

Burnout Prevention

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Agenda

- Define burnout and explain how it differs from stress
- Describe common physical, mental, and emotional responses to high levels of stress
- Describe common signs of burnout
- Discuss strategies of coping with or preventing burnout

Definition of Stress

- The body's response to a challenging event
- It involves *too much*: too many pressures that demand too much of you physically and psychologically
- Yet hope still remains that once you get everything under control, you will feel better

Definition of Burnout

- A physical, mental, and emotional reaction to constant levels of high stress
- It is about *not having enough* (e.g., unable to meet constant demands, feeling empty, little to no motivation, beyond caring)
- Sadness, indifference, or anger can set in
- You can also feel hopeless, powerless, and stagnant
- Burnout is common in occupations with high stress demands on our time and energy, or when we feel others are reliant upon us

Stress vs. Burnout

Stress	Burnout
Characterized by overengagement	Characterized by underengagement
Emotions are overreactive	Emotions are blunted
Produces urgency and hyperactivity	Produces helplessness and hopelessness
Loss of energy	Loss of motivation, ideals, and hope
Leads to anxiety disorders	Leads to detachment and depression
Primary damage is physical	Primary damage is emotional
May kill you prematurely	May make life seem not worth living

Source: www.helpguide.org/

Symptoms of Stress and Burnout

- **Physical Symptoms**

- Low energy/exhaustion
- Insomnia or oversleeping
- Muscle tension
- Decrease/increase in appetite
- Headaches
- Decreased sexual drive
- High blood pressure
- Heart attacks
- Teeth grinding
- Fatigue
- Digestive problems
- Rashes/itching
- Frequent urination
- Frequent colds

- **Behavioral Symptoms**

- Isolating from others
- Procrastinating
- Skipping work or coming in late and leaving early
- Using food, drugs, or alcohol to cope
- Taking out your frustrations on others

- **Emotional Symptoms**

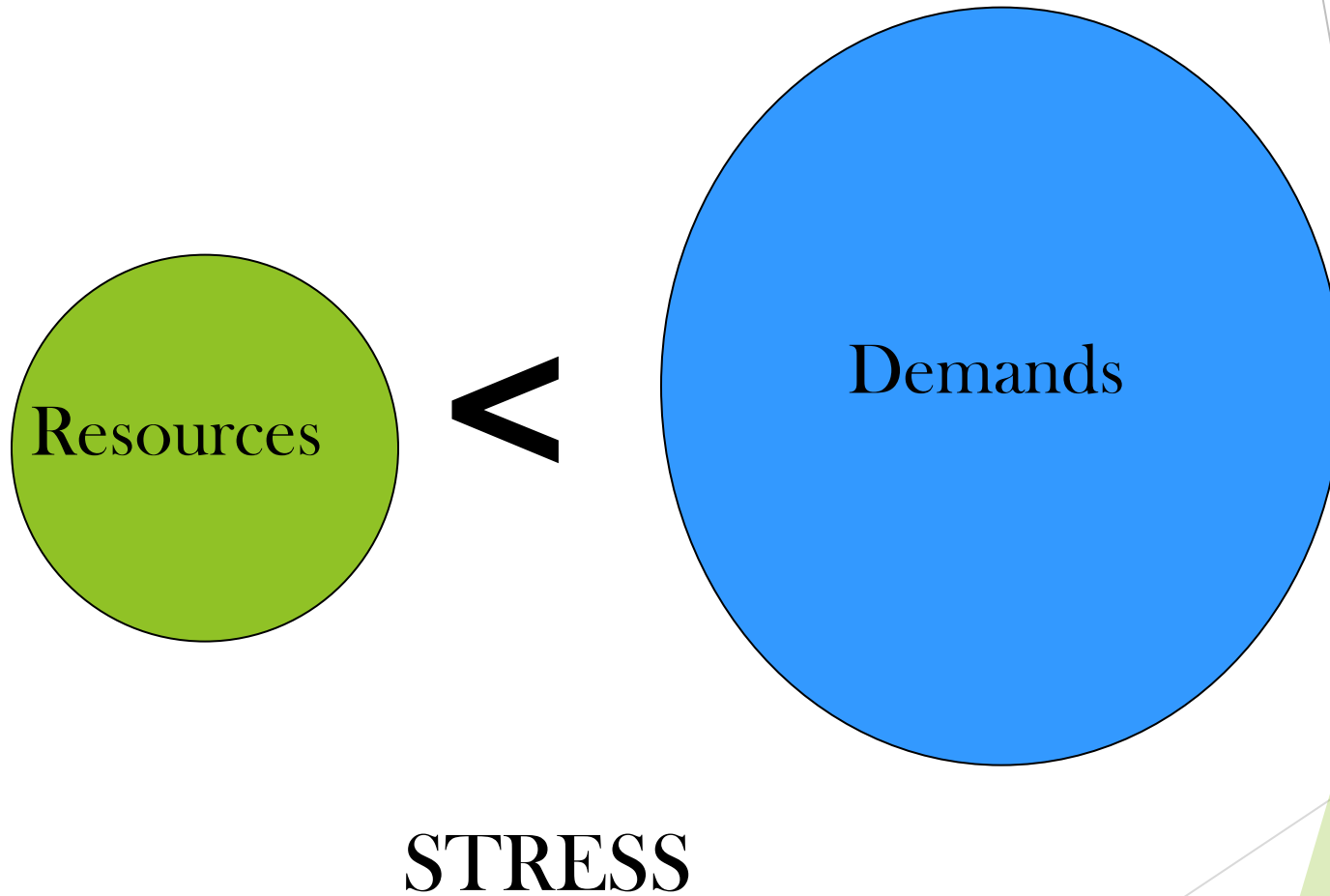
- Overwhelmed
- Irritable
- Anxiety
- Depressed
- Bored
- Resentment for having too much to do
- Feeling incompetent/inadequate
- Feeling stuck

Signs of Burnout

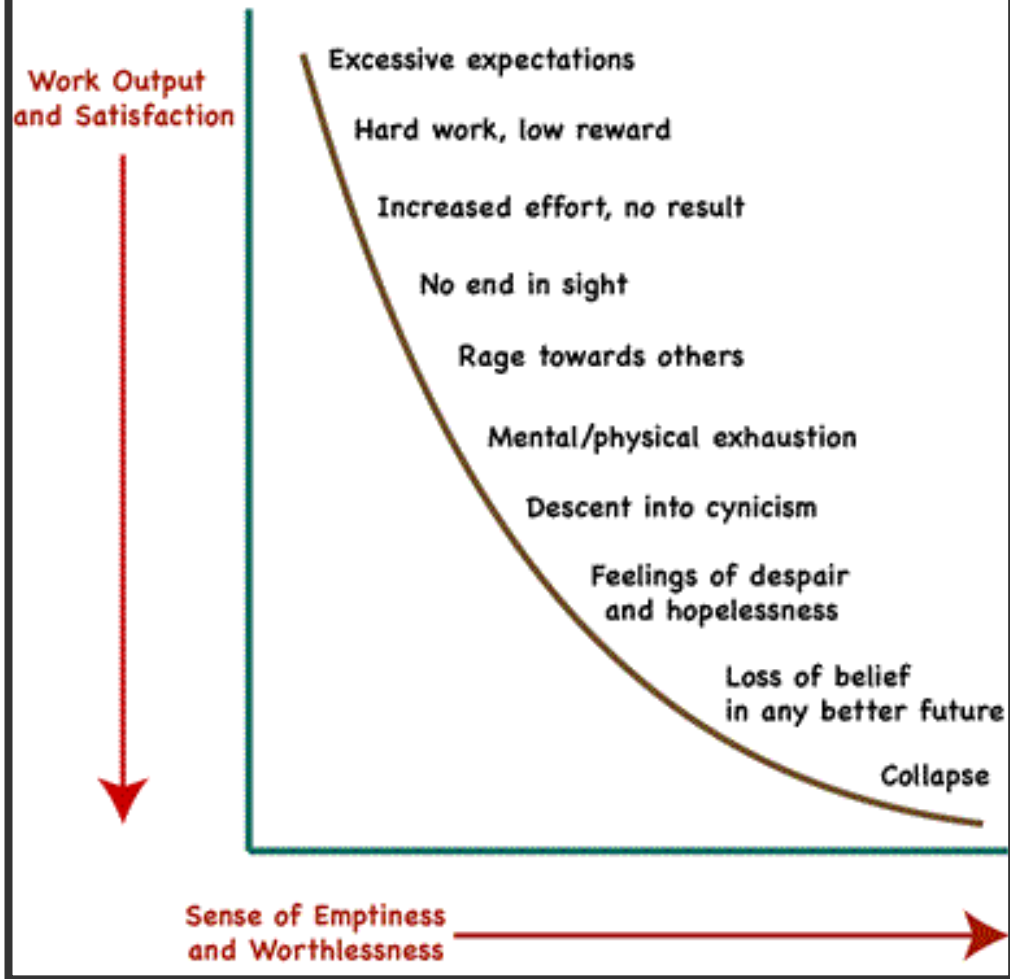
- Do you find yourself:
 - Dreading going to work in the morning?
 - Feeling easily annoyed or irritated by your students or co-workers?
 - Feeling envious of people who are content at work?
 - Feeling easily bored with your job?
 - Work that you once found enjoyable now feels mundane?
 - Have you become more cynical/bitter about your job or school?
 - Are non-work relationships being affected by your feelings about work?
 - Are you caring less now than you used to about doing a “good job” at work?
 - Do you regularly experience fatigue/low energy levels at work?
 - Do you tend to feel sad on Sunday afternoons because you have to work on Monday?

Source: <http://www.helpguide.org>

Understanding stress/burnout



THE BURNOUT CURVE



Preventing Burnout

- The “Three R” Approach
- **Recognize:** watch for warning signs of burnout
- **Reverse:** undo the damage by managing stress and seeking support
- **Resilience:** build your resilience to stress by taking care of your physical and emotional health

Tips

- **Start the day with a relaxing ritual**
- **Adopt healthy eating, sleeping habits, and exercising**
- **Set boundaries - say “no” when your plate is full**
- **Take a daily break from technology**
- **Nourish your creative side**
- **Learn how to manage stress**
- **Take charge - have a plan, organize, set realistic goals & avoid too high expectations**
- **Don't expect perfection from yourself**
- **Take time off - use your sick days and vacation days and use them to do things you enjoy**
- **Don't let your job define you**

Stress Management Strategies

- Deep Breathing
 - To counter unhelpful breathing that increases stress response
- Visualization
- Meditation
- Micro self-care strategies (little and often)
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
 - Passive or active



Deep breathing and Mindfulness Meditation

Let's practice!