

Tuning In to Avoid Burning Out

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Objectives

- Describe/discuss burnout, stress and their relationship to one another
- Discuss "attention's" role in the stress/burnout process
- Identify and describe means/strategies of **utilizing** stress to address burnout

What to do is simple (not easy), and you already know how to do it...

Before We Begin

The real problem in speech is not **precise language**. The problem is **clear language**. The desire is to have the idea clearly communicated to the other person. It is only necessary to be precise when there is some doubt as to the meaning of a phrase, and then the precision should be put in the place where the doubt exists. **It is really quite impossible to say anything with absolute precision, unless that thing is so abstracted from the real world as to not represent any real thing.**

-Richard Feynman, physicist

Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of our **language**.

-Ludwig Wittgenstein

An Important Distinction

I want to the woods because
 I wished to live deliberately,
 to front only the essential
 facts of life, and see
 if I could not learn what
 it had to teach, and not,
 when I came to die, discover
 that I had not lived.
 - Henry David Thoreau

What is Burnout?



"...a psychological syndrome emerging as a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors" (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).



Has three main impacts:

Feelings of extreme exhaustion
 Feelings of cynicism and detachment
 Feelings of being ineffective and lacking accomplishment



Has been studied for over 40 years, and...

There is no agreed upon definition or explanation
 There is no empirically supported "treatment" for the syndrome

"If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough."

- Albert Einstein

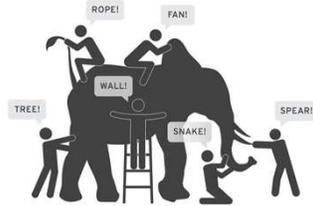
"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

- Albert Einstein

My opinions about burnout....

In this age of specialization men who thoroughly know one field are often incompetent to discuss another. The great problems of the relations between one and another aspect of human activity have for this reason been discussed less and less in public.

- Richard Feynman, physicist



A Systemic View of Burnout

What is a System?

The Anatomy of a Complex System

- A complex system is **OPEN**:
 - It is comprised of and comprises all surrounding systems (i.e., networks)
- A complex system is **CHAOS CAPABLE / NON-LINEAR**:
 - Small changes within the initial conditions of the system can lead to dramatically different outcomes
 - This means that the outputs of a complex system cannot be predicted or directed
- A complex system is **EMERGENT / SELF-ORGANIZING**:
 - Traits are only expressed through the interactions of elements within the system in relationship to one another and not in isolation (i.e. structure and function)
- A complex system is **ISOMORPHIC**:
 - This refers to fundamental structural sameness across complex systems. All this means is that the same processes at play in one part of the system are at play in all parts of the system no matter how micro or macro you are looking.

Osteopathic Principles

- The body is a unit, and the person represents a combination of body, mind and spirit
- The body is capable of self-regulation, self-healing and maintenance
- Structure and function are reciprocally interrelated
- Rational treatment is based on an understanding of these principles, body unity, self-regulation and the interrelationship of structure and function

What is STRESS?

Implications

- (You) are a process of the coordinated tension of every cell in your body
 - 37.2 trillion human cells
 - 200 different types
 - 30-50 trillion non-human cells that comprise our microbiome
- This sense of (YOU) is what we call:

Self/Ego

The Function of Ego

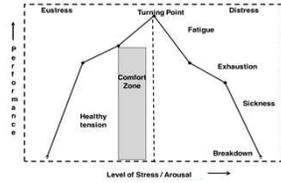
What is conveyed or represented by a particular arrangement or sequence of things.
-OED

Understanding Stress & Performance

Building the Connection

Yerkes- Dodson Law (1908)

- Stress leads to arousal, which increases performance. However, the relationship is curvilinear
- As arousal increases attention narrows
- Increased distractibility



Another Simple Truth

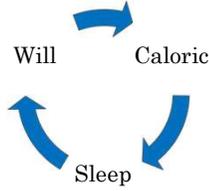
Stress does not create/cause **burnout**...

...our lack of responsivity to **stress** does.

*It is not stress that kills us, it is our **reaction** to it*
- Hans Selye, MD

Responding to Stress

· Our level of responsivity depends of the level of three interconnected energies:



Willpower

Core Assumptions

- Our general experience as humans can be broken down into Volitional and Non-Volitional action
- All action requires energy
 - Includes all mental processes
- As energy moves out of a system, the system moves towards disregulation

Ego Depletion

- Rather than being infinite, willpower is a finite but replenishable resource
- As this resource is depleted, the efficiency and effectiveness of volitional acts are compromised
- In other words...willpower =

Willpower is not about control!

{in•flu•ence} v.
1. to affect the nature, development,
or condition of;

Control vs influence

The power to direct people's behavior or the course of events...

The capacity to have an effect on the character,
development, or behavior of someone or something, or
the effect itself...

Mind: The emergent self-organizing process, both embodied
and relational, that regulates energy and information flow.

- Dan Siegel, MD

Yet another Simple Truth

You do not control your...



Consciousness, then, does not appear to itself chopped up in bits. Such words as 'chain' or 'train' do not describe it fitly as it presents itself in the first instance. It is nothing jointed; it flows. A 'river' or a 'stream' are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described.

- William James, father of American psychology



The Knot

- When experiencing sensations/emotions, we have four ways to orient to them:
 - Ignore
 - Avoid
 - Distract
 - Address

"Make everything as simple as possible, but not simpler."
- Albert Einstein

Utilizing Stress

	<h3>The Goal</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Paying attention to the sensation/emotion...like we do with any other.

- It continues with treating willpower like any other bodily/process: input/output/entropy
- Do you eat only once a week?
- Do you sleep only twice a week?

entropy

- Ultimately, there must exist the right daily/weekly/monthly/yearly ratio of energy giving VS energy taking experiences
- **Burnout** is the chronic disproportionate ratio of taking VS giving experiences



Responding
to
Stress

Step 1: Self Assessment

Ask yourself this one question....

What do you look forward to everyday?

BUT

...it cannot be going home and sleeping.

Step 2: Determine What Regulates You



There is **NO** predetermined course of action- it depends on what is meaningful to **YOU!**



However, the characteristics of an energizing activity are specific:

Lack of guilt after having engaged in the activity
Emotional / mental centeredness / stability afterwards regardless the level of physical exertion

The Heart
of an
Energizing
Activity

- Something small daily
- Something larger weekly
- Something even larger monthly

Step 3: Developing a Self-Care Regimen

Step 4: Develop a Sleep Ritual

- A speeding car must slow down gradually as it approaches a stop light.
 - Waiting until it is right at the light to stop can cause...?
- Our mind...
- Sleeping...

SO...do you gradually slow down after a long day or do you try and slam on the breaks?

Sleep Ritual Tips

- Try to unwind for **at least** 1 hour prior to trying to sleep
- Engaging in enjoyable but minimally stimulating activities
 - Books
 - Music
 - TV
 - Shows that relax not frustrate you (e.g., the news)
 - Hot shower/bath

Step 5: Implementation

- Rather than "looking for time," you can only MAKE time for yourself.
- Take stock of your day:
 - Question for self:
 - What does my day look like (hour by hour) from the time I wake up to the time I go to sleep?
- Instead of trying to do selfcare activities in blocks of time (1-3 hours), try to "pepper" it throughout your day.
 - 7 minute workout
 - Breathing exercises
 - Short walk outside

Implementation Con't

- Expect that you will have make adjustments over time
 - What worked once may stop working or become less effective given what is going on in your life
 - More Stress = More self care...however, the more stressful things get, the less likely we are to engage in self care...OH THE IRONY
- Plan for this plan to be implemented gradually over time
 - If mind=muscle, over exertion can lead to atrophy (i.e., change fatigue).

Programing Practice

Be Consistent!
Be persistent!
Be consistently persistent!
Be persistently consistent!

Most importantly, know that you will not "be" these things all the time...AND...that is part of the process!

It is OKAY!

Developing an Attention to Being Intentional...

Mind Full, or Mindful?

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