

Care for the Caregivers: Coping in a Pandemic

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What is Stress?

There is no definition of stress that everyone agrees on, what is stressful for one person may be pleasurable or have little effect on others. We all react to stress differently.



“What are you stressed about?”



Some Current Stressors?

- Fears of contagion: How much is too much?
- Witnessing Suffering
- Social Isolation
- Financial Concerns
- Impact on my Family
- Lack of Exercise
- Sleep Deprivation
- Food as Comfort



COVID-19 Challenges


- ✿ Its important to acknowledge feelings of stress and perhaps grief related to COVID-19
- ✿ It may be very difficult to process these experiences in the middle of an emergency
- ✿ Some of what we know about PTSD may help....first stop the spinning and then begin the process
- ✿ For HIV survivors a feeling of weary déjà vu (NYT, April 8, 2020)

An Invitation to "Unmask" & Build Community




COVID-19 (coronavirus)


6 Tips for Coping with the Stress




It's normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during a crisis. Talking to people you trust can help. Get in touch with your loved ones and connect with them.




Be aware that not everything being said about COVID-19 is accurate. Go to trusted sources like your state or local health department, the CDC or the World Health Organization.




Limit your stress and fear by reducing how much time you spend watching or reading the news or scrolling through social media, especially when you feel it's upsetting information.



Do things you've done in the past to help manage challenges and stress. Know that you've developed skills to manage your emotions and use them during this time, too.



If you're staying home, stay healthy by eating well, getting plenty of sleep, exercising regularly and having good social contact with loved ones by phone or video chat.



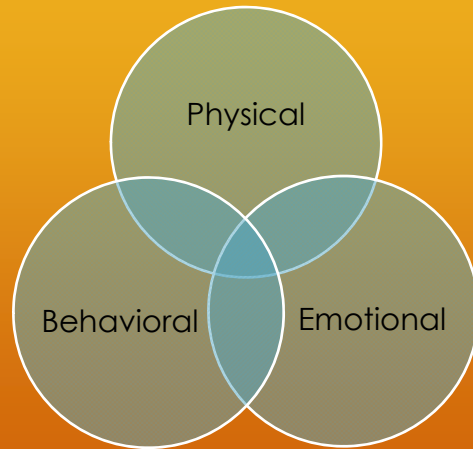
Deal with your emotions in a healthy way. Have a plan ready in case you do start to feel overwhelmed, and don't hesitate to talk to a counselor or therapist if you need to.

*Created for Mission Health by Jarrard Phillips Gate & Hancock, Inc.
**Adapted from the International Federation of Red Cross; data from the World Health Organization

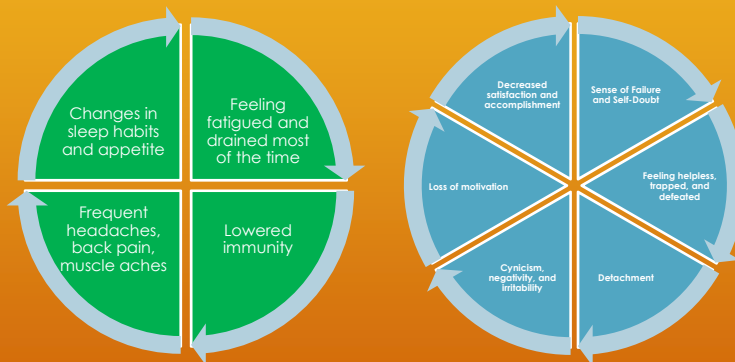
Warning Signs for Burnout

Stress	Burnout
Hyper- engagement	Disengagement
Emotions are Overreactive	Emotions are Blunted
Urgency and Hyperactivity	Helplessness and Hopelessness
Loss of Energy	Loss of Motivation, Ideals, and Hope
Anxiety and Anger	Leads to Detachment and Depression
Physical Damage	Emotional Damage

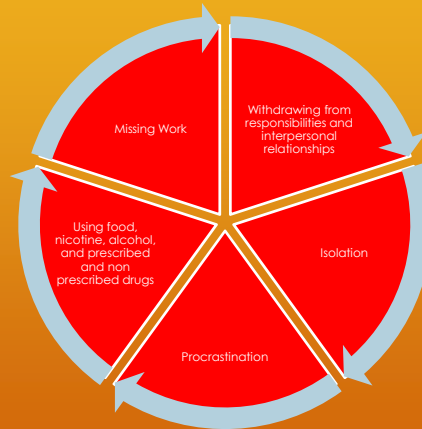
The Impact of Burnout



Physical & Emotional Signs of Burnout



Behavioral Problems & Burnout



Dealing with Burnout The “Three R” Approach

- ⚙️ **Recognize** – Watch for the warning signs of burnout
- ⚙️ **Reverse** – Undo the damage by managing stress and seeking support
- ⚙️ **Resilience** – Build your resilience to stress by taking care of your physical and emotional health



Wellness Strategies

- Seeking Solace thru Spiritual and religious practices
- Meditation and Mindfulness
- Moving toward rather than away or against people
- Friends and Family Support
- Consider Counseling/medication as needed

Wellness Strategies

- ✿ Regular cardiovascular exercise
- ✿ Mindfulness Eating
- ✿ Practicing Sleep Hygiene
- ✿ Managing work schedule
- ✿ Doing Pleasurable hobbies



Caregiver Tips

<https://www.bucme.org/node/1219>

- ✿ Create and Maintain pre-shift routines and post-shift routines
- ✿ Take breaks – even when you think you shouldn't!
- ✿ Stress Management Tools
- ✿ Unplug from media and news outlets
- ✿ Lean on others and accept support
- ✿ Use Apps to stay connected
- ✿ Stay connected with loved ones – "Family toolkit" keep small photos, cards, symbols of home
- ✿ Hug/Affirmation Jars
- ✿ Journal
- ✿ Utilize Creative outlets
- ✿ Aromatherapy
- ✿ Celebrate joyous occasions and successes!

Seeking Balance



Final Reflections

- ✿ "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference". The Serenity Prayer