
ADDRESSING HR & INDUSTRY-RELATED BURNOUT

Christine Higgins, PsyD
President
Quest Behavioral Health and Employee Assistance Program



Agenda

Introduction

Burnout, compassion fatigue, and HR professionals

- Definition
- Symptoms
- Contributing Factors

Prevention

Coping with burnout

Coping during extremely busy times



Human Resources Professionals & COVID Pandemic: *UNSUNG HEROES*

Constantly evolving
work environment

Evolving legislation

Working to act in the
best interest of
employees and
business

Burnout: The “Echo Pandemic”

Definition

Prolonged response to
chronic interpersonal
work stress

Three components

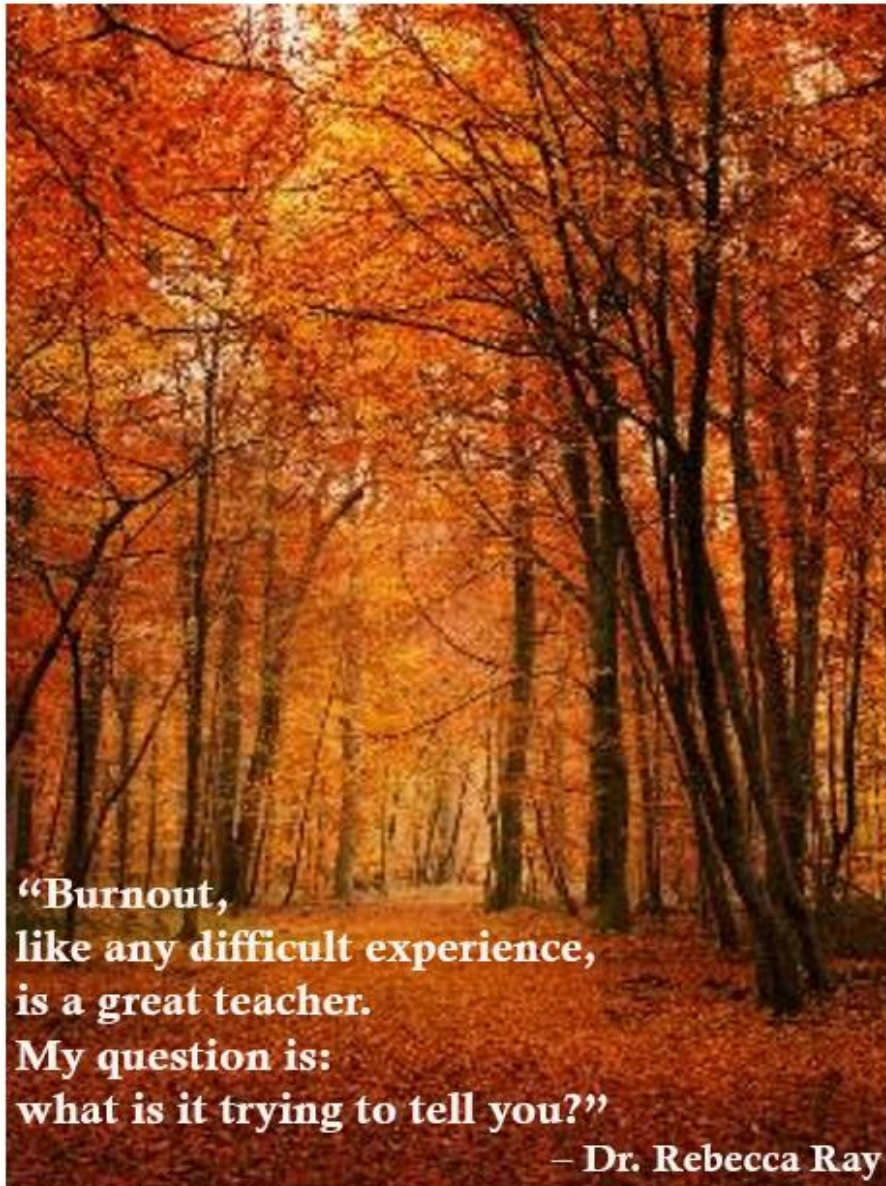
1. Exhaustion
2. Cynicism & detachment
3. Professional efficacy

Highest risk

Passionate about job;
high performers

It's not depression;
it's depletion

Can lead to depression
if untreated



**“Burnout,
like any difficult experience,
is a great teacher.
My question is:
what is it trying to tell you?”**

– Dr. Rebecca Ray

Identifying Burnout

Work performance

- Has it declined?
- Difficulty with motivation or focus?

Attitude & work satisfaction

- Disinterested?
- Detached?
- Dread or cynicism?

Well-being

- Emotionally drained?
 - Lethargic or malaise?
 - Withdrawn?
-

Compassion Fatigue

Type of burnout

When helping professionals take on others' extreme stress or trauma

For HR professionals: Often related to repeatedly guiding others through difficulties

Secondary traumatic stress or "empathy overload"

Symptoms may include:

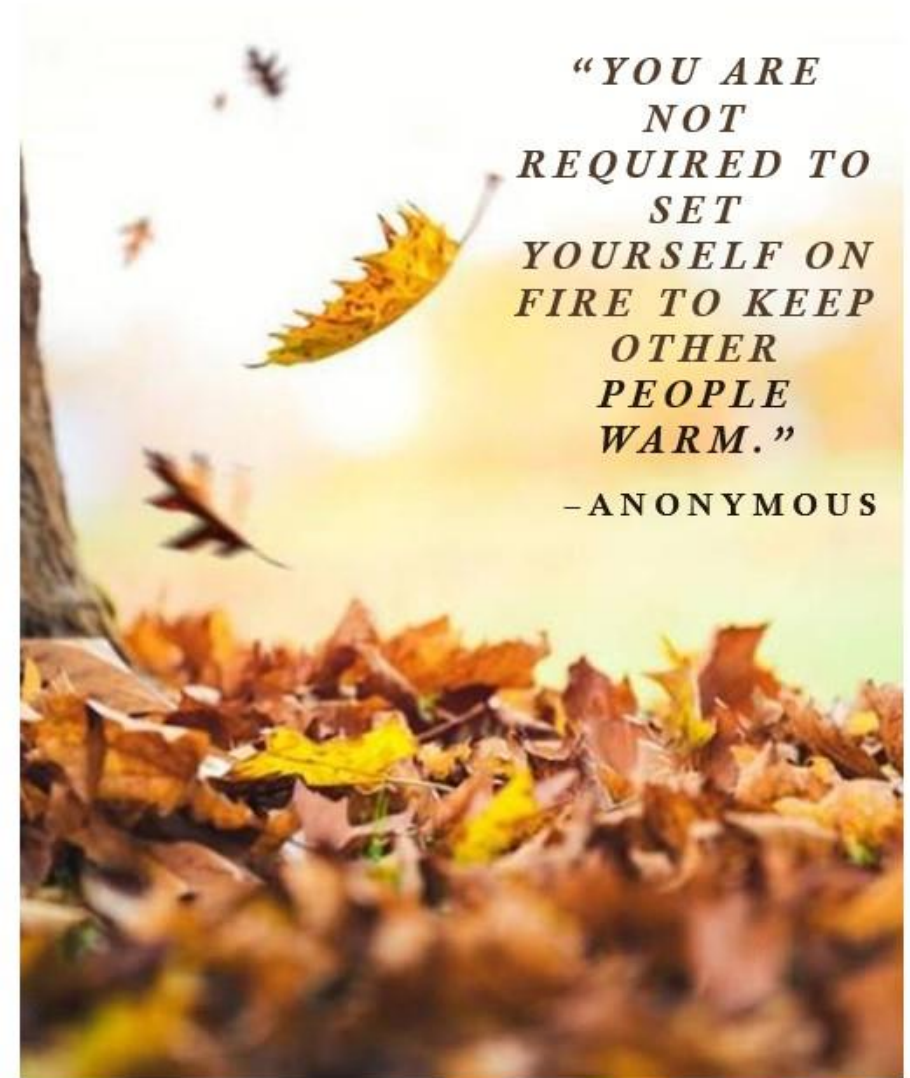
Intrusive thoughts

Numbness

Anxious

Hypervigilance

Feeling of having nothing else to give



Contributing Factors: The Big Six



1. Workload
2. Perceived lack of control
3. Reward
4. Community
5. Fairness
6. Mismatch in values

Contributing Factors: The Big Six

1. Workload

- Chronic overload
- Unable to complete it effectively; mismatches capacity
- Lack time for rest, recovery, professional growth

2. Perceived lack of control

- Lack access to resources
- Lack autonomy and/or a voice in decisions
- “What’s causing me to feel this way?”

3. Reward

- Amount of effort doesn’t meet the intrinsic or extrinsic rewards; feels like time investment isn’t worth it

Contributing Factors: The Big Six

4. Community

- How trusting and supportive are your working relationships?

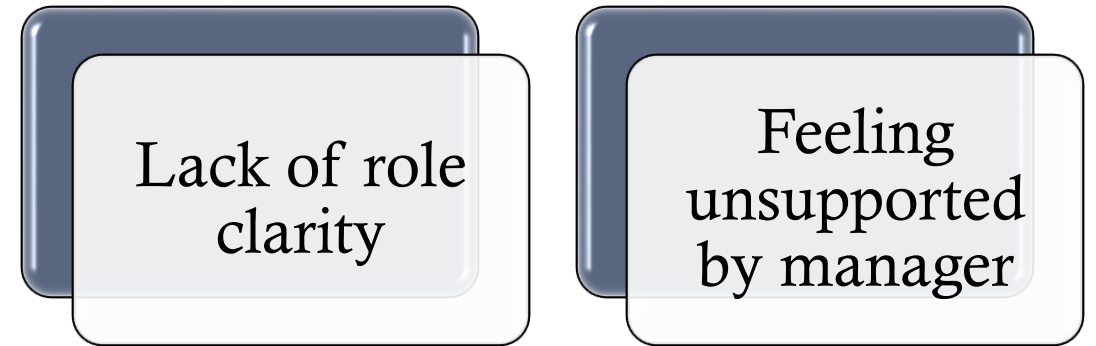
5. Fairness

- Sense of fair or equitable treatment

6. Mismatched Values

- You highly value something, but your company does not

Additional Contributing Factors



Contributing Factors for HR Professionals

Care felt for employees & pressure on oneself to help

Being liaison between employees and employers

Executing difficult decisions

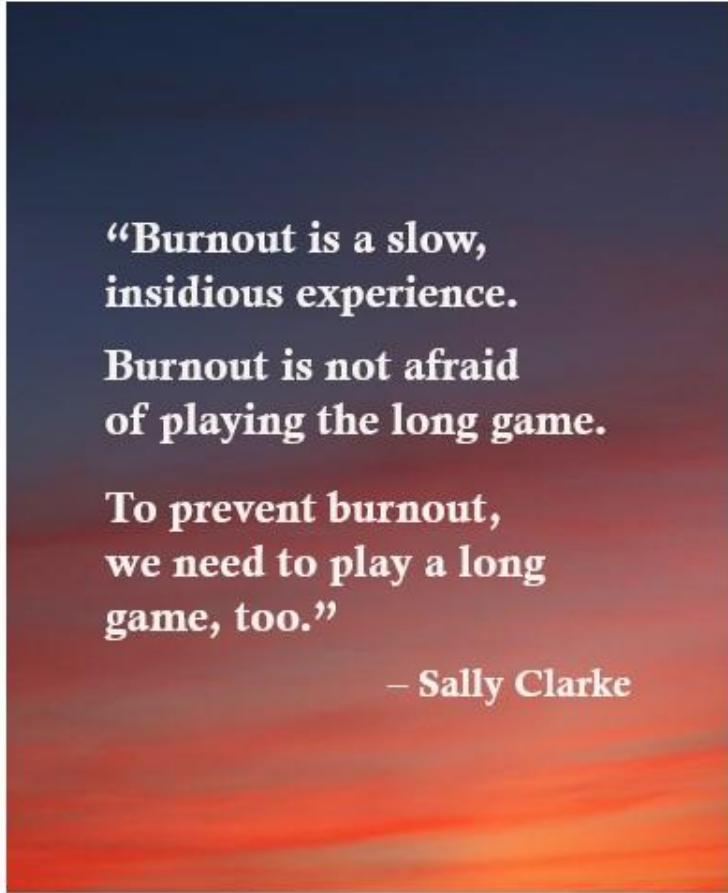
Conducting layoffs & related isolation

Pain when unable to help/support those struggling

Urgent recruiting and retention demands; short staffed

Feeling under-resourced or helpless can result in compassion fatigue

Prevention



**“Burnout is a slow,
insidious experience.
Burnout is not afraid
of playing the long game.
To prevent burnout,
we need to play a long
game, too.”**

– Sally Clarke

Takes conscious effort &
support

Set boundaries

Be realistic about
goals &
responsibilities

Diversify
workload

Ask for help

Prevention When Working from Home

Maintain

Physical & social
boundaries

Temporal boundaries

Focus

On your most important
work

- Knowledge workers are productive about 3 hours per day
- Consider strategies to remove / minimize distractions & multitasking

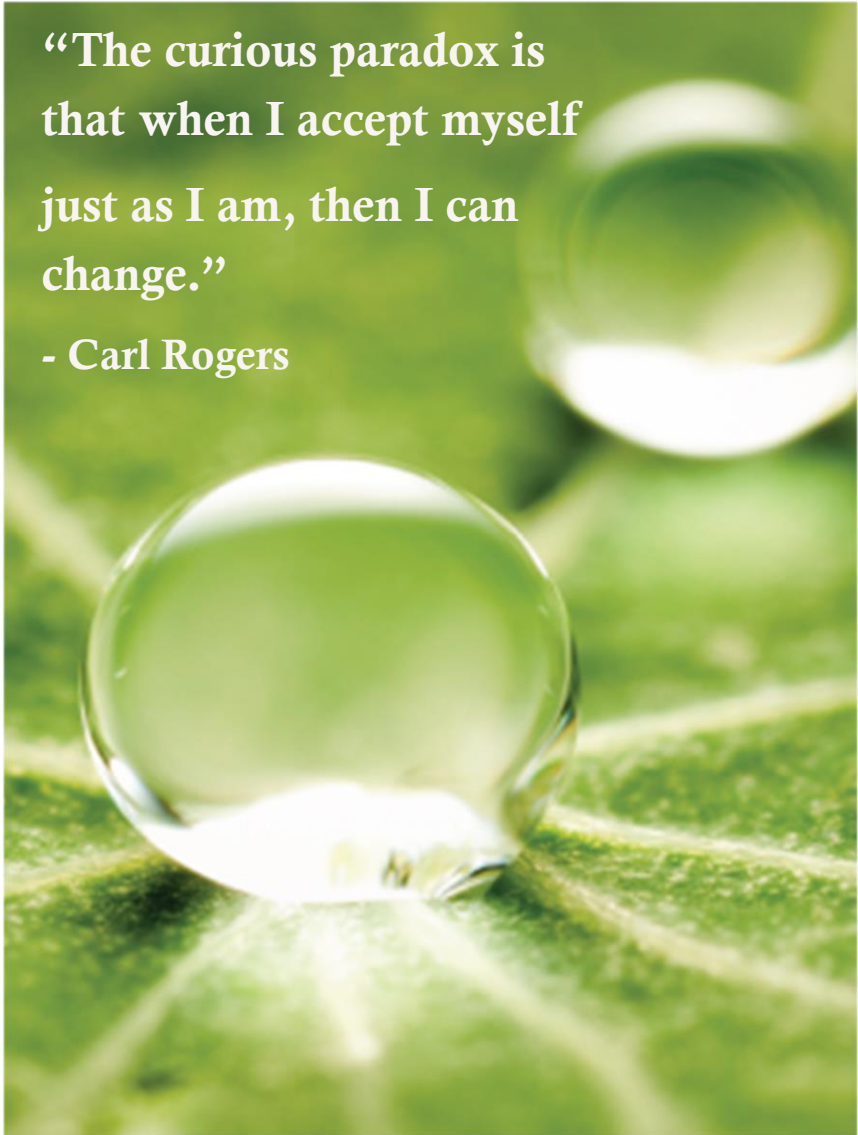
Carve out

Non-work time

Coping Travel Guide

Take small, incremental steps

Leave “should” at the door



“The curious paradox is
that when I accept myself
just as I am, then I can
change.”

- Carl Rogers

COPING CONSIDERATIONS

Self-care Examples

Mindfulness / Meditation

Deep breathing

Exercise

Social support

Therapy or Coaching

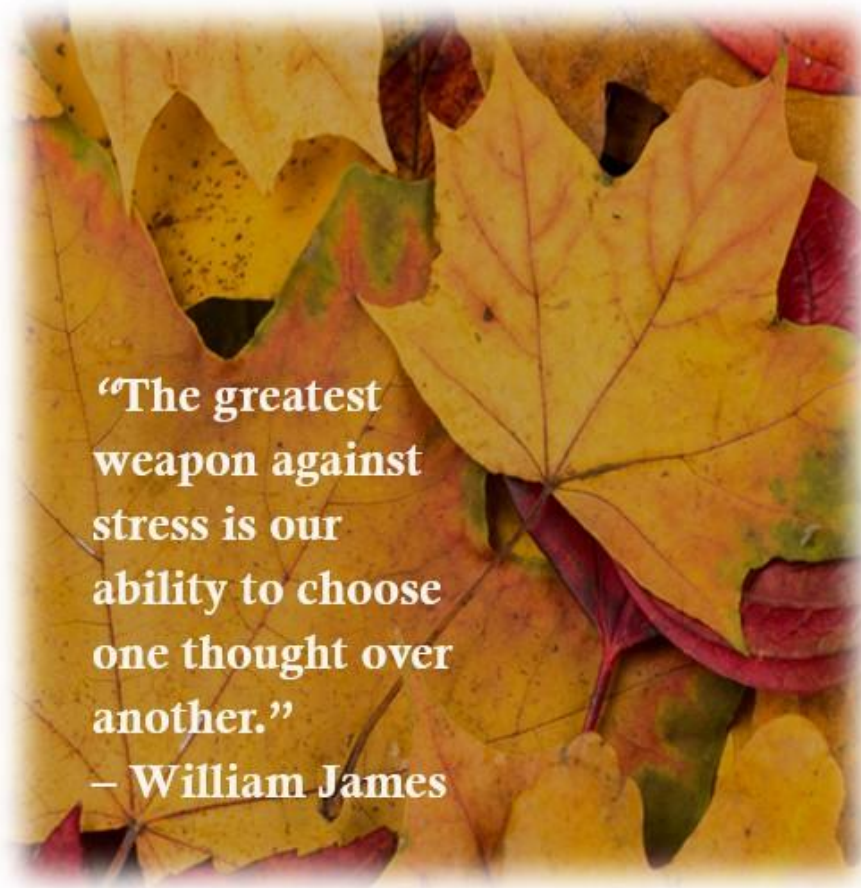
Doing these and still struggling?

- Challenge your ideas about how much you can do
- Create a “not do” list of behaviors that are not helpful

What makes you feel
replenished? Depleted?

What obstacles get in the
way?

Coping: Cognitive & Emotional



Reflect: What do you value and need, both in daily life and during periods of high stress?

Meditate

Reframe, understand, forgive

Track your mood

Focus on meaning – remind yourself why the work matters to you

Coping: Cognitive & Emotional

Practice Gratitude

- Can lead to greater compassion, connection to others & generosity
- 3 things

Practice self-compassion

- Seek to understand & care for yourself
- Curb urge to overwork – which is a trap, not a solution
- Be aware of that harsh inner critic; treat yourself like a human
- Reflect on what you have achieved each week



Coping: Behavioral & Physical

- Prioritize sleep
- Eat well & drink plenty of water
- Get some green space
- Take breaks during the workday
- Take some long weekends
- Identify & replace negative, unhealthy strategies
- Incremental approach

Coping: Work Strategies

Ask Yourself

- How do I help others perform?
- Where can I let go?

Pace Yourself

- Break down large goals into small, progressively more challenging goals
- Make small improvements consistently & persistently

Protect Your Schedule

- After 50 hours of work in a week, productivity & output decrease
- Learn when & how to say no; it creates space so you can say yes

COPING: INTERPERSONAL



Practice compassion & empathy

- Parasympathetic nervous system response (calming effect)
- Value people for who they really are
- Listen & seek to understand
- Caution: Overextending beyond emotional resources can lead to compassion fatigue; be mindful of limits

Build friendships at work; real connections matter

Coach others – decreases pre-occupation with ourselves

Coping during Extremely Busy Times

Not ideal over the long-term, but some strategies might help you through the busyness

- Premack's Principle: Use an easier behavior to reward a more difficult behavior
- Compartmentalize: Identify specific, enjoyable aspects of a task as a means of becoming more mindful to savor those aspects

Coping during Extremely Busy Times

Save small scraps of time for mental rest

- Avoid all or none approach

Add physical decompression rituals to your day

- Decide which moments of the day you'll do this

Pair simple sources of pleasure with things you don't like to do

Remember:



Small, incremental
steps



Identify what works
for YOU

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THANK YOU

Christine Higgins, PsyD

chiggins3@questbh.com

www.questbh.com

