



# Burnout Prevention

Help I'm falling and I want to stay UP!

September 19, 2014

2014 NCATOD Annual Conference

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“To hear most people tell it, everything is fine ... even some say Life is Good ...well most times I don’t buy it...if I knew how to do better..feel better, I would, but I have had this old mask on so long..so very long...I don’t even know if my soul remembers my true LIFE SONG” *Life Song by Barbara Armstrong White*



Focus of this Seminar

**YOU!**

- Burnout Defined
- Indicators for those working in OTP
  - Burnout v Stress
  - Preventing Burnout
    - Staying “Afloat”
- Getting ready to spread those Wings

# Burnout v Stress: They are Different!

- The term “burnout” was coined in the 1970s by the American psychologist Herbert Freudenberger. He used it to describe the consequences of severe stress and high ideals experienced by people working in “helping” professions. Doctors and nurses, for example, who sacrifice themselves for others, would often end up being “burned out” – exhausted, listless, and unable to cope.
- The term “stress”, as it is currently used was coined by Hans Selye in 1936, who defined it as “the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change”.

Source: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0050545/>

Source: The American Institute of Stress,  
<http://www.stress.org/what-is-stress/>

# So, How Do I Know???

- You might just be burned out if...
  - You feel like “Have a Nice Day” is the worst ever parting statement that you want to hear. As a matter of fact, you really feel that EVERY day is a bad day.
  - You feel drained ..lifeless..listless – hard to remember when you had enough energy to get beyond the basics.
- You go to seminars and staff enrichment activities because you HAVE to! And if you do, you feel it totally unnecessary to socialize or interact with “those people”.
- You feel that what you do (no matter what it is) does not matter and that your efforts mean nothing

Your loved ones  
whisper around  
you and try to  
talk as gently as  
possible because  
they do not  
know what else  
to do!



# Burnout and Stress: They are Different

## With Stress

The Glass is Empty  
Without enough energy  
to add more  
Maybe someone will  
come by with the  
pitcher ... If not, then I'll  
figure out a way...I am  
not that thirsty YET!



## With Burnout

It's broken and it will  
stay that way, I don't  
care anymore...just  
leave me alone...I  
didn't want to taste it  
anyway.

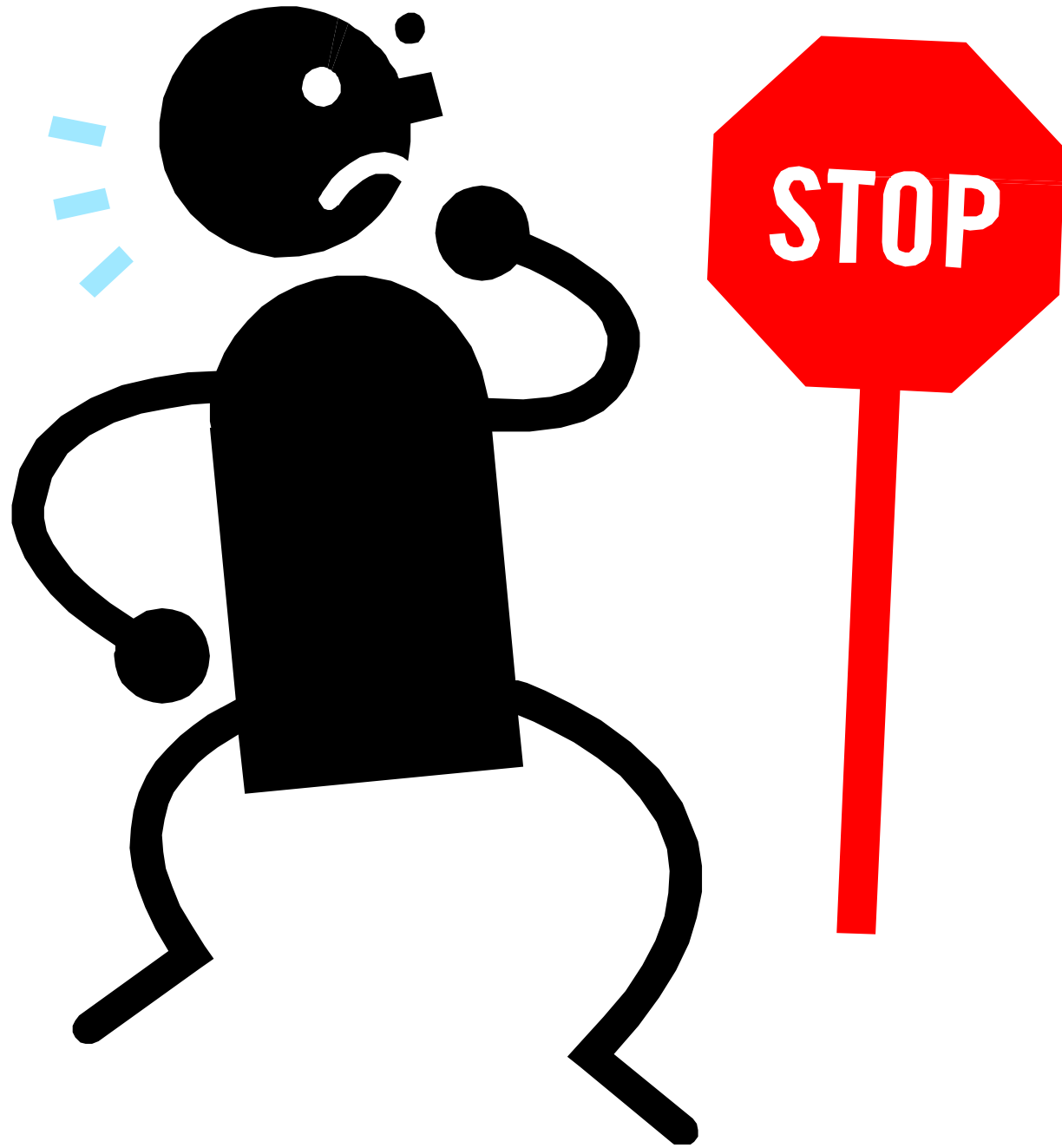




**Some Indicators for  
those who work in  
an OTP**

- Skipping Work
- Avoiding interactions with others including persons served
- Taking out frustrations on others, preoccupation with “other” issues
- Feeling tired and drained most of the time, “sickly”
- Feeling alone and detached from others
- Decreased productivity
- Persistent pessimism and a cynical outlook

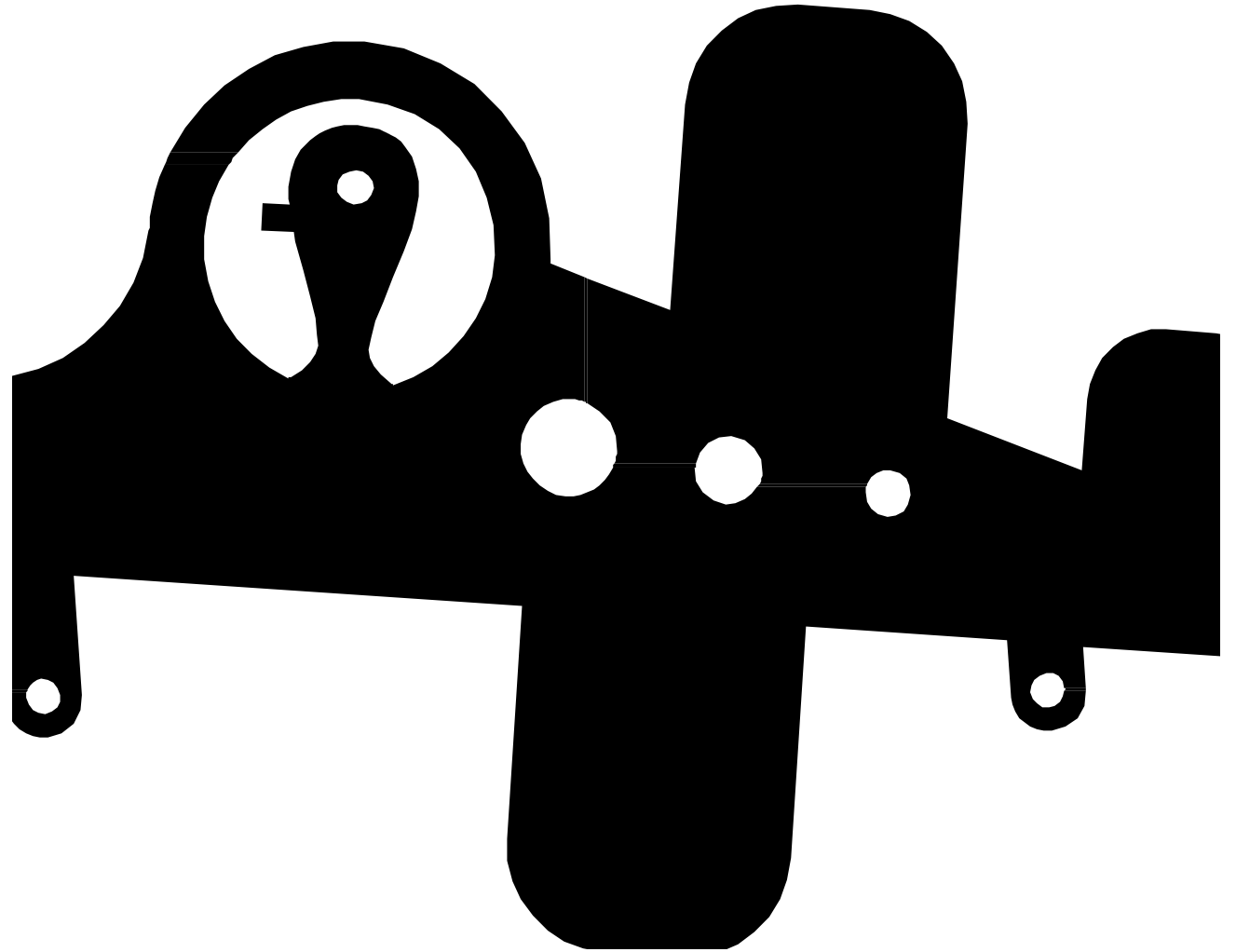




Burn Out  
Prevention  
Strategies

YOU

Develop a PLAN  
To take charge  
Of YOUR  
LIFE!!!



## FACE REALITY...

Even if you are afraid, you cannot fix what you REFUSE to see as broken!

1. Learn how to handle stress.  
Stress can be a powerful motivational TOOL!



2. Learn how to prioritize and set boundaries...be clear on performance expectations and equally clear on your ability to meet and/or exceed them. Ask for feedback and learn the value of NOT overextending yourself. With friends and others, we learn when and how to say NO with a smile and understanding.





3. Learn how to relax, refresh and renew. Bring fun back into your life with a “me-cation, day-cation, stay-cation”. Create a list of activities and places ... set aside 30 minutes of quiet time every day.



Of course, there are many more strategies to prevent burnout. The most important task that you have is to get to know the good, bad and ugly about the person in your mirror. Learn to accept her/him, flaws and all! Then you can begin your journey handling ups and downs...and sometimes lifting yourself higher by setting goals and experiencing new places and things. As a result, I guarantee you will be more compassionate, more energized and more accepting of those who many choose to judge as flawed. Thank you for your participation in this sessions and thank for working in a field that can sometimes be demanding and overwhelming.

Barbara Armstrong White

