

Managing Stress and Avoiding Burnout

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Stress

- ▶ Your body's physical and mental response to a demand (or stressor)
- ▶ Stressors can be both good and bad experiences

Stress is a normal part of life

Everyone feels stress from time to time

What we find stressful is different from person to person

Types of stress

- ▶ Survival stress
 - Occurs when there is a threat to our physical well-being
 - Triggers the "fight or flight" response

Types of stress

▶ Internal stress

- Occurs when we worry about situations or issues that are beyond our control
- Occurs when we worry unproductively and do not engage in problem-solving behavior

Types of stress

▶ Environmental stress

- Occurs when the things around us stress us
- Includes noise, traffic, crowding, family, co-workers, supervisors, living conditions, etc.

Types of stress

▶ Fatigue and overwork (Burnout)

- This stress builds up over time and negatively impacts our body and mind
- Generally caused by working too much or too hard
- Exacerbated by not knowing how to take time for rest and relaxation

Strategies to Manage Stress

- ▶ Exercise
- ▶ Set priorities
- ▶ Set aside perfectionism
- ▶ Say “No”
- ▶ Get organized

Strategies to Manage Stress

- ▶ Find a hobby
- ▶ Set aside time for yourself every day
- ▶ Share your feelings
- ▶ Breathe (4-7-8)
- ▶ Do one thing at a time

Strategies to Manage Stress

- ▶ Focus on the positive
- ▶ Laugh more
- ▶ Unplug
- ▶ Adopt a healthier lifestyle
- ▶ Ask for help

Burnout

- ▶ A state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress
- ▶ We feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands
- ▶ Our productivity wanes, energy collapses, and motivation disappears
- ▶ We feel cynical, resentful, and hopeless
- ▶ We have nothing more to give

Physical Signs of Burnout

- ▶ Feeling tired and drained most of the time
- ▶ Lowered immunity; feeling sick frequently
- ▶ Frequent headaches, back pain, and muscle aches
- ▶ Changes in sleep and appetite (too much or too little)

Emotional Signs of Burnout

- ▶ Sense of failure and self-doubt
- ▶ Feeling helpless, trapped, defeated
- ▶ Feeling detached, alone in the world
- ▶ Loss of motivation
- ▶ Feeling cynical and negative
- ▶ Decreased satisfaction, feeling ineffective
- ▶ Loss of pleasure (anhedonia)
- ▶ Feeling that there is never enough time
- ▶ Excessive worry

Behavioral Signs of Burnout

- ▶ Withdrawing from responsibilities
- ▶ Isolating yourself
- ▶ Procrastinating; taking longer to get things done
- ▶ Using food, drugs, or alcohol to cope (includes caffeine and nicotine)
- ▶ Increased irritability; taking things out on others; overreacting
- ▶ Skipping work, coming in late, leaving early

Strategies to Prevent and Avoid Burnout

- ▶ Use your vacation days
- ▶ Change up your routine
- ▶ Change up your environment
- ▶ Seek social support
- ▶ Cultivate healthier habits
- ▶ Get involved in a cause that is meaningful to you

Strategies to Prevent and Avoid Burnout

- ▶ Strengthen your social ties at work
- ▶ Reframe the way you look at work; find value in what you do
- ▶ Be more positive; spend time around positive people
- ▶ Set boundaries
- ▶ Find balance in your life (look for meaning and satisfaction in other areas)

Strategies to Prevent and Avoid Burnout

- ▶ Avoid nicotine and caffeine; drink only minimally
- ▶ Take a daily break from technology
- ▶ Nourish your creative side
- ▶ Set aside relaxation time
- ▶ Manage troublesome thoughts and feelings

Strategies to Prevent and Avoid Burnout

- ▶ Use prayer/access spirituality
- ▶ Talk to your doctor or a therapist if needed
- ▶ Consider changing jobs if you are in a toxic work environment
- ▶ Decide what you are going to do and act on it