

Maintaining Wellness As A Peer Recovery Support Specialist/Caregiver

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Purpose

- ▶ Defining burnout
- ▶ How to recognize and address stress
- ▶ Compassion fatigue
- ▶ Addressing specific issues for PRSS/caregivers
- ▶ Explore ways to apply self-care
- ▶ Returning to wellness using wellness tools

What Is Burnout?

➤ Merriam Webster:

Exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration

➤ Massachusetts General Hospital Handbook:

Burnout is a pathological syndrome in which prolonged occupational stress leads to emotional and physical depletion and ultimately to development of maladaptive behaviors

Burnout

Burnout happens when you are:

- ▶ Overwhelmed
- ▶ Emotionally drained
- ▶ Not able to meet requirements or demands
- ▶ Lacking motivation
- ▶ Not interested anymore

Characterized by

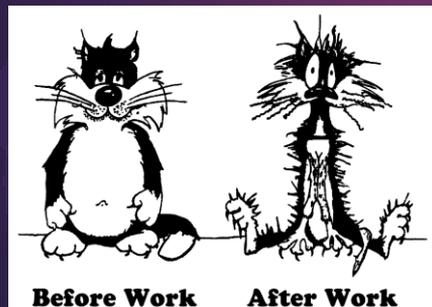
- ▶ Emotional and physical exhaustion
- ▶ Cynicism
- ▶ Ineffectiveness

Although burnout is not considered a mental illness, it can be a mental health issue.

Effects of Burnout

- Can effect all aspects of life
- Work
- Home
- Social
- Drains your energy
- Reduces productivity
- Creates feelings of helplessness & hopelessness
- Become cynical
- Resentful
- More susceptible to colds & flu

Who is at risk of burnout?



People who:

- ▶ Expect too much of themselves
- ▶ Overly critical of their work
- ▶ Feels inadequate
- ▶ Feels unappreciated
- ▶ Demands expected of them seem unreasonable to them
- ▶ Not a good match with the job
- ▶ Finds work dull
- ▶ Nothing makes a difference

Burnout is a gradual process which happens over a period of time.

Signs and Symptoms

Emotional

Feeling like a failure
 Self-doubt
 Feeling trapped & defeated
 Detached
 Alone
 Negative outlook

Behavioral

Isolating from others
 Procrastinating
 Responsibilities mean little
 Coping via drugs and alcohol
 Missing work/tardiness
 Taking frustrations out on others

Physical

Tired and drained often
 Getting sick a lot
 Frequent headaches
 Change in appetite
 Change in sleep

Causes of burnout

Work Related

- Little or no control of your work
- Lack of recognition
- Monotonous
- Chaotic
- High Pressure

Lifestyle

- Working too much
- Too many responsibilities
- Little assistance
- Lack of sleep

Personality traits

- Perfectionist
- Type A personality
- Negative outlook
- Bleak view of the world
- The need to control

Difference between stress and burnout

Burnout may be the result of unrelenting stress, but isn't the same as too much stress. Negative stress involves too much: too many demands, too many pressures. If it is just stress, people can still see that they might be able to control it.

Burnout conversely involves not enough: feeling empty, devoid of motivation and caring. People experiencing burnout do not see any hope of positive change. Nothing left to give.

Is it Stress or is it Burnout?

Stress

- ▶ Characterized by over engagement
- ▶ Emotions are over reactive
- ▶ Produces urgency and hyperactivity
- ▶ Loss of energy
- ▶ Leads to anxiety disorders
- ▶ Primary damage is physical
- ▶ May kill you prematurely

Burnout

- ▶ Characterized by disengagement
- ▶ Emotions are blunted
- ▶ Produces helplessness and hopelessness
- ▶ Loss of motivation, ideas and hope
- ▶ Leads to detachment & depression
- ▶ Primary damage is emotional
- ▶ May make life seem not worth living

Stress is the body's response to changes that create taxing demands. There are two types of stress.

Stress is defined by one's perception and response to that stressor. It can depend on the situation. Stress can be healthy or damaging depending on the factors that are involved. Generally, most people regard stress as negative and therefore considered as bad for you. That is not always the case.



Positive stress is referred to as Eustress.

Negative stress is referred to as Distress.

Positive stress is referred to as Eustress. Negative stress is referred to as Distress.

Eustress

- ▶ Motivates, focuses energy
- ▶ Short term
- ▶ Is perceived as within our coping abilities
- ▶ Excited
- ▶ Improves performance

Distress

- ▶ Causes anxiety
- ▶ Can be short or long term
- ▶ Is perceived as outside our coping abilities
- ▶ Unpleasant
- ▶ Decreases performance
- ▶ Can lead to mental and physical problems

So, the question
is:

WHY
EUSTRESSIN'?

Examples of positive and negative stress

Positive

- ▶ Promotion or raise
- ▶ Starting a new job
- ▶ Marriage
- ▶ Purchasing a home
- ▶ Having a child
- ▶ Moving
- ▶ Vacation
- ▶ Holidays
- ▶ Retiring
- ▶ New Hobby

Negative

- ▶ Death of a spouse
- ▶ Separation/Divorce
- ▶ Losing contact with loved ones
- ▶ Death of a family member
- ▶ Hospitalization
- ▶ Illness or injury
- ▶ Abuse/neglect
- ▶ Economic difficulties
- ▶ Problems sleeping
- ▶ Legal issues

Work and Employment Concerns



- ▶ Excessive work demands
- ▶ Job insecurity
- ▶ Conflicts with administration/coworkers
- ▶ Inadequate authority to complete tasks
- ▶ Lack of necessary training
- ▶ Delivering presentations in front of colleagues/clients/public
- ▶ Unproductive meetings
- ▶ Commuting
- ▶ Not valued as an employee.

Internal causes of stress

- ▶ Fears:
 - ▶ Flying, heights, spiders, snakes, public speaking
- ▶ Repetitive thoughts patterns:
 - ▶ Test results
 - ▶ What did they mean by that?
 - ▶ Did I lock the door?
 - ▶ Worrying about future events
 - ▶ Unrealistic expectations
- ▶ Habitual behavior patters:
 - ▶ Overscheduling
 - ▶ Failing to be assertive
 - ▶ Procrastination

How do we combat burnout?

Positive Steps:

- ❖ Reach out to others
 - They don't have to fix you. They just need to be able to listen
 - Close relationships are important
 - Develop relationships with coworkers outside of the work environment
 - Connect with a cause or community group
 - Build new friendships
- ❖ Reframe how you look at your work
 - Is a job change possible
 - Find value in what you do.
 - Remember why you chose your profession

Compassion Fatigue

Compassion Fatigue

- ▶ Also called "vicarious traumatization" or secondary traumatization (Figley, 1995). The emotional residue or strain of exposure to working with those suffering from the consequences of traumatic events. It differs from burn-out, but can co-exist. Compassion Fatigue can occur due to exposure on one case or can be due to a "cumulative" level of trauma.
- ▶ "We have not been directly exposed to the trauma scene, but we hear the story told with such intensity, or we hear similar stories so often, or we have the gift and curse of extreme empathy and we suffer. We feel the feelings of our clients. We experience their fears. We dream their dreams. Eventually, we lose a certain spark of optimism, humor and hope. We tire. We aren't sick, but we aren't ourselves."

– C. Figley, 1995

Compassion Fatigue

Mother Teresa Understood Compassion Fatigue

She wrote in her plan to her superiors that it was MANDATORY for her nuns to take an entire year off from their duties every 4-5 years to allow them to heal from the effects of their care-giving work.



Compassion Fatigue

Definition	"Cost of Caring" as a helper- Manifested as physical, emotional and spiritual exhaustion.
Onset	Acute- Can occur quickly without warning
Causes	Tends to be related to traumas experienced by consumer rather than other stressors
Recovery	Quicker recovery than burnout when treated

Burnout

Definition	Emotional exhaustion related to work in a helping role in a healthcare setting.
Onset	Occurs gradually
Causes	Several causative factors: job strain; fading idealism; and diminishing sense of accomplishment
Recovery	May be irreversible

Warning Signs of Compassion Fatigue

- ▶ Cognitive Warning Signs
 - ▶ Intrusive thoughts
 - ▶ Images of traumatic situations
 - ▶ Increased suspicion
 - ▶ Developing a world view in terms of victims or perpetrators
 - ▶ Decrease sense of safety
 - ▶ Decrease trust in others
 - ▶ Diminished feelings of control
 - ▶ Loss of hope
 - ▶ Guilt
 - ▶ Victim blaming
- ▶ Psychological/Emotional warning signs
 - ▶ Increased anger & irritability
 - ▶ Lower frustration tolerance
 - ▶ Depression
 - ▶ Decreased ability of joy
 - ▶ Increased anxiety
 - ▶ Feelings of horror or dread
 - ▶ Inability to maintain balance between empathy and objectivity
 - ▶ Feeling unappreciated, alienated and isolated
 - ▶ Emotional withdrawal from colleagues, friends, and family
 - ▶ Marked or increased countertransference issues

Warning Signs of Compassion Fatigue

- ▶ Physical warning signs
 - ▶ Chronic fatigue
 - ▶ Increased somatic complaints
 - ▶ Increased muscle tension
 - ▶ Physiological arousal in the form of palpitations and hypervigilance
- ▶ Behavioral Warning Signs
 - ▶ Difficulty sleeping
 - ▶ Becoming workaholic
 - ▶ Increase in addictive behaviors
 - ▶ Impairment in day to day functioning
 - ▶ Decreased use of supervision
 - ▶ Increased isolation
 - ▶ Chronic lateness
 - ▶ Increased absenteeism



From the New England MIRECC Peer Education Center Continuing
Education Series

Caregiver Self-Care Assessment

How Frequently do you do the following

0- Never 1-Rarely 2-Sometimes 3-Often

Physical Self-Care

- ▶ Eat regularly
- ▶ Eat healthy meals
- ▶ Get regular medical check-ups
- ▶ Obtain medical care when needed
- ▶ Take time off to rest & recuperate when you are sick
- ▶ Get a massage
- ▶ Exercise/engage in physical activity you enjoy
- ▶ Get enough sleep
- ▶ Take vacations
- ▶ Other _____

Psychological Self-Care

- ▶ Take a day trip
- ▶ Make time away from your telephone/office
- ▶ Make time for self-reflection- Listen to your thoughts, beliefs, feelings
- ▶ Read literature unrelated to your work
- ▶ Allow others to know different aspects of who you are
- ▶ Ask other for help/support when you need it
- ▶ Say no to extra responsibilities sometimes
- ▶ Try a new activity at which you are not an expert or in charge

Caregiver Self-Care Assessment
How Frequently do you do the following
0- Never 1-Rarely 2-Sometimes 3-Often

Emotional Self-Care

- ▶ Spend time with people whose company you enjoy
- ▶ Stay in contact with important people in your life
- ▶ Provide yourself with praise for your accomplishments
- ▶ Love yourself
- ▶ Find things that make you laugh
- ▶ Allow yourself to cry
- ▶ Make time to play and/or relax
- ▶ Other: _____

Spiritual Self-Care

- ▶ Make time for reflection
- ▶ Find a spiritual connection or community
- ▶ Be open to inspiration
- ▶ Cherish your optimism and hope
- ▶ Be open to not having all the answers
- ▶ Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life
- ▶ Meditate
- ▶ Pray
- ▶ Sing
- ▶ Contribute to causes in which you believe
- ▶ Listen to music
- ▶ Other _____

Caregiver Self-Care Assessment

How Frequently do you do the following
0- Never 1-Rarely 2-Sometimes 3-Often

Workplace or Professional Self-Care

- ▶ ___ Take your fully allotted time for lunch/breaks
- ▶ ___ Take time to chat with co-workers
- ▶ ___ Make quiet time to complete tasks
- ▶ ___ Identify projects or tasks that you find exciting and rewarding
- ▶ ___ Set limits with colleagues and consumers
- ▶ ___ Balance your workload so that no one day or part of a day is "too much"
- ▶ ___ Arrange your work space so it is comfortable and comforting for you
- ▶ ___ Get regular supervision or consultation
- ▶ ___ Have a support group with your peers/colleagues
- ▶ ___ Negotiate for you needs(ex. Benefits, pay raise, time off)
- ▶ ___ Other _____

Balance

- ▶ ___ Make efforts to have balance in your professional life and work day
- ▶ ___ Strive to achieve balance among work, family, friends, play, and rest
- ▶ ___ Other areas of self-care that are relevant for you: _____

Have you found you are neglecting yourself in one or more of these areas of self-care?

If so, set a goal for an area of self-care you want to improve. Decide a first step you will take to work on it. Give yourself a date by which you will complete your first step.

(Caregiver Self-Assessment Reference: Saakvitne, K.W., & Pearlman, L.A. (1996). *Transforming the pain: A workbook on vicarious traumatization*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.)

Caregivers

Caregiver

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A caregiver or carer is an unpaid or paid member of a person's social network who helps them with activities of daily living.[1] Caregiving is most commonly used to address impairments related to old age, disability, a disease, or a mental disorder.

Typical duties of a caregiver might include taking care of someone who has a chronic illness or disease; managing medications or talking to doctors and nurses on someone's behalf; helping to bathe or dress someone who is frail or disabled; or taking care of household chores, meals, or bills for someone who cannot do these things alone.

With an increasingly aging population in all developed societies, the role of caregiver has been increasingly recognized as an important one, both functionally and economically. Many organizations which provide support for persons with disabilities have developed various forms of support for carers as well.

Peer Support

What is peer support?

It is:

- sharing our personal experience of recovery in a way that inspires hope
- a way of being in relationships that shows people they have the power to recover
- a way of offering help and support as an equal
- a way of teaching, learning, and growing together
- an attitude that values each person's experience

Peer support is about being an expert at not being an expert

Peer support is about partnering with people to assist them in discovering the expertise they already have inside of themselves.

Peer Support

Peer support is based on mutuality.

- ▶ Each individual is assumed to have the best knowledge about him or herself.
- ▶ People who receive peer support services guide the services.
- ▶ People who receive peer support services are given the freedom and responsibility to communicate what works best for them.
- ▶ Each person is treated with respect and dignity, whether they receive or provide services.
- ▶ Our experience as peers is valued in the same way as the training and education of professionals with whom we work side by side.

Peer Support

- ▶ As previously stated, mutuality is a primary component of peer support. Sharing that lived experience and connecting to the people we serve in order to empower, support, and be the change agent for that person.
- ▶ We must be aware of our focus or we can become overwhelmed.
- ▶ Remember to connect to the person, not their pain.
- ▶ Does this make us more vulnerable?
- ▶ It can.



Peer Support

- ▶ Ways to stay ahead of burnout
 - ▶ Develop self-determination
 - ▶ Sidestep self-imposed barriers
 - ▶ Maintain a positive level of consciousness
 - ▶ Let go of unnecessary stressors
- ▶ Do not fall into the "fix it" mode.
- ▶ We can only put out so much positivity when we are not getting any back. It is a two way street. Remember it is a partnership.



According to Advance Peer Practices from Recovery Innovations we can encourage this positive energy exchange by:

- ▶ Ask the peer to talk about their hopes and dreams
- ▶ Ask them to talk about their favorite things
- ▶ Give them something to do for you
- ▶ Ask them what they do for others.

Applying Self-care

- ▶ Will the world fall apart if I'm not here
- ▶ Set reasonable and realistic expectations about work and responsibilities
- ▶ Have healthy boundaries
- ▶ Don't blame others
- ▶ Seek supervision
- ▶ Identify sources of support
- ▶ Set aside quiet time
- ▶ Arrive and leave work on time
- ▶ Ask for help when appropriate
- ▶ Eat well
- ▶ Exercise on a regular basis
- ▶ Get plenty of sleep

Maintain boundaries

- ▶ Take scheduled breaks on time
- ▶ Do not give out personal information such as personal phone number and/or address.
- ▶ Do not mix roles. Do Not become personally involved with the peers you are working with. Maintain that boundary.
- ▶ Leave work at work



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Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)

WRAP is . . .

The Wellness Recovery Action Plan® or WRAP®, is a self-designed prevention and wellness process that anyone can use to get well, stay well and make their life the way they want it to be. It was developed in 1997 by a group of people who were searching for ways to overcome their own mental health issues and move on to fulfilling their life dreams and goals. It is now used extensively by people in all kinds of circumstances, and by health care and mental health systems all over the world to address all kinds of physical, mental health and life issues.

WRAP has been studied extensively in rigorous research projects and is listed in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices.

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)

WRAP Will Help You:

Discover your own simple, safe Wellness Tools

Develop a list of things to do every day to stay as well as possible

Identify upsetting events, early warning signs and signs that things have gotten much worse and, using Wellness Tools, develop action plans for responding at these times

Guide you through the process of developing a Crisis Plan or Advance Directive

Introduce you to Post Crisis Planning

WRAP is for anyone, any time. It will support you in being the way you want to be and doing the things you want to do.

"When the group developed WRAP, I was so impressed that I went home and wrote one for myself. As I began to live WRAP, my life changed dramatically. Over time I felt better and better and better. WRAP is a way of life for me—a great life."

Mary Ellen Copeland. PhD

Wellness Toolbox

A wellness toolbox is a list of things to help you stay well. The list could include things that you have done in the past or things that you think might help you feel better and stay well. The list also includes things you can do when you are not doing well

Some common wellness tools are as follows:

- ▶ Talk to a friend
- ▶ Talk to a health care provider
- ▶ Journaling
- ▶ Exercise
- ▶ Take a warm bath
- ▶ Get little things done

Wellness Tools continued

- ▶ Attend a support group
- ▶ Surround yourself with people who are positive
- ▶ Make a list of your accomplishments
- ▶ Do something special for someone else
- ▶ Avoid alcohol, sugar and caffeine
- ▶ Sing
- ▶ Play with pets
- ▶ Activities with children/family members.

Social Media and Self Care



" Social Media offers instantaneous support, allowing people to talk about their distress and care for others at any time of day or night. However, the visibility of one's activity on the site creates a shared concern regarding how support should work"

Adapted from: <http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/114816/>

Social Media and Workplace Ethics

- ▶ Know Company Policies
- ▶ Consider Potential Consequences of Misinterpretations
- ▶ What Safeguards need to be in place?
- ▶ What contact is permissible between you and _____?
 - ▶ Texting
 - ▶ Blogging
 - ▶ Facebook
 - ▶ LinkedIn
 - ▶ Etc.
- ▶ Self Care Matters!



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