

"Overwhelmed", Could It Be Professional Burnout?

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Plan to Explore Burnout

- The buzzword which has been used in contemporary jargon to reflect dispositions, often in the workplace
- Let's look at effects burnout may have...
- Then we'll take these items apart to see what may be done to decrease risk or extent of impact
- And, yes, it would be most helpful to turn your electronic media (e.g., cell phones) off and put them in a difficult place to reach

* "Smartphones Hijack Cognitive Capacity". Medscape, Jul 14, 2017

• **Burnout:** *a psychological term for a syndrome characterized by long-term exhaustion and diminished interest, especially in one's career*

• This is Herbert Freudenberger, the first psychologist / researcher to publish a paper utilizing the term "burnout" (1974)



Wikipedia, August 22, 2017

Reality of Burnout

- 2017 U.S. job satisfaction data indicate that....
 - 89 % of workers report being generally satisfied with their jobs*
 - Fortunately in SLP & AUD the numbers are even better, although we should maintain some concern about workplace satisfaction so we're focused on improving
- Efforts at better understanding point to "mental wellness"

* "2017 Employee Job Satisfaction and Engagement: The Doors of Opportunity Are Open." (April 24, 2017) Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).

Reality of Burnout

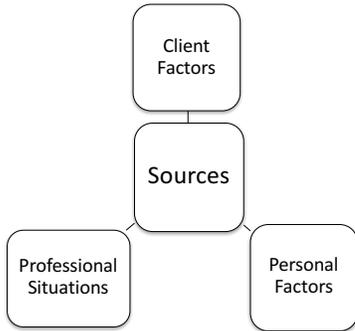
- Top stress items for SLP's include*
 - Overwhelming paperwork
 - Overwork
 - Lack of time
 - Lack of preparation time
 - Large caseload size

*Blood, et al, CICSD, vol 29, pp 132-140, Fall, 2002

Reality of Burnout

- Top stress items for AUD's may be similar, based on my experience
- At the very least many issues overlap...
- Let's look at factors influencing the development

Factors Influencing Burnout



Client Factors

- Overly demanding clients and/or families
- Complicated, serious problems of clients and/or families
- Lack of client/family responsiveness
- Lack of client/family appreciation

Professional Situation Factors

- Size of caseload
- Too many responsibilities
- Lack of autonomy
- Little opportunity for self-actualization

Professional Situation Factors

- Low pay; few salary increases
- Job insecurity
- Little opportunity for continuing education
- Tedium

Professional Situation Factors

- Excessive paperwork and inadequate time to complete it
- Inadequate working conditions and/or resources
- Discrimination: sexism, ageism, racism

Professional Situation Factors

- Inadequate supervision
- Unclear criteria for professional evaluation

Professional Situation Factors

- Evaluation based on negative factors only
- Co-worker competition or incompetence
- Lack of co-worker support

Professional Situation Factors

- Interdisciplinary conflict or competition
- Unprofessional attitudes on part of supervisor or co-workers
- Rigid or unrealistic institutional policies

Personal Factors

- Unrealistic expectations; perfectionism; need to do "it all"
- Not being able to say "no"
- Not being able to delegate work to others
- Lack of confidence
- Need for approval from others

Personal Factors

- Hostility
- Impatience
- Personal and/or family health problems
- Family pressures
- ...and there may also be generational factors that influence the degree to which burnout may be an issue...just sayin'

“Factor Analysis”

- Are there consistent patterns or similarities between “issues” you may be confronting and the positions you take? Is there a “match”/ “mismatch” problem?
- What take away’s are there if you decide to change employment – what will you choose to value as you pursue a next job?

Effects of Burnout

- Professional Effects
- Psychological Effects
- Physiological Effects
- Effects on Significant Others

Effects of Burnout

Professional Effects

- Detachment
- Depersonalization
- Sense of inadequacy
- Irritated with clients
- Do less work
- Work performance deteriorates

Effects of Burnout

Psychological Effects

- Sadness
- Anger
- Frustration
- Tension
- Anxiety

Effects of Burnout

Psychological Effects

- Depression
- Forgetfulness
- Suspiciousness
- Paranoia

Effects of Burnout, cont.

Physiological Effects

- Feeling of exhaustion and chronic fatigue
- Increased susceptibility to illness and infection
- Poor eating habits
- Frequent headaches
- Insomnia
- Gastrointestinal disorders

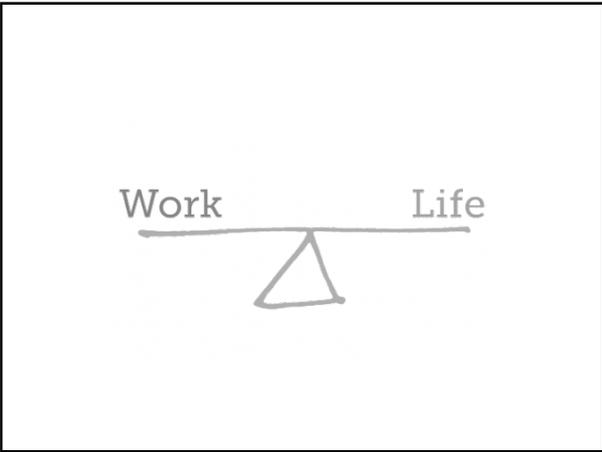
Effects of Burnout, cont.

Physiological Effects

- Possibility of developing dependencies
- Dermatological disorders (e.g., hives, exema)
- Back and neck disorders
- Hypertension
- Heart Attack, Stroke

Effects on Significant Others

- Marital conflict
- Family discord



Ideas That Might Help

- First and foremost, we should anticipate that there will be times when we may need to drop back and analyze our overall mental wellness
- Also consider an annual work appraisal: Where am I ? Where am I going? What's my plan? ...don't we already do this? If not, why not?
- It could be the answers suggest change(s)

Ideas That Might Help

- Don't be afraid to seek support(s) to your answers
- Continue to be honest with yourself – call it what it is
- Spend time with people who are uplifting – odds are you're a support to others
- Perhaps as easy as any suggestion, get rest, eat right, don't get into abusive habits (sound like your mama?)
- The glass can be half full. 

Ideas That Might Help

- Look to the benefits of positive self-talk (think, "little engine that could")
- Reinforce evidence of a more positive disposition
- Others can compliment, reinforce, affirm - if they know you're going through a rough stretch – and you can do the same!



Ideas That Might Help

- Google: speech-language pathology or audiology social media
 - an extensive array of blogs and discussion groups
 - many topically oriented but not all...
 - overall assumption must be professionals wanting to connect with other professionals

ASHA website resources

- <http://www.asha.org/practice/multicultural/self/> (this includes a "Personal Reflection")
- <http://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/Self-Assessment-of-Competencies-in-Supervision.pdf>
- <http://www.asha.org/Articles/Quality-Indicators-A-Self-Assessment-Tool/>
- <http://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/SLPs-Performance-Assessment-Contributions-Effectiveness.pdf>

Mental Health (Wellness) Resources

<https://dhs.georgia.gov/health-and-wellness-services-children-and-caregivers>

Department of Human Services agency providing an extensive wellness services across the lifespan. Includes the Area Agencies on Aging in addition to Children 1st, Adolescent Health and Youth Development Programs, among others.

<https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/adult-mental-health>

Dr. Terri Timberlake
Director, Office of Adult Mental Health
Email: Terri.Timberlake@dbhdd.ga.gov
Fax: 404-463-7149

To identify adult community-based mental health service providers in your area, call the **Georgia Crisis & Access Line** at 1-800-715-4225 or visit www.mygcal.com.

Mental Health (Wellness) Resources

<http://www.mentalhealthgeorgia.com/>

Mental Health Georgia
Mental Health Georgia is a multi-faceted community mental health agency serving the residents of Georgia. We provide an extensive array of mental health services for both children and adults

<https://www.mentalhealth.gov/talk/community-conversation/services/index.html>

MentalHealth.gov

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services directory to assist in identifying mental health agency and on-line information.

- Thank you for the opportunity to share ideas with you this morning.
- You do GREAT work – it is important that you are mindful of the things that will allow you to continue to be a strong helper.
- Best wishes for a highly productive career!
