Professional Burnout and Personal Recovery

What is Professional Burnout?

- A condition characterized by
  - Emotional Exhaustion
  - Depersonalization
  - Decreased sense of personal accomplishment
Who does it effect?

- Individuals whose work involves constant demand

- Professionals whose job requires intense interactions with people who have a great deal of physical and emotional needs
Common Symptoms

- Feeling Emotionally Depleted
- Poor Judgment
- Cynicism
- Poor Health
- Sleep disturbances
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Headaches
- Impaired Job Performance
- Irritability
- Marital difficulties
- Hypertension
- Myocardial infarction
- Aggressiveness and Short Temper
- Apathy and Isolation
- Poor Concentration
- Indecisiveness
- May Contribute to Alcoholism and Drug Addiction
Burnout Represents a Deterioration of *Values*, *Dignity*, *Spirit*, & *Will*

*It is an Erosion of the Soul*

*The Silent Anguish of the Healers*
How is Professional Burnout defined?
Emotional Exhaustion

- This leads to an inability to fully engage with the many aspects of the job but, particularly, with those involving interaction.

- Speech may become flattened and body and facial gestures diminished as the person becomes less responsive to the demands of the situation of a professional interaction.
Depersonalization

This is a tendency to depersonalize those with whom one is forced to interact so that patients are seen less as individuals and situations become simply part of the routine.
Lack of Personal Accomplishment

This usually accompanies burnout. The individual will tend to feel little sense of achievement in relation to the job, even if the reality is very different.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stress</th>
<th>Burnout</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characterized by over-engagement</td>
<td>Characterized by disengagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotions are over-reactive</td>
<td>Emotions are blunted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Produces urgency and hyperactivity</td>
<td>Produces helplessness and hopelessness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of energy</td>
<td>Loss of motivation, ideals, and hope</td>
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<td>Leads to anxiety disorders</td>
<td>Leads to detachment and depression</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary damage is physical</td>
<td>Primary damage is emotional</td>
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<td>May kill you prematurely</td>
<td>May make life seem not worth living</td>
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Source: Stress and Burnout in Ministry
Stress is the flame

Burnout is when it is extinguished
How do we get to it and get through it?
There is a need to explore the relevant research and dynamics of the contributing factors that lead to professional burnout and how they can and must be remedied to insure a more healthier professional in the workplace.
There are many causes of burnout

In many cases, burnout stems from the job. But burnout is not caused solely by stressful work or too many responsibilities. Other factors contribute to burnout, including your lifestyle and certain personality traits. What you do in your downtime and how you look at the world can play just as big of a role in causing burnout as work or home demands.
Contributing Factors: Psychological

- Self Esteem
- Nuclear Family Stability
- Personality Type
- Attitude/Spirituality
- Addictive/Obsessive Tendencies
- Time Management
- Diet and Physical Health
Contributing Factors: Relational

- Appropriate Boundaries
- Marital/Romantic Satisfaction
- Support Persons
- Social Interactions and Recreation
- Trust/Control Issues
- Emotional Attachments
Contributing Factors
Institutional

- Appropriate Work Hours
  (fixed or flexible)
- Healthy Communication
  (with supervisors, co-workers, subordinates, and interdepartmental)
- Working Conditions and Supportive Services
- Control or Lack of Control
Contributing Factors
Societal

In recent years we have been inundated with new and pressing stressors from:

- Information Overload
- Access Overload
- Legal System Overload
Contributing Factors

Occupational

- Life or Death Situations
- Continuing Education
- Family Members of Patients
- DOCUMENTATION
- Time Demands
- Continuous Pressure
What is Being Seen by You or Others

Changes in

Behavior
Work Ethic
Mood
Competency
Appearance
Relationships
Reliability
IMPACT of BURNOUT

**Personal Life**
- Depression
- Addiction
- Isolation
- Loss of Relationships
- Physical Ailments
- Suicide

**Professional Life**
- Decreased Productivity
- Increase of Mistakes
- Loss of Job/License
- Legal Liabilities
- Loss of Life
- Reputation
What to do?

- Talk to Someone
- Seek Professional Help
- Make Appropriate Changes
- Establish and Maintain Support
- First Things First
- Remove Fears and Obstacles
- Develop a Vision and Plan
Recovering from Burnout:

**Acknowledge your losses**

Burnout brings with it many losses, which can often go unrecognized.

Unrecognized losses trap a lot of your energy.

It takes a tremendous amount of emotional control to keep yourself from feeling the pain of these losses.

When you recognize these losses and allow yourself to grieve them, you release that trapped energy and open yourself to healing.

- Loss of the idealism or dream with which you entered your career
- Loss of the role or identity that originally came with your job
- Loss of physical and emotional energy
- Loss of friends, fun, and sense of community
- Loss of esteem, self-worth, and sense of control and mastery
- Loss of joy, meaning and purpose that make work – and life – worthwhile

Source: *Keeping the Fire* by Ruth Luban
An Ounce of Prevention

- Know Thyself
- Set Boundaries
- Communicate
- Balance
- Plan
- Be Flexible
- Recharge Regularly
- Exercise