagnant in quantity, or quality I should say. That is the issue for me. Yeah, I just like, how do I get out of this rut, because all my videos are like, a month ago all my videos were the same and I hated where I was at, and so it’s like how do I get out of there?”* (Jacksfilms in an interview on the h3 podcast). Together are the profile of burnout. According to Maslach, there are six indicators that predict when an individual may burnout. We can see some of these indicators in past creators who have left the platform and interestingly enough, these indicators are all in the nature of work that comes along with being a YouTuber. *“A lot of people who are doing YouTube for a living are living their dreams. Their dream jobs. They wanted to be filmmakers, they want to be entertainers, they wanted to be famous, and they wanted to make money doing it, and now they are doing that. And I think almost every YouTube Creator has felt tremendous guilt complaining about the aspects of that life, of that job, because we often know that the audience has difficulty understanding that. But I’ll remind everybody of the very old phrase to be careful what you wish for because you just might get it. And it may not be what you wanted. And it may not be what you needed. And sometimes, almost always, there’s a catch.”* (clip from a Boogie2988 video).

5:05 The first predictor, workload. When one has a hard time meeting the demands for a job, burnout is likely to happen. *“I would say, that after about a year of doing YouTube, I started to feel the stress and the weight of the job more than I ever had before. It started to feel like a job more than it ever had before.”* (clip from Laina’s, commonly known as overly attached girlfriend, video). Sure, you’re able to set your own schedule, but when everyone around you seems to surpass your channel because they upload so frequently, work so hard, it’s difficult not to feel the pressure to take a workload that you can’t handle.

“We are all putting out content on systems that reward us for putting out more, and more, and more content. And so, at some point. No matter if you think that you are above it, or not, you will hit that wall.” (clip from a Philip DeFranco video). It’s absolutely no surprise that the bulk of burnout videos came right on the tail end of the popularity of hustle culture and the daily vlog trend. Phrases that sum up hustle culture include the grind, don’t stop, be sleepless for a week or go all-in. You might have seen these types of entrepreneurs or creators on social media that promote maximum hard work. Nothing wrong with a little hard work, but when it comes to social media, things get tricky.

7:38 *“One of the tried and true formulas for remaining relevant on YouTube is to make a steady stream of content. Ideally daily, at least a few times a week, on a regular schedule that doesn’t have any breaks. And that expectation has led to a lot of people feeling like they cannot stop giving themselves to their audience. And if they do, they’re going to fade away into obscurity. And that struggle has led directly to the mental breakdown of a number of high-profile YouTubers, who have made videos about the meltdowns, the burnouts, that they are having.”* (Rhett McLaughlin on the Ear Biscuits-podcast).

9:25 Predictor number two is control or lack of. What’s even more crushing is when you work hard on a video and the video doesn’t do well. And sometimes, you don’t have control over that, because, at the end of the day, you’re at the mercy of the algorithm.

10:28 Predictor number three is the lack of rewards.

10:49 You see YouTubers like grav3yardgirl, who have been given advice to up the quality or production value of her content, in order to get views. But she didn’t do this. She didn’t, because it seems like she’d rather have this small amount of viewership and interact with the viewers that she already knows. This is a sufficient social reward for her. So, she sacrificed views for this interaction.

11:54 Prediction number four is community. This has to do with how much support a workplace gives their employees. If you’re solely a viewer, I think that YouTube is the perfect place to find a community that caters to whatever interests you have. For creators, a bulk of the job is done in isolation. Filming sometimes, writing, editing, managing emails, you name it. Because YouTube is so vast, support can feel impossible. YouTube does have community events, but it’s up to the Creator to go. It’s also only in certain

cities. Sometimes at those events as well it seems more like networking, and social climbing, rather than connection. The platform feels like this as a whole.

13:52 Predictor number five is unfairness. When things in the workplace feel unfair, burn-out is more likely.

14:17 This I think seems unavoidable in a space where people can constantly compare subscriber and view counts. When we look at something live VidCon, and I know that this isn't limited to YouTubers, but it is closely linked when we look at a place like that, some creators feel they are treated unfairly.

16:37 Predictor number six is values. Values describe one's motivation for applying to a job in the first place.

16:48 *"Right, there's that old saying: find a job that you'll enjoy, and you'll never work a day in your life. That is, it's, it's, it's a romantic notion, but it's fucking stupid. I understand the idea but doing what you love is still work. And in fact, because you love it, your self-worth is probably more closely connected to it, and many entrepreneurs and people who love what they do, put in way more hours than your average forty-hour workweek here in the United States."* (clip from a Philip DeFranco video).

17:42 *"So, burnout is like a canary in the coal mine, and when I say that, it's because when you put a canary in the coal mine, what happens if the canary has trouble breathing, doing anything, then it's not going to survive in that environment. It's a warning sign. It's of a toxic work environment and what you do, or should be doing, is focusing on making the environment less toxic. But instead, what we are doing with burnout, even though it's a sign of a toxic environment, people are often trying to make the canary stronger, and tougher, and resilient – you can take any fumes in this environment if you're just you know strong enough etc.. This is not the way to solve the problem of burnout."* (clip from a Maslach lecture). Maslach research has done wonders to help organizations keep employee morale up. But company changes for someone who is their own boss is difficult because you are the company essentially.

19:26 *"In my humble opinion, it is quality that leads to longevity. It's making meaningful work that will last. Not chasing clouds, not chasing relevancy today, but instead making work that an audience, that viewers, that people can believe in and get behind. That is*

how you build a long meaningful career. And I do think that that's something that's tremendously undervalued on YouTube". (clip from a Casey Neistat video).

20:23 *"I don't push myself anymore. I'm able to sense it, yeah, when I'm having a breakdown, and I'm feeling depressed, and I don't want to leave my room, and I'm like crying every day like that's when I know, I'm like okay, that has to stop. And also I have great people around me."* (Elle Mills on the Impulsive podcast). *"The thing that's most important is that you are picking a job or a thing, anything you do in life. You are picking a thing that you are willing to deal with the bad shit that comes from that. That's the most important thing for the long-term because this is reality and this is life, so there will always be problems, but you want the problems that you actually want."* (clip from a Philip DeFranco video).

9 SUMMARY IN SWEDISH – SAMMANFATTNING PÅ SVENSKA

9.1 Introduktion

Att vara YouTuber är drömyrket för många unga i dagens läge. Samtidigt ser vi antalet arbetsutmattade YouTubers öka. För många blir det också deras första jobb. Tufft att vara sin egen boss från första början. Dock är det där problemen ofta börjar. Men varför sker utmattningen då de äntligen fått allt de vill ha?

Målet med detta examensarbete är att undersöka arbetsutmattning bland YouTubers. Metoden är kvalitativ fallstudie. Forskningsfrågorna lyder:

- Varför är arbetsutmattning vanligt bland YouTubers?
- Hur visar sig arbetsutmattning för YouTubers?
- Kunde arbetsutmattning förebyggas?

Erfarenheter av fem YouTubers i tjugo-trettioårs åldern som öppet talat om arbetsutmattning analyseras. Ord som uppkommer bland flera fall delas i tre kategorier: känslor, orsaker och lösningar. Dessa nyckelord binds vidare ihop med tidigare undersökning både om arbetsutmattning och specifikt arbetsutmattning inom den kreativa branschen. Från den informationen dras slutsatser.

Strukturen av denna sammanfattning följer det egentliga arbetets struktur. Därmed används inga källhänvisningar, läsaren hänvisas till huvudtexten.

9.2 Tidigare forskning

Arbetsutmattning mäts i tre dimensioner: utmattning, cynisk eller negativ attityd mot arbetet och ineffektivitet vilket är känslan av nedsatt personlig prestation. Däröver finns det sex förebud för arbetsutmattning: arbetsmängd (för mycket arbete, för litet resurser); kontroll (brist på influens, ansvarighet utan makt); Belöning (för liten lön, erkännande eller tillfredsställelse); gemenskap (isolering, konflikt, respektlöshet); rättvisa (diskriminering, favoritism); och värden (etiska konflikter, meningslösa uppgifter).

Enligt tidigare studier kan användning av sociala medier påverka ångest och depression negativt. I synnerhet om det utvecklas till addiktion. Undersökningen nämnde inte specifikt YouTubers, men det är uppenbart att producera videon och viljan att underhålla tittarna kan utvecklas till addiktion. Det leder lätt till isolering, vilket är bort från off-line social kontakt. Om det finns en balans mellan on-line och off-line social kontakt, kan internet ha en positiv inverkan på en individs välmående. Använt i måtta kan förbättra social kapital.

Vi är vana att publicera glada och positiva saker om oss själva på sociala medier. Detta kan vara farligt. Att visa sig positiv hela tiden alienerar oss från våra känslor. YouTubers berättar att det inte känns äkta då de försökt göra glada videon medan de i verkligheten känt sig eländiga. Negativa känslor är lika viktiga som positiva känslor och de borde inte kränkas.

Som behandling och förebyggande metoder för arbetsutmattnings finns det många rekommendationer. Dessa inkluderar att minska på arbetsbelastningen, hålla mera pauser, undvika övertidsarbete, utnyttja avslappningsmetoder, främja god hälsa och kondition och utveckling av självförståelse genom självreflektion.

9.3 Empiri

För denna undersökning valdes fem YouTubers med erfarenhet av arbetsutmattnings för analys. Alla arbetar heltid med att producera YouTube-videon, prenumerantmängden varierar från 1,85 miljoner till 23,4 miljoner. I detta kapitel presenterar jag dem kort.

Sean McLoughlin, känd som Jacksepticeye on-line vände sin arbetsutmattnings till en rörelse som uppmanar till positiv mental attityd och med hjälp av sina tittare har han insamlat kring tre miljoner euro för olika välgörenheter. Allt började med att arbetsutmattnings blivit för svår. Dag efter dag kände han sig usel och förstod inte varför. Genom terapi och självreflektion kom han fram till att arbetsutmattnings berodde på olösta emotionella problem. McLoughlin kände ångest, att han inte har mål i livet, utmattad, usel och uttömd. Han var också orolig över att göra publiken besviken.

Casey Neistat lät sin arbetsutmattning gå så långt, att han slutade använda sociala medier helt för att återuppbygga sig. Han hade tanken att arbetsutmattning endast sker för svaga människor, och att det därför aldrig skulle hända honom. Neistat var hela tiden på dåligt humör och började se hur det inverkade människorna omkring honom. Han insåg att han använde sin fru och sitt barn för att få mer visningar. Hjärnan gick på övervarv, Neistat kunde inte sluta tänka på video-idéer. Då Neistat förstod att det var ingen skillnad om hans tittare väntar på honom eller inte, kunde han slappna av. Det kommer alltid att finnas människor av annan åsikt.

Elle Mills drömyrke var att bli YouTuber. Då hon uppnått sitt mål, kraschade hon totalt. Hon förstod inte varför innan familj och vänner sade stopp. Hon hade känt sig deprimerad och ångestfylld en tid, och de eskalerade så långt att hon tänkte begå självmord. Problemet kulminerades då hon gick live i ett psykiskt sammanbrott. Hon hade druckit alkohol sedan hon vaknade, grät och skrek om hur eländig hon kände sig och att hon inte förstod varför. I efterhand är det klart, att ökande mängden arbete och erbjudanden hon inte klarade av att neka ledde till arbetsutmattningen. Hon fick panikångest, panikattacker, och kände sig inhuman, som ett objekt.

Hannah Harts upplevelser med ångest och panikattacker på grund av stress började innan hon visste vad en panikattack är. Hart säger att man känner sig mer ensam än någonsin, då man känner sig miserabel bland människor. Hart trodde att hennes första panikattack var en allergisk reaktion och gick till akutmottagningen. Hon blev snabbt diagnostiserad och hade reaktionen ”that makes sense” (det låter vettigt). Hart önskar mer skydd för YouTubers. Ingen lär om tidsplanering eller balans mellan arbetsliv och fritid.

Mykie hade överarbetat sig fem år i rad innan hon höll sin första planerade semester. Mykie publicerar en video i veckan, och för Halloween vill hon göra många större videon, för Halloween är hennes favorithelg. Normalt går hela arbetsveckan till en så kallad normal video, och så dubblar hon arbetsmängden från och med planering i maj-juni tills Halloween är över. Hon hade inte njutit av varken Halloween eller sin födelsedag som är dagen efter Halloween på fem år. Hon var rädd för det negativa som kommer från att ta en paus, och därför flyttade hon upp pausen så länge. Hon upplevde panikattacker, svår ångest och ätstörningar. Hon hade för höga förväntningar, arbetade för långa dagar, och

det började kännas som om hon inte hade något mera att lära sina tittare. Hennes råd för YouTubers som ännu är i startgroparna, är att ha ett litet arkiv av videon som kan publiceras då som en paus är nödvändig. Då behöver det nödvändigtvis inte bli paus på YouTube-kanalen.

9.4 Resultat och diskussion

Gemensamma känslor som uppkom bland fallen, och som kunde bindas ihop med tidigare undersökning om arbetsutmattning uppkom. Majoriteten upplevde för mycket press, ångest, panikattacker och att de var totalt utmattade. Dessutom var flera rädda över att svika sina tittare, flera förnekade deras utmattning och kände helt enkelt att de höll på att bli galna.

De vanligaste orsakerna för arbetsutmattning visade sig vara emotionella problem som inte blivit lösta och brist av fritid. Bristen av fritid ledde ofta till inga sociala kontakter off-line. Sista gemensamma orsaken var rädslan av criticism. Den rädslan kommer från tanken att man ska alltid bara vara tacksam över att få jobba med sitt drömyrke.

Den populäraste lösningen var att hitta balans mellan arbetsliv och fritid. Till det hör hobbyn, som flera funnit hjälp av. Andra lösningar var terapi, självreflektion, att vara öppen och medicinsk behandling vilka ofta är kopplade ihop.

Resultaten skiljde sig då det kom till tidigare undersökning om YouTuber arbetsutmattning, och arbetsutmattning bland mer traditionella entreprenörer inom den kreativa branschen. Skillnaden hade att göra med oro över ekonomi. Fallen i denna studie hade inte upplevt det som ett problem, medan det visat sig vara ett problem för andra i liknande situationer.

Det visar sig att arbetsutmattning bland YouTubers är vanligt för att de har så hög moral och stor passion mot sitt jobb, men också för att flera hade obeslutade emotionella problem. Alla fall i denna studie hade nått sitt mål, allt de ville ha, och inget att oroa sig över. Ja, på ytan. Alla fall säger dock att de kommer i fortsättningen att ta bättre hand om sig själva och att de aldrig kommer att totalt sluta göra videon, så länge det är upp till dem.

9.5 Slutsatser

Det finns flera fysiska och psykiska orsaker till att YouTubers kan bli arbetstutträttade, men framför allt ser det ut att handla om brist på information, och missförståelse om arbetsutträttning. Hög moral och passion för jobbet var en annan ledande faktor.

Begränsade generaliseringar kan göras fastän undersökningen hade ett litet sampel. Generaliseringar av orsaker kan appliceras för andra YouTubers som har nått ekonomisk stabilitet. Generaliseringen kan inte appliceras för alla YouTubers, eftersom tidigare undersökning fått avvikande resultat.

Arbetsutträttning diskuteras mycket inom den kreativa branschen, men statistiken är homogen eller anekdotisk. Allmänt är arbetsutträttning studerat bland läkare, sjukskötare, poliser, lärare och liknande. Därmed kunde vidare undersökning mäta hur vanligt arbetsutträttning är inom den kreativa branschen och jämfört med andra branscher.