

Delnor Hospital News

Are you burned out?

Absolutely, positively, the last article you'll ever need to read about stress

By Richard R. Grayson, M.D.

Have you just about "had it"? Are you at the point where you can't take it anymore? Do you feel you can't cope with your problems even one more time? You might be burned out.

To be burned out is to be stressed beyond one's ability to cope. It is to be emotionally exhausted. Burnout is caused by excessive striving to reach some unrealistic expectation imposed by one's self.

An unrealistic expectation might be to perform perfectly and to have everyone appreciate this obvious perfection. Consider the minister whose parishioners, after his intensive help and counseling, still leave his church. Or think of the doctor who has done his best but his patient still forsakes him. Or how about the working mother who arrives home late and is criticized by the family for a skimpy supper—and then finds her teen-agers becoming wayward and rebellious despite her self-sacrifice.

The expectation we all have is that when we do the right thing we should be able to know

gets, and the widgets disappeared into a hole. Then suppose you never saw another person, never got paid and no one knew or cared about your work. I can think of very few things worse than this—the absence of any ACHIEVEMENT or relevant feedback. Some jobs are like this. At the end of a boring week, the paycheck is eaten up by deductions, and what is left goes to pay bills, leaving nothing. Even though you might not have previously verbalized this expectation, you know that you hope to feel a sense of accomplishment from your effort.

Coping behavior, the fourth item in the stress equation, is just another way of referring to the amount of WORK one does. Scientific experiments show that even among animals of the same species, some animals will expend more effort in attempting to cope with stresses. The ones that tried the hardest to overcome the experimental stresses developed more stomach ulcers than did the animals which gave up sooner. This can be compared to a similar situation in people who work harder and harder to overcome their insurmountable problems. They become exhausted and suffer more stress and burnout than do those people who care less about what happens and therefore work less. The under-achievers of this world are

sometimes less stressed than the overachievers. You might say that the frustrated over-achievers are the ones most at risk for burnout, not the successful overachievers.

To minimize stress and avoid burnout, therefore, one needs to be rewarded for effort, should not receive punishment for what one does and should be able to gain a sense of achievement. It would seem self-evident that the more reward, praise and achievement the better. Ideally, even though it may not be realistic, we might hope for a total absence of negative things happening to us because of our activities.

But since this is not an ideal world, what defenses can we build against the stresses of our life?

We can define our particular problem by the use of the stress equation and reduce the negative aspects of our life and increase the positive aspects.

There is no virtue in unnecessary suffering. We can cut out or avoid at least some of the things that upset us during the day. If we need more praise, we can even ask for it from the people who love us. Or we can add something to each day ourselves that is personally rewarding.

We can apply the golden rule in our dealings with others. We can try to ease their burdens by praising them when we can and as we would like to be praised. They might then be able to cope so well that they will even be able to praise and assist us sometime.

Finally, we can remember the old adage: Behind every door of adversity there is a new world of opportunity. Challenges produce new growth and enlarge our abilities. So the new job will really be a better one. And the grass might even be greener on the other side.

Parental consent for treatment of a minor

Medical emergencies with children arise at any time without warning, even when a child's parent is not



DELNOR
HOSPITAL

975 North Fifth Avenue
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Emergency Staff

CONSENT FOR TREATMENT

I/we hereby give my/our consent to the Delnor Hospital Emergency Department Staff and the doctors on the hospital's Medical Staff to treat my child/children in the event that I/we cannot be, and until I/we can be, contacted to give consent personally.

