

# Us

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We cannot **and must not** fall back  
on the defense mechanisms that  
allow others to ignore the  
realities we bear witness to every  
day

**There is no “other”**

**There is only US**

If we are to be this open to reality,  
without falling back on toxic defense  
mechanisms . . .

We must have strategies and supports  
that allow us to remain whole while  
serving youth in a loving way

# Something We Who Serve Others Rarely Speak About

Us

**How do we define success?**

To touch many lives over a  
lifetime of service and  
connection with others

# We are the role models that. . .

**Display resilience**

**Choose to cope in healthy ways**

**Admit vulnerability and personal limits**

**Reject stigma**

**See strength in seeking help**



# Burnout Prevention

**Stress** is usually something people are acutely aware of, whereas burnout can present insidiously.

When you are **stressed**, you care too much, but when you are burned out, you don't see any hope of improvement. You are numb.

The Worst thing is not to be  
stressed . . . it is to be **NUMB**

# Stress

Characterized by over engagement

Emotions are overreactive

Produces urgency and hyperactivity

Loss of energy

# Stress

Leads to anxiety disorders

Primary damage is physical

May kill you prematurely

**Activated, sometimes paralyzed**

# Burnout

Characterized by disengagement

Emotions are blunted

Produces helplessness and  
hopelessness

Loss of motivation, ideals, and hope

# Burnout

Leads to detachment and Depression

Primary damage is emotional

May make life seem not worth living

**Depleted**

# Workplace Factors that lead to burnout:

- **Cultures that normalize extending oneself beyond physical, or emotional capacities.**
- **Cultures that confuse over-functioning with ambitiousness and blur the boundary between professional and personal lives.**
- **Coercive or punitive rules**
- **Work that causes you to violate your personal values**



# Individual Factors that lead to burnout:

- **Individuals who have unmet personal needs or have conflicting needs**
- **Individuals whose self definition is too tightly tied to work**
- **Setting unrealistic goals for yourself or having them imposed on you**
- **Being expected to be too many things to too many people**

# The Universal Factor that may lead to our burnout:

**Those who spend their work lives attending to the needs of others, especially if their work puts them in frequent contact with the dark or tragic side of human experience.**

# What does burnout do to our relationships and work environment?

May make us less likely to engage

May send a message to eager coworkers that they are over-functioning, setting an overall lower standard as part of the “welcoming” or orientation process

May make more energetic coworkers **misjudge** seasoned colleagues as unfeeling or uncaring, when, in fact, the problem is that they have cared too much

Serving Over a Lifetime

# **The “Solution” on One Slide**

**(The premise is ridiculous)**

- 1. Boundaries**
- 2. Knowing (and experiencing) that what we do matters**
- 3. Self-Care**

# Boundaries

- Not the easy stuff. How do you love and still remain whole?
- Knowing our buttons
- Being trauma-informed
- Knowing who is the expert
- Avoiding the rescue fantasy
- Giving control back
- Planting seeds

# Being Trauma Informed is Healing (for Us and Youth)

But focusing on **trauma** or risk holds  
the potential to re-traumatize

**Knowing (and experiencing) that  
what we do matters**





Who's the expert?

Who's the facilitator?

Turning off the lecture

Restoring control to the person who needs it

**Self Care: The Greatest Gift You Can  
Give Those You Serve**

“Love is seeing someone as they deserve to be seen, *as they really are* , not through the lens of the behaviors they have sometimes needed to display.”

The importance of  
**Connection** can not be  
overstated. . .

- Family
- Spirituality
- Community
- **Mission**

# Writing a personal mission statement

# Finding a Mentor

# Being a Mentor



We are not Superman  
(or Superwoman)

# Is balance possible?

**Urgent**  
Not Important

**Urgent**  
Important

Not Urgent  
Not Important

Not Urgent  
Important (at least to you!)



**What is High Yield**

**What is irreplaceable?**

**Where are you irreplaceable?**

Do we view our colleagues, and even ourselves, through the same strength-based lens with which we commit to see the young people we serve?

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The Tupperware Box

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