

BURNOUT RESOURCES

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Burnout

- Evaluate yourself
 - Burnout questionnaire
<http://www.mnsu.edu/humanres/profdev/handouts/handouts05/burnout.pdf>
- Book
 - Leiter and Maslach, Banishing Burnout, 2005, ISBN 0-7879-7608-3
Very practical book, with check lists to determine the most “challenging” areas of your workplace, and concrete suggestions for improvement

Resilience

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from difficult circumstances, can protect against and counteract burnout, and can be learned.

- Evaluate yourself
 - National Center for Victims of Crime online resilience evaluation
www.ncvc.org/resilience
 - U Penn Positive Psychology Center online happiness, optimism (need to register, free, info used anonymously for research)
<http://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/>
- Webhelp
 - American Psychological Association “The Road to Resilience”
<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>
 - Resilience e-book from the Canadian Medical Association
<http://www.ephysicianhealth.com/pdf/Resilience.pdf>

Mindfulness

Mindfulness, another antidote to burnout, is the ability to focus and appreciate the present moment, while letting go of regrets from the past or worries about the future. Numerous research studies have shown that the practice of mindfulness may improve sleep, memory, mood, quality of life, and compassion; and decrease anxiety, pain, inflammation, and depression.

- Recent mindfulness-related editorial from JAMA
 - Shanafelt TD. Enhancing meaning in work: a prescription for preventing physician burnout and promoting patient-centered care. JAMA. 2009 Sep 23;302(12):1338-40.
- More information from U Mass Center for Mindfulness
<http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/home/index.aspx>
- Book
 - Kabat-Zinn, Wherever You Go There You Are, 1994, ISBN 0-7868-8070-8

Humor

Humor can help counteract burnout, and correlates with quality of compassion

- Schedule time every day for humor
 - Read the daily comics before leaving for the office
 - Read a page/chapter of jokes at night before going to sleep
 - Funny page-a-day calendars
 - Internet joke websites, daily email feeds
- Increase exposure to funny movies, clubs, people
 - American Film Institute afi.com – list of 100 funniest movies – rent and watch with your family
 - Save a clip file of cartoons
 - Laughter yoga <http://www.laughteryoga.us/>

Qualities of resilience

- Healthy coping and problem solving skills
 - Taking positive action
 - Persistence
 - Adaptability, flexibility with change, able to compromise
- Self-knowledge
 - Learning and accepting who you are, identity doesn't depend on externals
 - High self-esteem, self respect
- Motivation/personal meaning
 - Sense of values and purpose, that life is worth living
- Optimism
 - Sense of hope – ability to believe there is a solution in adversity
 - Sense of enjoyment of life
- Strong relationships
 - Support from family and friends; good social skills
 - Able to ask for help

Improving happiness

- Every evening, think of 3 good things that happened that day
- Receive hugs (reduces cortisol, BP)
- Start off the day by remembering what you are grateful for
- Make a list of 5 personal strengths, and apply them in a new way every day for a week
- Perform random acts of kindness; be nice to people; altruism; “give back”
- Practice forgiveness/ let go of resentments

Counteracting burnout/compassion fatigue

- Take some time off
 - Postpone critical decisions
- Take care of yourself !!!
- Keep your work hours reasonable
 - Learn to say no – reduce expectations
 - What are your priorities? (see balance handout)
 - Recognize that your occupation is not your life
- Focus on the parts of your education/job that you love the most
 - Find something interesting about each day
- Be generous in forgiveness – for self and others
- Create a positive support system at work and at home
 - Look for positive people to associate with
 - Be able to ask for help
 - Remember that you are not alone
- Remind yourself of your goals
 - Review goals once a year
 - Keep learning