

# SELF CARE

for the

## Caregiver

### Preventing Stress And Burnout

Kathy Waggoner MA NCC LPC  
[kwaggone@centralmethodist.edu](mailto:kwaggone@centralmethodist.edu)



**Stressed?  
Who? Me?**



# Glass of Water Exercise

- How much does it weigh?
- One minute
- One hour
- One day
- How much stress do you carry?



# Defining Stress

- What is your definition???
  - Please take a moment to write down your definition.
  - No cheating
  - Don't share just yet.....
- 



## **"STRESS"**

**THE CONFUSION CREATED WHEN  
ONE'S MIND OVERRIDES THE  
BODY'S BASIC DESIRE TO CHOKE  
THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS OUT OF  
SOMEBODY WHO DESPERATELY  
NEEDS IT !**

# Defining Stress

- “the experience of external environmental or internal environmental impingements (stimuli) or stressors”. (Peterson & Nisenholz, 1999, p21)
- American Institute of Stress quoted Hans Selye– “the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change”. (AIS, 2009)
- Selye – redefined stress as wear and tear on the body
- In later years when asked, Selye stated “ everyone knows what stress is, but nobody really knows”.
- Negative, unpleasant – a threat to our happiness and well being

# Defining Stress

- The body's reaction to a change that requires a physical, emotional or cognitive adjustment or response (Angela Morrow, 2011)
- But is Stress all bad? Maybe not all stress according to Morrow--  
Some define stress as a condition that is a negative response to stressors... something to be avoided. To be reduced by a change of lifestyle, a change of jobs and more relaxation
- Others define stress as motivation
- Stress may be considered a challenge that provides mental strength, coping and adaptation to enhance function
  - Just enough will keep you on track
  - But too much can cause problems...
  - So let's look at various forms of stress

# Eustress

.....a healthy stress.....

## ➤ Pleasant

- Getting a promotion
- Getting married
- Having a baby

## ➤ Curative

- Engaging in exercise
- Making time for relaxation and enjoyment

## ➤ Motivational

- The ability to meet or engage in a challenge
- GET R DONE

# DISTRESS

- Too much stress
- The inability to meet the challenge of a stressor or too many stressors to meet.
- Physical, mental or emotional strain or tension
- A condition or feeling experienced when it is perceived that demands exceed the capability of one's personal and social resources.

# JOB STRESS





**Before Work**



**After Work**

# THE WORKING WEEK



DON'T SPEAK TO ME!



MONDAY

GOD, GET ME THROUGH THIS DAY!



TUESDAY



LIFE SLOWLY SEEPS BACK INTO MY BODY...



THURSDAY

ANTICIPATION!



FRIDAY



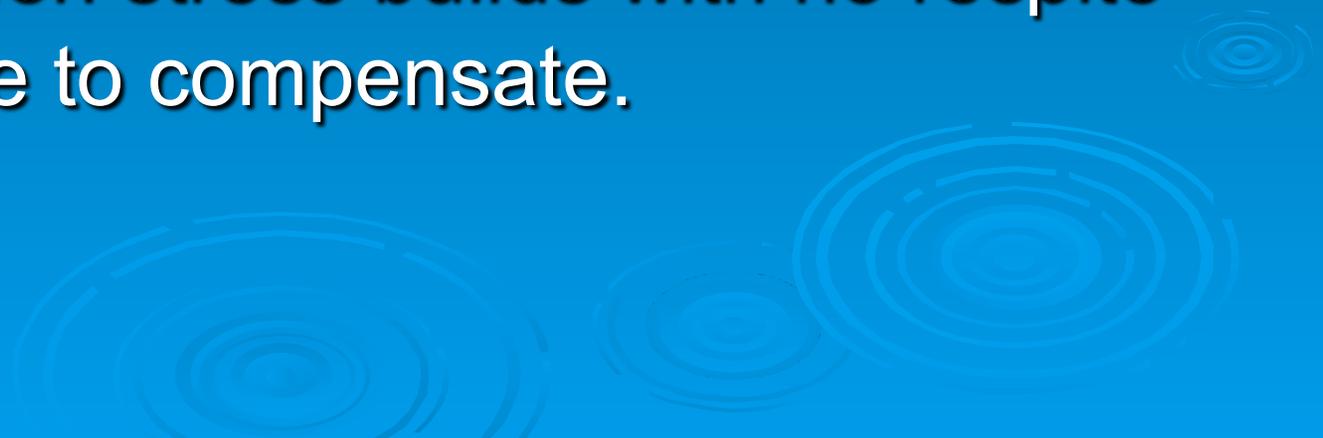


Stress has nothing to do with  
how many hours you work



And everything to do with how  
you feel during those hours

# Stress to Burnout

- Feeling totally stressed out....
  - Feeling like you can do no more –
    - Trapped
    - Confused
    - Dead end – no option
  - Occurs when stress builds with no respite or self care to compensate.
- 

# BURNOUT DEFINED

- The depletion of physical and mental resources characterized by a loss of motivation, enthusiasm, energy, and interest as well as a significantly lowered performance.
- May occur from too much work and/or too much emphasis on getting a terminal job done
- Also known as compassion fatigue in the helping profession

# Compassion Fatigue

- Also known as Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder or Vicarious Traumatization is when compassion begins to fade over time. This often occurs in professionals who are faced on a regular basis with trauma, sad stories, stress and overload.
- Symptoms include decreased compassion and empathy, depression, hopelessness, a negative attitude, decreased effectiveness, and decreased productivity

# Vicarious Trauma/Compassion Fatigue

➤ Goodwill and Greenwald (nd) quoted Rubenstein:

- Persons high in empathy may find it difficult to be sympathetic to their own needs, always putting others' needs first (Rubenstein, 1998).
- Caregivers working with victims of violence carry a high risk of suffering from vicarious traumatization which can become complete burnout unless preventive factors are considered

# SIGNS OF BURNOUT

- Physical signs
  - Dry mouth
  - Headache
  - Faintness
  - Heart palpitations
  - Clumsiness
  - Fatigue

# SIGNS OF BURNOUT

## continued

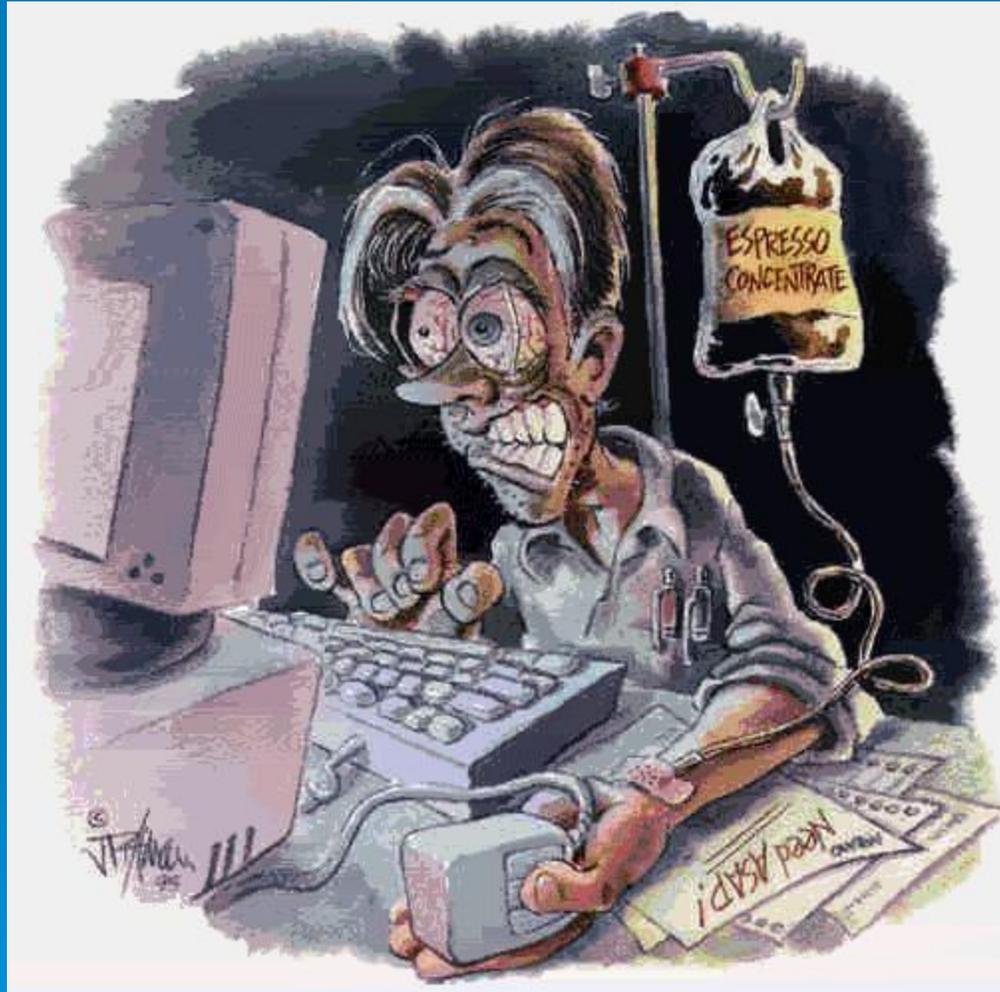
### ➤ Emotional signs

- Excessive nervousness or anxiety
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Nightmares
- Chronic irritability
- Constant feelings of resentment
- Antisocial or withdrawn
- Feeling down or alone
- Feeling anxious about going to work

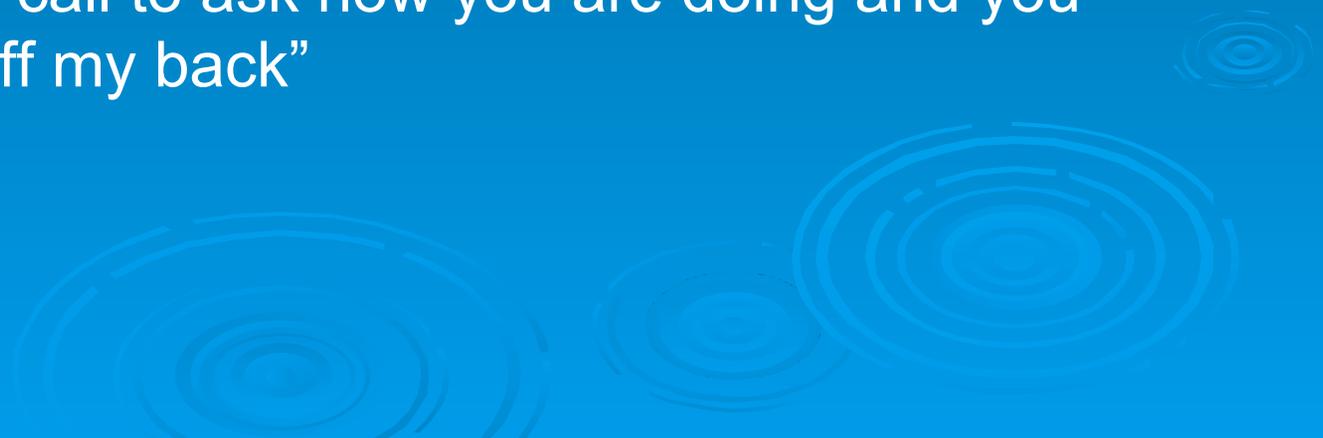
# SIGNS OF BURNOUT

## continued

- Thought related signs
  - Difficulty making everyday decisions
  - Memory problems
  - Constant worries
  - Expecting the worse
  - Finding excuses to avoid work
  - Feeling that everyone is working against you
  - Feeling like you live the job that never gets done



# You might be burnt out if: Top ten signs of burn out

- 10. You believe that the golden rule is only for masochists
  - 9. you don't bother to set your alarm because you know your pager will go off first
  - 8. Two seconds after the alarm goes off your clock may be seen flying through the newly broken window
  - 7 you're so tired you answer the phone with just "Hell"
  - 6 Your friends call to ask how you are doing and you scream "get off my back"
- 

# Top Ten signs of burnout continued

- 5 your garbage can just became your 'in box'.
- 4 you think about how relaxing it would be if you were in jail right now.
- 3 You picture yourself chopping off the head of your \_\_\_\_\_ (co-worker, boss, spouse etc) and hanging it in view of anyone else who might ask you to do more.
- 2 you wake to discover your bed is on fire. You go back to sleep because you simply don't care
- 1 you begin to feel jealous of the psychotic patient who is happily picking imaginary flowers from around your office. She is obviously having more fun and relaxation than you.



And you thought  
there was stress  
in your life !

# Preventing Burnout

Prevention of Burnout begins at the job site

- solid professional training
- regular self-examination by collegial and external supervision,
- limiting caseload,
- continuing professional education and learning about new concepts in trauma,
- occasional research sabbaticals,
- keeping a balance between empathy and a proper professional distance to clients,
- protecting oneself against being misled by clients with fictitious PTSD
- therapeutic self-awareness
- Self care

(Behandlungszentrum für Folteropfer, 2006)

# Preventing Burnout

## Self-awareness and Self-care

- Nobody's perfect
  - Use assertive communication
  - Get it off your chest
  - Balance work and play
  - Take time out
  - **BE NATURAL**
- 

➤ B  
➤ E  
  
➤ N  
➤ A  
➤ T  
➤ U  
➤ R  
➤ A  
➤ L



- **Breathe** breathing exercise
- **Exercise** move – healthy adrenal gland, endorphins
- **Nutrition** appropriate nourishment for a healthy body and healthy brain – weight control
- **Attitude** saying positive, guilt free, dealing with personal issues and not taking on others
- **Time management** delegate as needed, prioritize, boundaries for work & personal time
- **Uniqueness** maintain unique qualities, your own style, own your own problems
- **Relaxation** self care, renewal, hobby, fun, refreshment
- **Associations** healthy, positive, nourishing, supportive. Avoid negative, gossips, guilt
- **Laughter** stress relief, endorphins, laugh at mistakes, embarrassments, life in general... keep positive outlook... sometimes issues are funny.....

# ANTI-STRESS KIT

1. PLACE ON A FIRM SURFACE
2. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS IN CIRCLE
3. REPEAT UNTIL YOU ARE UNSTRESSED OR BECOME UNCONSCIOUS



BANG  
HEAD  
HERE





### A Prayer for the Stressed.

**Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
the courage to change the things I cannot accept,  
and the wisdom to hide the bodies of those I had to kill today,  
because they got on my nerves.**

**Also help me to be careful of the toes I step on today,  
as they may be connected to the feet I may have to kiss tomorrow.**

**Help me to always work at 100%**

**12% on Monday  
23% on Tuesday  
40% on Wednesday  
20% on Thursday  
5% on Friday**

**And help me to remember .....**

**When I'm having a bad day and it seems  
that people are trying to wind me up, that  
it takes 42 muscles to frown, 28 muscles to smile,  
and only 4 to extend my arm and smack you in the mouth.**



*When things go wrong  
as they usually will,  
And your daily road  
seems all uphill,  
When machines are down  
and tempers high,  
When you try to smile  
but you can only cry,  
And you really feel  
you'd like to quit ...  
Don't run to me  
I don't give a shit !*

➤ TAKE

➤ THE

➤ DAY

➤ OFF

So you want the day off :-

**Lets take a look at what you are asking for :-**

There are 365 days in the year available for work.

There are 52 weeks in the year, in which you already have two days off per week, leaving 261 days available for work.

Since you spend 16 hours each day away from work, you have used up 170 days, leaving only 91 days available.

You spend 50 minutes each day in coffee breaks which accounts for 25 days per year, leaving only 68 days available.

With 1 hour lunch period each day, you have used up another 46 days, leaving only 22 days available for work.

You normally spend two days per year on sick leave.

This leaves only 20 days available for work.

We are off for 5 holidays per year, so your available working time is down to 15 days.

We generously give you 14 days vacation per year, which leaves only 1 day available for work,

and I'll be darned if I'm going to let you take that day off.

# Look on the Bright Side

## The Light at the End of the Tunnel :-

- I thought I saw a light at the end of the tunnel,
- but it was only some jerk with a torch bringing me more work!

# Find an alternative point of view

- 1 \* Accept the fact that some days you're the pigeon, and some days you're the statue!
- 2 \* Always keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them.
- 3 \* Always read stuff that will make you look good if you die in the middle of it.
- 4 \* Drive carefully... It's not only cars that can be recalled by their Maker..
- 5 \* If you can't be kind, at least have the decency to be vague
- 6 \* If you lend someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it..
- 7 \* It may be that your sole purpose in life is simply to serve as a warning to others.
- 8 \* Never buy a car you can't push.
- 9 \* Never put both feet in your mouth at the same time, because then you won't have a leg to stand on.
- 10 \* Nobody cares if you can't dance well. Just get up and dance.

# Find an alternative point of view continued

- 11 \* Since it's the early worm that gets eaten by the bird, sleep late.
- 12 \* The second mouse gets the cheese.
- 13 \* When everything's coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.
- 14 \* Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live.
- 15 \* You may be only one person in the world, but you may also be the world to one person.
- 16 \* Some mistakes are too much fun to make only once.
- 17 \* We could learn a lot from crayons. Some are sharp, some are pretty and some are dull. Some have weird names and all are different colors, but they all have to live in the same box.
- 18 \* A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.
- 19 \*\*Save the Earth..... It's the only planet with chocolate !\*
- 20\*\* Have an awesome day and know that someone has thought about you today.

# Be a Healthy Caretaker

- Remember that it is important to stay healthy physically and mentally to be able to provide healthy caring support to others.
- Good self care IS A MUST
- Seek personal support – family, friends, coworkers, counseling
- Make a Commitment to growth and improvement but also to health

# Take a breather



# Pamper yourself



# Meditation



# Letting Go

- As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again.
- When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the burden - holding stress longer and better each time practiced.
- So, as early in the evening as you can, put all your burdens down. Don't carry them through the evening and into the night... pick them up tomorrow.
- Whatever burdens you're carrying now, let them down for a moment.
- Relax, pick them up later after you've rested. Life is short. Enjoy it and the now 'supposed' stress that you've conquered!“ (unknown author – E-mail pass-on)

And don't forget to stop and  
smell the flowers.



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Thank you for coming  
Relax and enjoy your day