Dental Leadership Burnout After 5 Months of COVID:
A Safe Space to Share and Support

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Objectives

• Learn to recognize burnout and stress-related behavior

• Understand the need to step back and engage in self-care

• List common situations that create work-related stress in dental program leaders
Acute vs Chronic Stress

- Short-term stress resulting from normal parts of everyday life.
- Triggered by specific events or situations that are new, unpredictable, a threat to the ego, and leave us with a poor sense of control.
- "On the spot" type of stress that is good because the stress hormones released help our mind and body deal with a situation and help our stress response system stay on the ball.

- Long-term stress resulting from repeated exposure to situations that lead to the constant release of stress hormones.
- Can cause wear and tear on the mind and body, the breakdown of many bodily systems, and is linked to heart disease, hypertension, high cholesterol, type II diabetes, and depression.
What is Burnout?

Burnout is physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion, especially in one’s job or career, accompanied by decreased motivation, lowered performance, and negative attitude towards oneself and others. It results from performing at a high level until stress and tension, especially from extreme and prolonged physical and mental exhaustion or an overburdening workload, take their toll.
Burnout Statistics

- 2018 Gallup poll: Of nearly 7,500 employees, 23% reported burnout at work very often or always, while an additional 44% reported feeling burned out sometimes.

- Increased risk among helping professionals who often lack focus on self-care due to attending to the needs of others.
Psychological Symptoms of Burnout

- Anxiety, Depression, Anger, Frustration, Detachment, Listlessness, Emotional Numbness/Apathy, Hopelessness and Powerlessness
- Fatigue, Difficulty Concentrating, Lack of Creativity, Reduced Performance and Productivity
- Loss of Purpose, Passion, and Commitment to the role/job, Cynicism towards Job, Co-workers, and Life in general
- Absenteeism and Job Turnover
Physical Symptoms of Burnout

- Chronic Fatigue/Exhaustion
- Loss of appetite/Weight loss
- Headaches and/or Generalized aches and pains and muscle tension
- Difficulty sleeping and/or a disrupted sleep cycle
- Increased susceptibility to acute and/or chronic illnesses
Burnout Self-Assessments

- Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)
- Oldenburg Burnout Inventory
- Single-Item Burnout Measure
- Copenhagen Burnout Inventory
- Standard Professional Fulfillment Index
- Well-Being Index
- Patient Health Questionnaire - 9
Combating Burnout

- Acknowledge and talk about feelings and stressors.
  - Talking about it releases emotions/is cathartic.
  - Helps people realize their feelings are normal and they are not alone, which helps provide needed validation and reduces feelings of isolation.
  - Provides opportunities for connecting with others who may have already developed positive coping strategies that can be shared with others.
Combating Burnout

- Examine and challenge negative, self-defeating thoughts.

“COVID-19 is the worst thing that has ever happened. There is no way to solve all of the problems it has caused. This is never going to end!”

VERSUS

“COVID-19 is an unfortunate situation that no one saw coming. It has certainly presented new challenges. I’ve overcome challenges in the past. As long as I take it one day/step at a time, I’ll eventually get through this one too.”
Combating Burnout

- Practice positive affirmations/self-talk.
  - Challenges bring opportunities.
  - I can handle whatever comes my way.
  - I have dealt with this before, I can do it again.
- Focus on/change areas of control and accept/let go of areas beyond control.
  - KNOW THE DIFFERENCE!
- Develop realistic expectations for self, others, and the situation.
  - Resist perfectionism.
  - Learn to forgive (yourself and others).
Combating Burnout

- Create and Prioritize To-Do List
- Break down Tasks/Goals into smaller, more manageable steps
- Cross off completed items
- Delegate and ask for support/help when possible

Helps reduce overwhelming feelings and leads to a sense of accomplishment and empowerment.
Combating Burnout

- Take breaks at work, even if only for a few minutes
  - Short walks
  - Deep breathing (“Breathe2Relax” app)
  - Imagery (“Headspace” app)
  - Meditation (“Calm” app)
  - Take lunch outside of the office
- Set limits/boundaries at work
  - Be more assertive/learn how to say “no”
  - Take time off
  - The “Away” Box (at work or at home)
- Find humor in the situation
Self-care Outside of Work

- Eat healthily, exercise regularly, and get proper rest (7 to 8 hours of sleep per night).
- Limit/avoid use of alcohol or illicit substances.
- Limit outside stressors, say “no” to extras.
- Talk to/spend time with family and friends, journal, read, listen to music, spend time in nature, take a long bath, play with a pet, get a massage.
- Seek counseling if needed.
References


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Share & Support

• You can remain anonymous

• Chat in question or situation- no names will be used

• Raise hand- you will be identified by initials only to unmute
Register at nnoha.org
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