Burnout: Pitfalls & Prevention for Academic Administrators in Psychiatry

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Acknowledgements & COI

• Center for Professional Health
• Previous workshops @ Vanderbilt
• A New You!

• COI:
  – Charlene M. Dewey, has no financial conflicts of interest.

Women in Health Care
Women in Health Care

- Women make up the majority of the health care industry\(^4\)
- Women physicians more prone to anxiety, stress, depression in the workplace\(^2,3\)
- Women MD more likely to commit suicide\(^1\)
- Women ≠ Men: \[\frac{\text{Women}}{\text{Men}}\]

2. Health of Faculty in Academic Medicine, 2009

"If momma ain't happy…. ain't nobody happy!"

Reflection

1. Are you stressed at work?
2. Are you thriving or just surviving?
3. Would you like to see improvement in your current mental, physical, emotional or spiritual wellbeing?
Goals

The purpose of this session is to:
1. Assist administrators with focusing on their wellness.
2. Review definitions of stress and burnout, risk factors for and symptoms of burnout.
3. Create an individual action plan to help reduce stress, prevent burnout, and improve overall health and wellness.

Objectives

1. Reflect on your current state of wellness, your stressors and if you are at risk of burnout.
2. Identify ways to prevent burnout.
3. List ways to enhance your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellness.

Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Stress and Burnout
3. Professional Health and Wellness Spectrum
4. Individual Action Plans
5. Summary/Evaluation
Self-Awareness

“Self-awareness means having a deep understanding of one’s emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives. People with strong self-awareness are neither overly critical nor unrealistically hopeful. Rather, they are honest – with themselves and with others.”


Self-Assessments

- What stresses you out?
- Measure your stress level on the stress-o-meter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stress free</th>
<th>Stressed out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>Ready to cave in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Anxious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>Exhausted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>Overwhelmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready to go</td>
<td>At the breaking point</td>
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</table>

Stress & Burnout

- Stress and burnout occurs for different reasons in different individuals.
- Work load ≠ level of stress or burnout in all situations.
- Multifactorial
Definition - Stress

- Stress can be defined as:
  - d : a state resulting from a stress; especially: one of bodily or mental tension resulting from factors that tend to alter an existent equilibrium <job-related stress>

~Webster's Dictionary

Stress & Productivity

- Prolonged Stress
- Reduced Cognition
- "Impairment"

Work-Place Stress

Reduce work-place stress by:
- Managing your energy
- Reducing distractions
- Planning appropriately
- Managing failures and successes
Definition - Burnout

- Burnout can be defined as:
  - a: exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration
  - b: a person suffering from burnout.

  ~Webster's Dictionary

Burnout

“In the current climate, burnout thrives in the workplace. Burnout is always more likely when there is a major mismatch between the nature of the job and the nature of the person who does the job.”

~Christina Maslach

The Truth About Burnout: How Organizations cause Personal Stress and What to Do About It. Maslach & Leiter pg 9; 1997

Six Sources of Burnout

1. Work overload
2. Lack of control
3. Insufficient reward
4. Unfairness
5. Breakdown of community
6. Value conflict

Risk Factors for Burnout

- Single
- Gender/sexual orientation
- ># of children at home
- Family problems
- Mid-late career
- Previous mental health issues (depression)
- Fatigue & sleep deprivation
- General dissatisfaction
- Alcohol and drugs
- Minority/international
- Teaching & research demands
- Potential litigation

Symptoms of Burnout

1. Chronic exhaustion
2. Cynical and detached
3. Increasingly ineffective at work
4. Leads to:
   1. isolation
   2. avoidance
   3. interpersonal conflicts
   4. high turnover

Spectrum of Disruptive Behaviors

- Aggressive
  - Inappropriate anger, threats
  - Yelling, publicly degrading team members
  - Intimidating staff, patients, colleagues, etc.
  - Pushing, throwing objects
  - Swearing
  - Outburst of anger & physical abuse

- Passive
  - Chronically late
  - Failure to return calls
  - Inappropriate
  - Inappropriate chart notes
  - Non-participation
  - B-prepared, not prepared

- Passive-Aggressive
  - Hostile notes, emails
  - Derogatory comments about institution, hospital, group, etc.
  - Inappropriate joking
  - Sexual Harassment
  - Complaining, blaming

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Two systems interact

The external system
- Functional & nurturing
- Work Environment
- Individual

The internal system
- Good skills
- Dysfunctional
- Poor skills

"The Perfect Storm"

Work Environment

- Powerful model how practice environment can impact physician health
- Stress: physician, environment, patients
- Environment was the only sig predictor of stress
- Job stress predicts job satisfaction
- Job sat is positive predictor of positive mental health
- Perceived stress was a stronger predictor of both poorer reports of physical and mental health
- Therefore, environment influenced health


Stress Management

- Seven Key Areas Help Manage Stress:
  - Sleep
  - Balanced meals
  - Physical activity
  - Socialization
  - Vacations/down times
  - Spiritual engagement
  - Have a physician
Protective Factors

- **Personal:**
  - Tend to self care issues first
  - Address Maslach’s 6 sources of burnout
  - Influence happiness through personal values and choices
  - Adapt a healthy philosophy/outlook
  - Spend time with family & friends

Protective Factors

- A supportive spouse or partner
- Engage in religious or spiritual activity
- Hobbies
- Mentor (s)

Protective Factors

- **Work:**
  - Address Maslach’s 6 sources of burnout
  - Gain control over environment & workload
  - Find meaning in work
  - Set limits and maintain balance
  - Have a mentor
  - Obtain adequate support systems
“Natural abilities which come easily, are enjoyable to do, and result in a sense of inner satisfaction and meaningfulness.”

~Nick Isbister

Managing Energy at Work

- Listen to your body
- Identify your own needs
- Define limits - Just Say NO!
- Create your work environment
- Eliminate distractions
- Take breaks
- Plan ahead

Managing Energy: Case Discussion

Ms D is a 46 yo female with 2 kids and a spouse with significant travel/work schedule. She is a mid-level administrator for a psychiatric department chair and is involved in several community activities. Ms D finds emails and other interruptions distracting and is feeling stressed due to changes in the department, a grant, and several other submissions and activities in the office that are due in the next 6 weeks. She has cut down on sleep and exercise to meet the deadlines.

- What are her risk factors for burnout?
- Will this lead to burnout?
- What changes could we suggest to control energy at work?
Managing Energy: Case Discussion

- Examples:
  - Check emails only twice a day – planned checks
  - Define blocks of time 60-120 min each
  - Walk, stretch and bathroom breaks
  - Define grant writing periods – block out on calendar
  - Schedule vacations in advance
  - Coordinate with spouse/family
  - Continue self-care and socializing/spirituality

Preventing & Resolving Burnout

**Individual Approach**
- Starts with person
- Becomes group project
- Connects to organization
- Outcome affects related mismatches
- Outcome is a process

**Organizational Approach**
- Starts with management
- Becomes organizational project
- Connects to people
- Outcomes affects related mismatches
- Outcome is a process

Figure 5.1 (pg 80) Maslach, C & Leiter, MP. “The Truth About Burnout: How Organizations Cause Personal Stress and What to do About It.” 1997

The Truth About Burnout

“The twin goals of preventing and building engagement are possible and necessary in today’s working world. These goals cannot be easily achieved by an individual. Rather, people have to work together to make them happen. And if we all commit ourselves to the long-term process of organizational progress, we will be rewarded with workplaces that are more productive and resilient as well as humane.”

~Maslach & Leiter, pg 127
Dewey’s Professional Health & Wellness Spectrum

High Functioning

Fair Functioning

Decreasing Productivity

Relationships Suffer

Reduced Productivity

Fair-Not Functioning

Risk of MH issues and suicide

No Coping Mechanisms

Professionally Healthy & Well

Stressed Coping Mechanisms Strong

Burnout Coping Mechanisms Failing

Institution & Family Loses

Burnout: Pitfalls & Prevention

• Expressing need = weakness
• Pretend you’ve got it all together
• Suck it up!
• For the greater good.
• More, faster, bigger, better!
• Your selfish if you take time for yourself
• Saying “no” = laziness

The greatest strength of any institution is it’s people!

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The Ethics of Self-Care

“The medical academy’s primary ethical imperative may be to care for others, but this imperative is meaningless if it is divorced from the imperative to care for oneself. How can we hope to care for others, after all, if we ourselves, are crippled by ill health, burnout or resentment?”


The Ethics of Self-Care

“…medical academics must turn to an ethics that not only encourages, but even demands care of self.”


The Ethics of Self-Care

1. Should you be ethically obligated to care for ourselves?
2. Do you feel empowered to demand your own self care?
“The first wealth is health.”

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Professional Health & Wellness

- Share a story about a time when you felt you had achieved a good level of work-life balance. What worked for you?
  - List several

Vanderbilt Resources

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<th>Focus</th>
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<td>FPWC</td>
<td>Faculty and Physician Wellness</td>
<td>All issues of professional health</td>
<td>Charlene Dewey</td>
<td>x6-0678</td>
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<td>Treatment &amp; counseling for faculty</td>
<td>Mary Yarbrough</td>
<td>X8-1327</td>
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<td>CPH</td>
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<td>Training physicians</td>
<td>Bill Swiggart</td>
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<tr>
<td>VCAP</td>
<td>Vanderbilt Comprehensive Assessment Program for Professionals</td>
<td>Fit for duty assessments and treatment</td>
<td>Reid Finlayson</td>
<td>X2-4967</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPPA</td>
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<td>Identification and assistance</td>
<td>Jerry Hickson</td>
<td>X2-4500</td>
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Resources

- Primary care provider
- Private counseling services
- Institutional employee programs
- Substance services: AA, NA, etc
- 1-800-273-TALK: suicide prevention hotline
- Other:
  - YMCA/YWCA, Massage envy, wellness programs
  - Center for Women in Medicine

Individual Action Plan

1. Reflect
2. Self-assess: stress level/burnout
3. List three self-care areas to improve
4. List three ways to manage your energy
5. Identify a resource you will use if needed.
6. Define your plan:
   Specific and clear  Plan/Timetable
   Behavior not attitude  What are your personal barriers?
   Something you can count  When will you start?
References

1. ACP Ethics Manual
2. AMA Code of Ethics
3. The 2007 Physician Charter

Burnout: Pitfalls & Prevention

Take Home Points

1. You are valuable! Self-care is the foundation to your vitality at home and work.
2. Look for and anticipate stress. Take action immediately to manage stress and energy.
3. Recall the 6 sources of burnout and seek ways to prevent burnout in the workplace.
4. Take advantage of resources when needed – esp MH!

True thriving is...

“Embracing the truth of who you are so that you can freely receive, give, and hope, regardless of your circumstances.”

~Debbie Smith, M.A.
Center for Women in Medicine