KEEPING BURNOUT AT BAY:
Engaging Self-Care Practice to Protect Against Career Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

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OVERVIEW

- BURNOUT PREDICTORS
- IMPACT OF BURNOUT
- COMPASSION FATIGUE
- FIGHTING BACK BURNOUT
- INCREASING PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL
- SELF-CARE AND OBSTACLES TO PRACTICE
- TRACKING OUR PRACTICE
- SELF-CARE ENGAGEMENT

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A state of chronic stress that leads to physical, mental and emotional exhaustion. Leads to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and inefficacy.

COUNSELOR BURNOUT
Personal discouragement, apathy towards system, and emotional and physical strain that leads to failure to deliver professional tasks appropriately.

SIGNS OF BURNOUT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPTOMS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low Immune System Functioning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Difficulty Sleeping</strong></td>
<td><strong>Anxious</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pessimistic</strong></td>
<td><strong>Depression</strong></td>
<td><strong>Muscle Tension</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Irritability</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resistant</strong></td>
<td><strong>Unproductivity</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Withdrawn</strong></td>
<td><strong>Heart Palpitations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Poor Eating Habits</strong></td>
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<td><strong>High Blood Pressure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Overwhelmed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Feeling Incompetent</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Upset Stomach</strong></td>
<td><strong>Avoidant</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forgetful</strong></td>
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BURNOUT PREDICTORS

- Growing amount of job duties
- Perceived job role ambiguity
- Limited resources
- Long work days
- Growing student populations
- Growing diversity of student needs
- Low supervision levels
- Non-counseling related activities, i.e. administrative work, discipline, teaching

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BUTLER & CONSTANTINE, 2005; COLL & FREEMAN, 1997; LAMBIÉ, 2007; MOYER, 2011; PAINE, 2009; WILKERSON, 2009
BURNOUT VS. COMPASSION FATIGUE

State of tension and preoccupation with the traumatized patients by re-experiencing the traumatic events, avoidance/numbing of reminders, and persistent arousal (e.g., anxiety) associated with the patient.

Similar to burnout, but differs in its onset

Can occur after a lone, significant event

Symptoms similar to PTSD

Compassion Fatigue can increase the rate of ultimate burnout, and reduce our capacity to bear the suffering of others

Counselors are an extremely vulnerable population to burnout and compassion fatigue, as the deeply personal nature of the work makes keeping objective distance difficult.

When physical exhaustion and burnout begins to set in, the ability to emphatically connect with clients and contribute meaningfully decreases, thus negatively impacting the quality of our work.

As we burnout, not only is our health affected, but our ability to connect empathetically with our clients or students, overall impacting our career and profession at large.

CAN WE PROTECT AGAINST BURNOUT?

Proactively focuses on our responses to events and improve inner resources, specifically hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism.

Together, these inner resources make up Psychological Capital (PsyCap), defined by an individual’s positive psychological state of development.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL OUTCOMES (SELECTED)

PsyCap:

- Considered to be malleable and open to development (Luthans et al., 2007)
- Research supports that even short trainings can strengthen and develop it as a resource
- Can have a mediating effect on stress levels and burnout (Wang et al., 2012)
- Has a positive relationship with overall well-being (Avey et al., 2010)
- Has a negative relationship with intentions to quit, feelings of stress (Avey et al., 2009)
- With mindfulness, a positive relationship with positive emotions (Avey et al., 2008)

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HOW DO WE DEVELOP PSYCAPP?

Fredrickson (2001, 2009) suggests that PsyCap has a constructive effect on positive emotional states that can be drawn from in times of difficulty or stress, as if it were a reservoir in times of drought.

To add to this reservoir, we need to practice exercises that will build upon the four constructs of PsyCap:

- **HOPE**
- **SELF-EFFICACY**
- **RESILIENCE**
- **OPTIMISM**
THROUGH INTENTIONAL PRACTICE OF SELF-CARE

Positive self-care habits are correlated with higher levels of resiliency and psychological capital.
"Multi-dimensional, multifaceted process of purposeful engagement in strategies that promote healthy functioning and enhance well-being" - Dorociak et al. (2017, p. 326)

In other words...

Any action or behavior that proactively seeks to balance the effects of daily stressors
WHAT PREVENTS US FROM ENGAGING IN SELF-CARE?

GUILT?  "NO TIME"?  SELFISH?  NO PLAN?

We can learn to better cope with circumstances and appraise our realities to increase our psychological capital by forming effective self-care practice.

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TRACKING HABITS

- What do you do already that works?
- What hasn’t worked?
- How do you conceptualize taking time for yourself?
- Intention and meaning?
- What are you getting out of these activities?
- Implementing plan that is more continuous than occasional?
- Tracking SUDS
SELF-CARE TECHNIQUES
Deep Breathing
Chair Yoga
References


References


