

Community Care Corner

Health Center Staff Wellness Resources



Trauma-Informed Toolbox Strategy Session: Burnout

Whitney L. Marris, LMSW

The Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care





Possible Impacts of the Work





Burnout is the result of too much energy output and not enough energy self-invested.

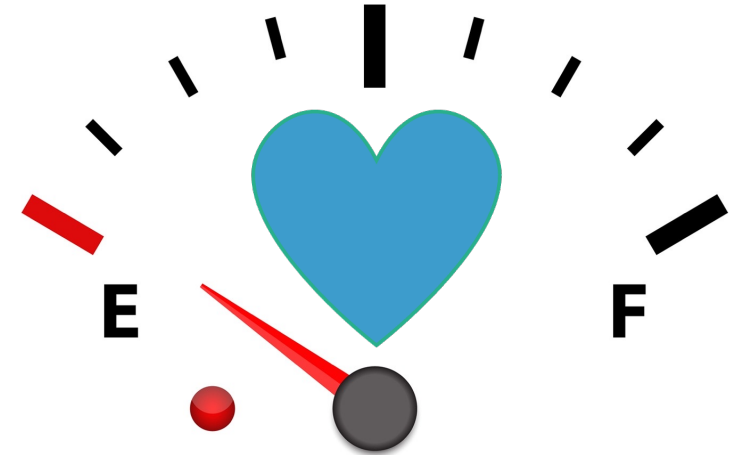
In other words, it's **burning more fuel than you've put in your tank.**



Melissa Steginus, Mindfulness Teacher and Productivity Coach

Signs of Burnout

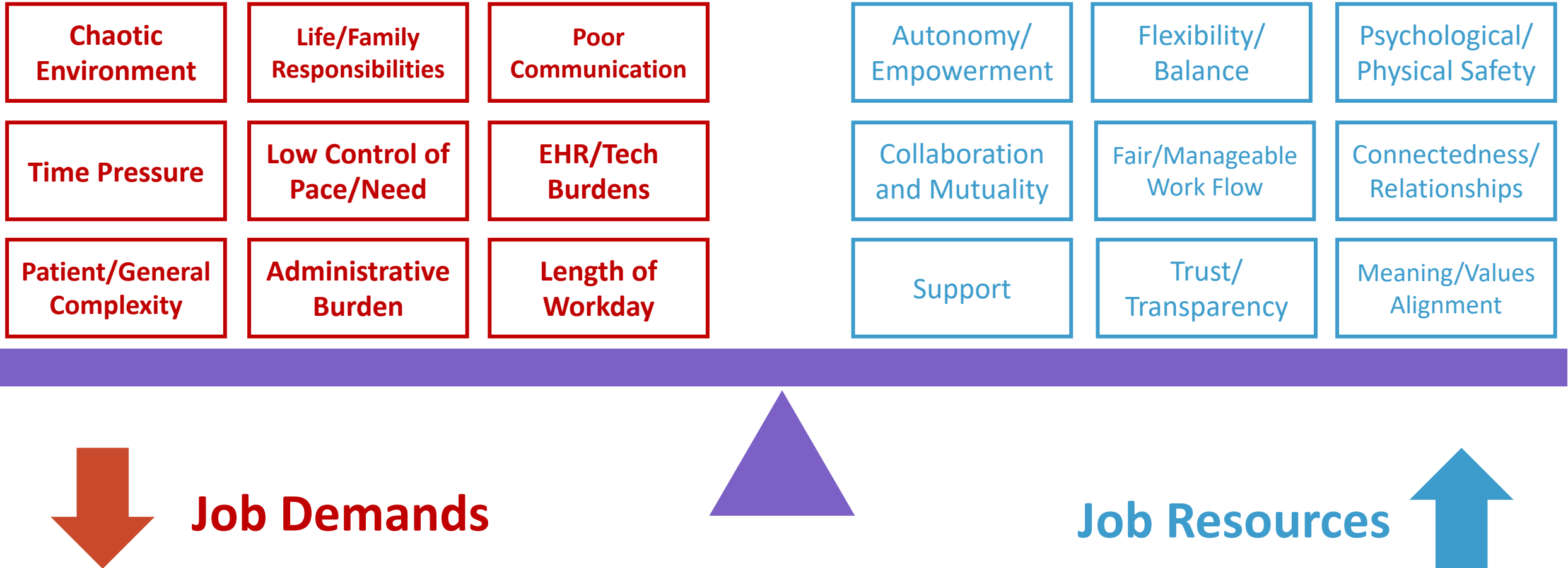
- Apathy
- Cynicism
- Irritability
- Blaming others
- Easily frustrated
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Disconnecting from others
- Desire to use substances to cope
- Decreased compassion for others
- Feeling like nothing you can do will help
- Feeling like a failure/you aren't doing your job well



(Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018; SAMHSA, 2014)



Burnout and Health Care



“There was a point where I could no longer contain the heartbreak of everyone that had been lost.”

*Kevin C. from Florida,
Nurse*



“Something has to change. Something good has to come out of this or it will be for nothing.”

*Nisha B. from Pennsylvania,
Palliative Social Worker*



“The primary concern for burnout is not being able to emotionally take care of each patient individually or uniquely.”

*Derick S. from Nevada,
Respiratory Therapist*



(U.S. Surgeon General)

Impacts of Health Care Worker Burnout

- Decreased empathy/compassion toward others
- Less person-centered interactions
- Increased errors while working/impaired attention and executive function
- Less intentional prescribing behaviors
- Higher staff turnover
- More sick/mental health days
- Increased health system costs
- Lower productivity



(Dept. of Health and Human Services; Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality)



Health Center Considerations for Burnout

- Create working environments that promote physical and psychological safety
- Provide mechanisms for peer and emotional support
- Review and revise policies related to sick time/mental health days, paid leave, accessing high-quality, confidential supports for mental health/substance use, etc.
- Be transparent and highly communicative about changes and what staff can expect
- Collaborate with local partners to increase access to wellness resources for staff
- Create a Chief Wellness Officer role and/or Workforce Wellbeing program
- Implement a process for confidential, ongoing feedback/suggestions/recommendations



Safety



Trustworthiness



Choice



Collaboration



Empowerment

(National Academy of Medicine;)



Leadership Considerations for Burnout

- Engage in regular check-ins and provide opportunities for trauma-informed debriefing
 - Possible settings: supervision, team meetings, huddles, consultations, etc.
- Pay attention to signs that staff may need additional support to mitigate/address burnout and offer resources/referrals as appropriate
- Identify and utilize multiple internal channels of communication to share information
- Allow flexibility and autonomy where possible
- Model and express the importance of utilizing health center resources and attending to self
- Celebrate triumphs, promote joy in the work, and talk about what's working, too!



Safety



Trustworthiness



Choice



Collaboration



Empowerment



(van Dernoot Lipsky, 2009)



Individual Considerations for Burnout

- Stay connected to yourself – notice and attend to what’s happening for you
- Set realistic expectations and boundaries
- Take care of your physical health
 - Eating a nutritious diet, staying hydrated, integrating movement into every day, sleeping enough
- Maintain fulfilling hobbies outside of work
- Make intentional attempts to remain connected to friends and loved ones
- Ask for and seek support as needed



Safety



Trustworthiness



Choice

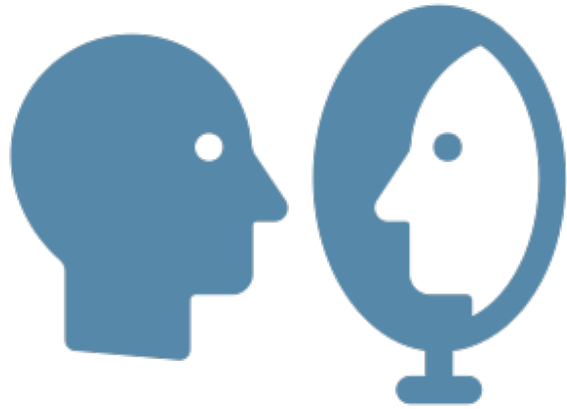


Collaboration



Empowerment

Reflection Point



What makes sense as your next small step to supporting yourself and/or others to prevent burnout?



Additional Resources on Burnout

- U.S. Surgeon General – [Health Worker Burnout](#)
- National Academy of Medicine – [Resource Compendium for Health Care Worker Well-Being](#)
- American Medical Association – [Caring for the Health Care Workforce During Crisis: Creating a Resilient Organization](#)
- Health Policy Institute of Ohio – [A Call to Action: Improving Clinician Wellbeing & Patient Care/Safety](#)
- Institute for Healthcare Improvement – [Promoting Health Care Workforce Wellbeing During & After COVID-19](#)
- Institute for Healthcare Improvement – [Framework for Improving Joy in Work](#)
- American Hospital Association – [The Clinician Wellbeing Playbook](#)

