

Burnout Presentation

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Speaker Disclosures



Dr. Bryan MacLeod

Relationships with financial sponsors (including honoraria):

- AFMC – opioids, substance abuse and chronic pain curriculum
- OCFP – Practising Well Implementation Group member and information session speaker
- NOSM, MERLIN 2020 – Education Research Fund
- NOSM LEG – Student Research Funding
- Mindful Self-Compassion faculty - NOSM
- Center for Mindful Self-Compassion – Trained Teacher



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Relationships with financial sponsors (including honoraria):

- Kindful Psychology Services – Owner/Founder
- Center for Mindful Self-Compassion – Trained Teacher

Outline

- Definition of Burnout
- Brief CMA & NOSM stats on burnout
- Caregiving Fatigue & Empathy Overwhelm
- Compassion with Equanimity Practice
- Resources, etc.

Burnout

“A depleted state characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment.”

(Maslach, 1981; Freudenberger, 1974)

Physician Health

- Canadian Physicians experience high rates of burnout (30%), depression (34%) and suicidal ideation (19%) (CMA, 2018)
- This has only worsened during COVID: “The [CMA physician health] survey, conducted in November 2021, shows more than half of physicians and medical learners (53%) have experienced high levels of burnout, compared to 30% in a similar survey conducted in 2017. As well, nearly half (46%) of Canadian physicians who responded are considering reducing their clinical work in the next 24 months” (CMA 2022)

Extra Stress for Female Physicians

- “gender-based discrimination,
 - evaluation biases against women,
 - higher standards set for women,
 - exclusion from male-dominated social networking,
 - lack of women-to-women mentoring,
 - work-life-family balance issues,
 - and hostile work environments”
 - ...” What is truly alarming in female physicians is their suicide rate. Whereas male physicians have a suicidal rate about 70% higher than men in the general population, female physicians have a suicidal rate over **250% higher** than women in the general population”
- (Wong, 2020)

**Results of the
NOSM Exit
Survey
showed:**

- In 2018 & 2020: 60% of residents had experienced burnout at some point in time during their residency
- In 2019: 71% of residents had experienced burnout at some point in time during their residency

**COVID is a
double-hit on
our social
wiring...**

- **Connection & loss during the day**
- **For many/some complete isolation or disconnection away from work.**
- **Or being forced to literally isolate from our own loved ones.**

Burnout

- Signs?
 - Mental
 - Emotional
 - Behavioural
 - Relational
 - Physiological

A red speech bubble graphic with a white outline, containing the text 'Signs of Burnout'. The bubble has a tail pointing towards the bottom left.

Signs of Burnout

- Easily distracted
- Angry or irritable
- Uneasy sleep/insomnia
- Avoiding people or things
- Sadness, anxiety
- Racing thoughts
- Distressing, intrusive thoughts

Caregiving Fatigue = Empathic Overwhelm

- Empathic resonance is a key feature of caregiving
- Human brain is highly social
- Evolutionary adaptation to have a social brain:
 - cooperation helped to promote our survival

Empathy

- Empathic resonance is preverbal (before words!)
- Emotions are contagious
- Mirror neurons
- Resonating with suffering in a caregiving role

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Coping with Burnout

- How do you cope with burnout?
- Are there any limitations to these strategies?

Self- Compassion for Burnout

- Compassion fatigue is a misnomer – more like “empathy fatigue”
- Empathy vs. Compassion
 - Empathy
 - “I feel what you feel”
 - Compassion – Empathy that cares –
 - a sense of tenderness and kindness that embraces the suffering of others rather than emotionally reacting to it
 - Energizing emotion
 - Compassion holds both our patient’s pain and our own – NOT a one-way road!
- When we are calm and soothed – our patients can pick up on this and resonate calmness as well.

Equanimity

- **Equanimity** helps us to remain balanced when we are with others in their pain.
 - It's kindness with perspective.
- "... spacious stillness of mind, [where] we can:
 - " fully connect to whatever is happening around us, fully connect to others,
 - "but without our habitual reactions of rushing toward what is pleasant and pulling away from what is unpleasant.
 - "Developing equanimity, in effect, is how we can forge a space **between fear and compassion** and between **sorrow and compassion.**" (Sharon Salzberg)

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Compassion with Equanimity Practice

Online Mindful Self-Compassion:

- [Center for Mindful Self-Compassion](#)
- [Neff Website Research Resources](#)
- [Kindful Psych](#)
- [MSC North](#)

Books:

- [Fierce Self-Compassion: How Women Can Harness Kindness to Speak Up, Claim Their Power, and Thrive,](#) by Kristen Neff 2021
- [Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself](#) by Kristin Neff. 2011
- [The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion: Freeing Yourself from Destructive Thoughts and Emotions](#) by Christopher K. Germer, 2009

“I’m good but always keen to provide better care...” 😊

- [Attending: Medicine, Mindfulness, and Humanity](#) by Ronald Epstein, 2017

A Great Academic Look at the broader Issues:

[Beyond burnout: looking deeply into physician distress.](#) Wong, A.
[VOLUME 55, ISSUE 3, SUPPLEMENT 1,](#)

A Deeper
Dive into
Burnout,
Mindfulness
& Self-
Compassion

Thank you!

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