

REACH FOR RESILIENCE

BURNOUT TOOLKIT

The Reach for Resilience team composed this guide after synthesizing available information and research on burnout and strategies to prevent and combat burnout in the workplace. Sources for this guide are included at the end of this document.



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BURNOUT TOOLKIT

Definitions ¹

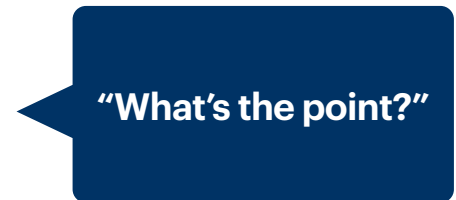
EXHAUSTION

A chronic state of physical and emotional depletion, lack of energy.



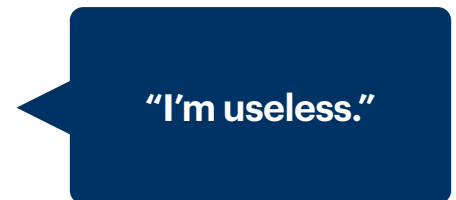
CYNICISM

Having negative or indifferent attitudes toward work, feeling alienated, having become irritable, lost idealism, and being withdrawn.



INEFFICACY

Originally called "reduced personal accomplishment", is described as reduction in productivity or capability, low morale, and inability to cope.



ENGAGEMENT

- ▶ First defined as the positive opposite of burnout.
- ▶ High energy, strong involvement, and sense of professional effectiveness.
- ▶ Engagement by another approach is defined as a persistent, positive affective-motivational state of fulfillment comprised of vigor, dedication and absorption.

¹ Maslach (2017)

Myths busted

“I DON’T HAVE TIME FOR SELF-CARE.”¹

It is helpful to refocus on the tangible benefits.



How would I feel differently if I focused on improving my sleep, emotion regulation, diet, exercise, etc.?

When stressed, our amygdala kicks in and diverts resources from the prefrontal cortex — the exact area we need to be online and functional if we are to think big, innovate, and solve problems.



Taking breaks—even “micro-breaks”—can improve focus and attention, prevent decision fatigue, and strengthen motivation.

“SELF-CARE IS SELF-INDULGENT.”²

Self-care is a data driven investment that can increase overall productivity and effectiveness as a staff member and as a leader.

There is a myth that to be a strong leader means you shouldn’t need self-care.



If the strongest leader you knew was struggling with stress, what would you advise them to do?



How has taking some time for yourself benefitted you or your team in the past?

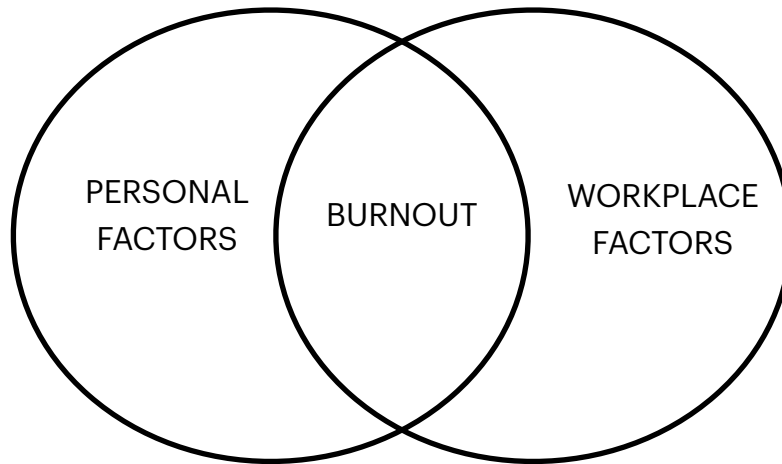


If you didn’t need the help, but you just wanted to recharge your battery, how would you do that?

¹ Neale (2020)

² Schabram & Heng (2021)

Key lessons from burnout research ¹



- ▶ Workplace programs that specifically target relevant burnout issues and not just general health issues have a positive impact.
- ▶ Interventions designed for the entire organization are more likely to result in successful outcomes.
- ▶ Social relationships are important influencers on job performance and the elements of burnout.

Provider ↔ Recipient

Coworker ↔ Coworker

Employee ↔ Manager/Supervisor

Workers ↔ Family members/Friends

- ▶ Locklear et al (2020) looked into addressing negativity in the workplace, as it related to COVID 19 pandemic. Their study showed that gratitude interventions, like daily gratitude journaling for two weeks, worked to decrease workplace rudeness by enhancing self-control. They then replicated this study and expanded beyond rudeness to how frequently participants gossiped or ostracized coworkers and found all of these negative behaviors were reduced with a gratitude practice.

¹ Maslach 2017

Evidence based Assessment for burnout

MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY (MBI)

Recommendations

PREVENTION: CULTURE OF ADDRESSING BURNOUT ¹

3 kinds of prevention strategies:

1. Eliminate or modify worksite stressors. *Goal:* reduce incidence of new cases.
2. Help people manage/cope with worksite stresses. *Goal:* reducing prevalence of job stress/burnout.
3. Treat people who are already suffering from worksite stresses. *Goal:* reducing residual deficits following stress or burnout

Building engagement is the best approach



How can this be made a great place to work, and a workplace of choice?



What would make people want to work here and be fully engaged with their job?

COMBAT BURNOUT INDIVIDUAL INTERVENTIONS

SUSTAINING YOUR CALLING ²

- Balance idealism and pragmatism
- Focus on viable goals through the use of “SMART goals”.
- Think of your calling as a marathon, and not a sprint.

¹ Maslach (2017)

² Schabram & Maitlis (2017)

- Don't isolate yourself, try to empathize with coworkers, asking yourself:



“Is it that they don't care, or are they simply overwhelmed right now and could use a helping hand?”

- Seek out allies with whom you can speak freely to resolve the wear and tear of your work.
- Have a rich life outside of work, regularly stepping away from your calling to ensure its not the singular focus of our life.
- Set boundaries and don't cross them.

ORGANIZATIONAL INTERVENTIONS

As leaders, we want to foster collaboration, community, and prosocial behaviors. We can do so in following these concepts: ¹



Invite — Make first moments matter; invite staff to identify what resources or contributions they can make to the environment (e.g., skills, ideas, insights, etc); build two-way curiosity.



Share — Create space for shared experiences.



Attend— Ask questions that affirm and expand; respond in ways that are open and non-evaluative; connecting thoughts and experiences between staff; demonstrate safety for sharing.

Especially marking moments of discovery, i.e., what we are “struck by.” Shotton (2013) calls these “arresting moments” as we actively engage through sharing Insights, things that are “deeply puzzling, feels wrong, or unexplained.”



Reveal— Display some form of genuine vulnerability, since vulnerability builds trust, use appropriate and relevant disclosure, share power in solution finding, build a shared sense of who is in the community, indicate the possibility for empathic insight, and use relationally responsive communication over time.

¹ Dutton, et al. (2020)

FOSTER A CULTURE OF GRATITUDE ¹

Building a better workplace starts by saying “thanks.” A culture of gratitude boosts well-being and performance, and reduces or eliminates workplace mistreatment.

Leaders should serve as role models for gratitude, should make it genuine, and should signal a commitment through action. This helps to counteract idea that gratitude is “hokey” or “trite”.



Make time and space for gratitude. This can be an appreciation wall, or an ongoing digital means for recognizing others and giving kudos through online platforms like Webex, Teams, e-mail, etc.



Start meetings with gratitude check-ins. When staff participate, they create social proof that encourages the ambivalent ones to do the same.



Allow employees to interact with beneficiaries and hear directly from people who benefit from their work— such as patients and their families, among others.



Form gratitude groups, involving staff attending sessions to discuss, write about, and practice expressing gratitude through role-play.



Writing a thank you letter to someone and reading it aloud to them.



Gratitude journaling — taking a few minutes each day to write about things, people, and events you’re thankful for in your life.

SUPPORTING YOUR EMPLOYEES’ CALLING ²

Calibrate candidates’ expectation. Provide a realistic job preview. Highlight challenges candidate(s) will like encounter. During onboarding, share ways others have successfully negotiated the described challenges.

Channel passion into constructive outlets.

Harness the energy. Matching mentorships, assigning special projects, and soliciting suggestions can help prevent frustration and maximize contributions.

Keep on it. Employees with a “calling” face multiple “waves” of challenges, beginning with limits on their own work (such as a lack of training or experience) and gradually learning about broader organizational constraints.

¹ Locklear, et al (2020)

² Schabram & Maitlis (2017)

References

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