

Avoiding Burnout: Strategies to Promote Wellbeing

Generation Next 2016



Lifeline Australia

Burnout

'State of emotional, mental & physical exhaustion caused by excessive & prolonged stress'



Symptoms:

- Feeling overwhelmed
- Physically & emotionally exhausted
- Isolating self from others
- Loss of motivation; forgetting why you do your job
- Questioning one's professional competence & effectiveness; self-doubt
- Increase in illnesses and/or pains
- Increasingly cynical & negative outlook

Irrational Beliefs held by Helping Professionals

- It is my responsibility to make the person feel better
- I should not have any emotional problems of my own
- I have to be respected and loved by everyone I help
- I should always know what to do and/or say
- I should be able to cope
- I must not dislike anyone I'm trying to help
- I must help (or save) everybody


What is Self-Care?

More than just having a hot bath or using smelly candles

Two aspects:

1. Managing emotional reactions to stressors in our work/life
2. Proactively enhancing ongoing overall well-being



To implement these, you need good self-awareness



Self-Awareness

Some questions to reflect upon...

- How do you know you are adversely reacting to an individual?
Consider both physical and emotional reactions
- What provokes a reaction in you?
- How do you manage your reactions?
Consider in the moment & immediately after
- What gives you joy and meaning?

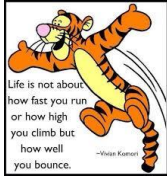
Managing Our Emotional Responses

- Acknowledge and accept any reactions
- Reflective practice, journaling
- Practice relaxation exercises:
 - e.g. deep breathing, meditation, mindfulness, music
- Take breaks
- Debriefing & supervision




Resilience

- Social connection
- Nurture yourself
- Maintaining a positive mindset
- Sense of purpose and meaning
- Manage strong emotions & impulses
- Develop self-confidence & problem solving skills
- Take control



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Creating Professional Boundaries

- Be clear within yourself about your personal values & boundaries
- Clearly communicate your boundaries to others
- If in a professional context, establish roles and expectations early
- Take consistent action if your boundary is crossed
 - Immediately name the behaviour
 - Firmly & politely request the behaviour to stop
 - State desired behaviour
 - End the conversation or leave if persists
- Learn to say no and be comfortable with this
- Avoid self-disclosure, dual relationships etc.



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For 24/7 Crisis Support, talk to us



For more information see this article: *Self Care for Psychologists: Lifeline's Learnings*
www.psychology.org.au/inpsych/2015/February/evans

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