

Effective Stress Reduction Strategies to Help Prevent and Manage Burnout

MELANIE H. REIS, PSY.D.

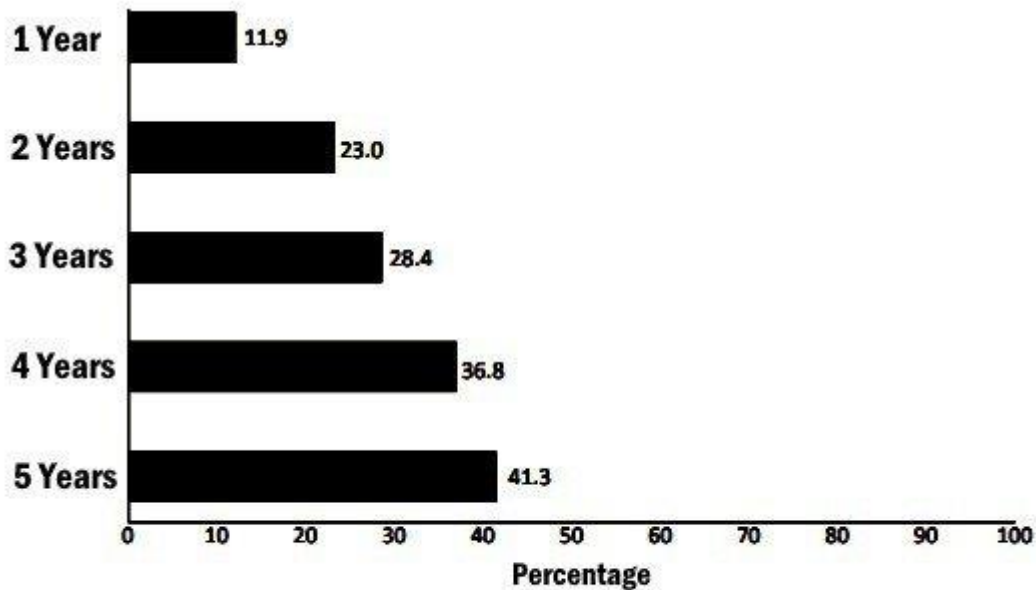
SCRIPPS EAP

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OBJECTIVES

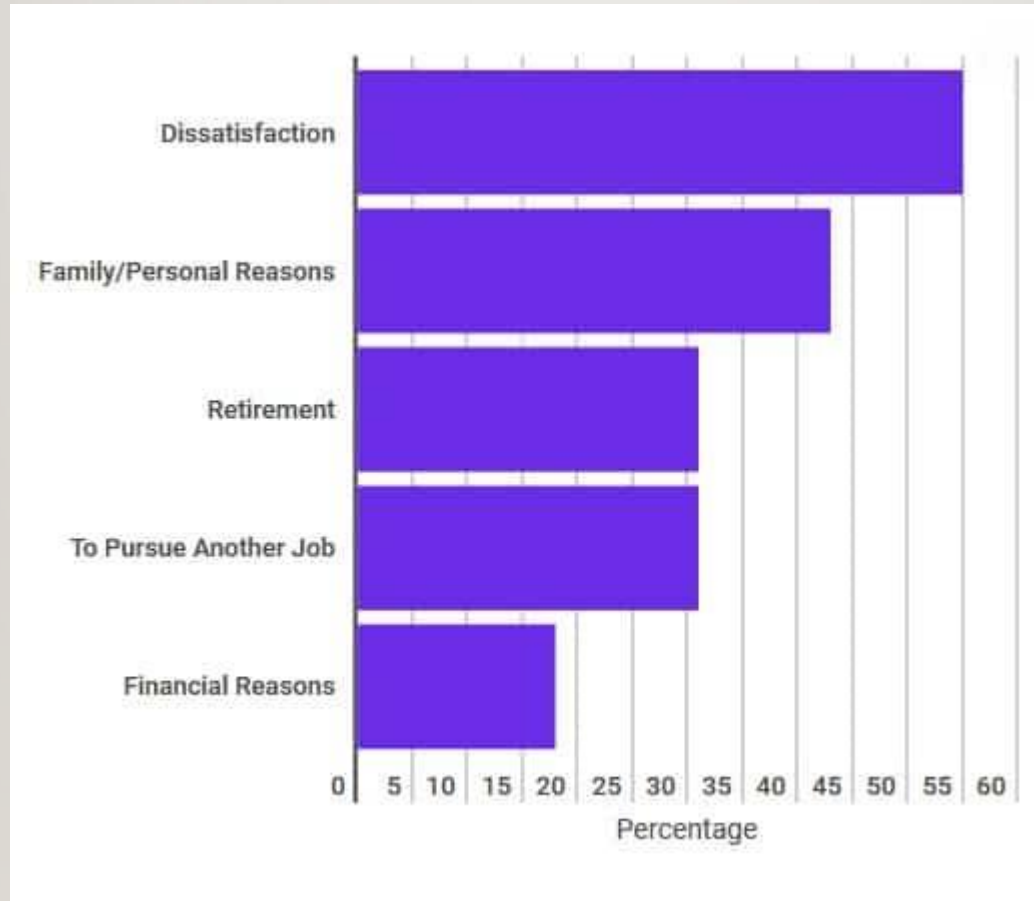
1. Identification of the difference between stress and burnout
2. What types of situations trigger stress and eventual burnout
3. Discussion around what stresses you
4. Explore ways to reverse and prevent teacher/staff burnout

WHILE MANY TEACHERS DO MAKE TEACHING A LIFELONG CAREER, WITH NEWER TEACHERS, AS MANY AS 41.3% LEAVE THE PROFESSION WITHIN 5 YEARS.



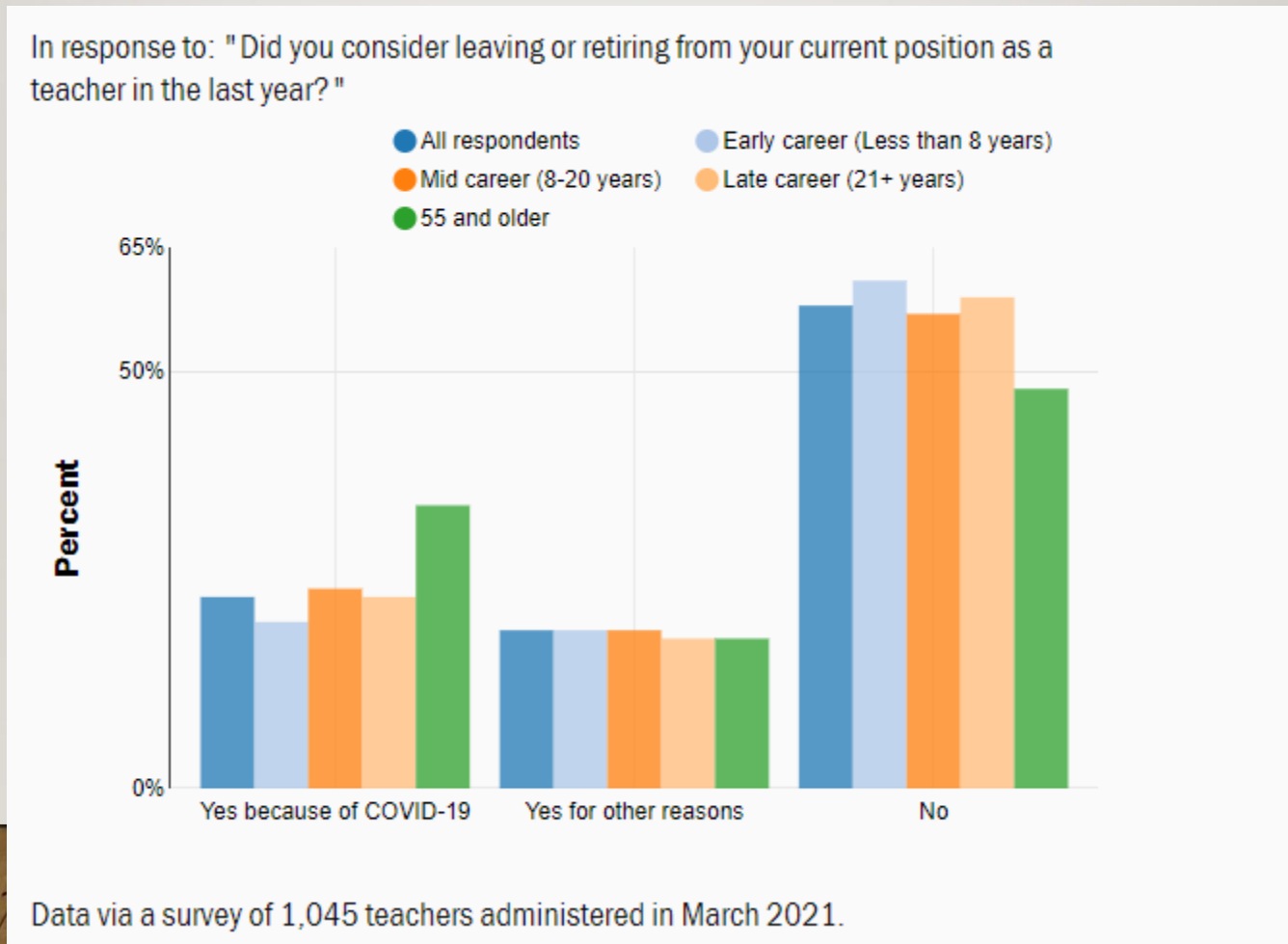
Source: Perda, D. 2013 Transitions Into and Out of Teaching. A Longitudinal Analysis of Early Career teacher Turnover University of Pennsylvania

WHAT CAUSES TEACHER BURNOUT?



CURRENT STATISTICS

“In March 2021, 42% of teachers declared they have considered leaving or retiring from their current position during the last year. Of these, slightly more than half say it was because of COVID-19.”



DIVING DEEPER

Top 3 reasons for considering leaving teaching:

1. First, a larger proportion of those approaching retirement age reported having considered leaving or retiring because of COVID-19, which could be problematic if schools begin to lose their more-experienced teachers.
2. Second, most teachers had to change instructional mode at least once during the year (and many experienced multiple disruptions) and having to change instructional modes was associated with an increased probability of considering leaving or retiring.
3. Finally, COVID-19 health concerns were also associated with an increased probability of considering leaving.

What is the Difference Between Stress and Burnout?

STRESS vs BURNOUT

- Overengagement
- Reactive or over reactive emotions
- Sense of urgency and hyperactivity
- Lost or diminished energy
- Leads to anxiety
- Physically tolling



- Disengagement
- Blunted or distant emotions
- Sense of helplessness
- Motivation is lost or diminished
- Leads to feeling depressed
- Emotionally tolling

WHY DO WE HAVE TO MANAGE STRESS?

- Stress is a part of every-day life.
- Our tolerance for stress is in constant flux due to several factors:
 - Sleep, nutrition, exercise, sense of self-efficacy, internal vs. external locus of control, etc.
- If we don't manage stress, we can be sure it will manage us – it's a decision.



Stress and Burnout

The difference between Stress and Burnout is the ability to recover in your time off. Burnout begins when you are NOT able to recharge your batteries between school days. **You begin a downward spiral that has three distinct symptoms:**

- 1) Physical and Emotional Exhaustion**
- 2) Depersonalization: cynicism, sarcasm, feeling put upon**
- 3) Reduced Sense of Personal Accomplishments**

**What is the Difference
Between
Clinical Depression and Burnout?**



DEPRESSION VS BURNOUT

DEPRESSION

- Inability to find pleasure in once pleasurable activities
- Anger directed internally
- Unrealistic feelings of guilt
- Significantly ambivalent
- More dependent
- Avoids conflict
- Overeating / under eating
- Wakes up early

BURNOUT

- Ability to enjoy non-work activities
- Anger directed externally
- No (or realistic) guilt
- Somewhat ambivalent
- More dependent
- Interpersonal conflicts increase
- Appetite unaffected
- Difficulty falling asleep

ARE YOU AT RISK?



DO THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS GIVE YOU PAUSE?



- How many nights a week do you eat dinner with your family?
- Can you have a date or dedicated time with your family or friends without threat of interruption?
- What do you normally do from the time you return home from work to the time you go to bed?

RISK FACTORS – WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Work overload
- Lack of control over one's work
- Insufficient reward for one's contributions
- Absence of community
- Lack of fairness
- Conflict in values
- Safety concerns

RISK FACTORS – DEMOGRAPHICS

- Younger age
- Early in career
- Lack of life partner
or children
- Higher level of
education



RISK FACTORS – PERSONALITY TRAITS

- Low self-esteem or confidence
- No recognition of personal limits
- Need for approval
- Overachieving
- Need for autonomy
- Impatience
- Intolerance
- Empathy
- Extreme conscientiousness
- Perfectionism
- Self-giving

THE MODERN SCHOOLTEACHER

DISHEVELED HAIR
FROM GETTING UP
AT 5:00 AFTER
GETTING TO BED
AT 1:16

PRANK FROM
STUDENT
(FUTURE CARTOONIST)

MONEY FOR CLASSROOM
SUPPLIES (OUT OF HER
OWN POCKET)

LESSON PLANS,
PAPERS TO GRADE
AND GRADE BOOKS
TO UPDATE BY
TOMORROW

SHOES FOR TRAFFIC
DUTY, PLAYGROUND DUTY,
CAFETERIA DUTY AND
THAT REALLY FAST BRAT

NOTE FROM
PARENT SAYING
TEACHERS GET
PAID TOO MUCH



THE CARTOONIST
P. J. RAY

INVISIBLE DAILY STRESSORS & OBSTACLES

- High level of responsibility and little control over the outcome
- Intense encounters with sick, scared or disabled individuals
- Lack of training on how to create and maintain boundaries with our students/parents of students AND between work and life
- Lack of formal leadership skills training
- Pressure to perform at full steam all day long

INVISIBLE DAILY STRESSORS & OBSTACLES

- Care occurs behind the closed door – when we are one-on-one with our students
- Confusing financial incentives
- Legal risks, reform and politics
- Documentation
- Shifting organizational structures

BURNOUT METER



Fuel Sources:

Physical level (Body) -ability to get up and go

Emotional level (Mind) –emotionally availability and compassion for self and others

Spiritual level (Spirit) – your connection to your professional/ personal Purpose in your work ... “WHY”

Our Goal is to keep the “TANK” full because you can operate for a very long time on empty

BURNOUT – SYMPTOMS

- Can not recharge, depleted at all three levels
- Physical, Emotional, Spiritual Exhaustion
- Depersonalization - cynicism, sarcasm, feeling put upon
- Reduced Sense of Personal Accomplishment-
Doubt

BURNOUT – SIGNS

- You have a high tolerance of stress
- Your practice is exceptionally chaotic
- You don't agree with your boss' values or leadership
- You're the emotional buffer
- Your job constantly interferes with family events
- You lack control over your work schedule and free time
- You don't take care of yourself

BURNOUT – STAGES

1. Burnout and stress vary from day to day - asymptomatic
2. Burnout symptoms are intermittent - feeling fine more often than not
3. Symptomatic of more often than not - occasionally feel at full strength and “your normal passionate self”
4. Long time since you felt at full strength “hanging in there” and “doing the best you can”, trying to convince yourself this is how all teachers feel ...
5. Chronically symptomatic - occasionally enters the danger zone
6. Something is going to break very soon - contemplating quitting teaching, self medicating with drugs or alcohol, major depression, deterioration of significant relationships, health

What can you do to reverse it?




BURNOUT – SOLUTIONS

- **Recover** energy lost at work and refuel your tank
- **RESTORING BALANCE.** What is important to you outside of your career? What are those things that fill you up, recharge your batteries and your bank accounts.
- Sleep, good nutrition and regular exercise are a great start. What relationships, activities, hobbies, experiences build you up, make you smile? What is on your Bucket List?
- **Restore is also about creating (and defending) BOUNDARIES** between your work life and your larger life. This skill is absolutely essential when preventing burnout.

BURNOUT – SOLUTIONS

Respond rather than react to lower the stress present in your workplace by exerting some control in one or more of the following four ways.

- 1) Keep doing what you are doing now ... just less of it**
 - 2) Change the stressors that lead to burnout without changing jobs**
 - 3) Change jobs to a position that is less stressful inside education**
 - 4) Quit teaching to retire and/or make a living doing something different.**
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BURNOUT – SOLUTIONS

- Check in and assess what Resilience, Replenish, Respond are at on a regular basis
- Learn and practice Mindfulness



RESOURCES

- Intelligence, learning agility, hard working, the drive to do our best
- Focus on “WHY” you became an educator, your purpose
- Invested many years of your life in school for teaching
- Respected member of the community
- Our families love and support
- Life outside teaching where you can recharge and recuperate

How do you prevent it?



PERSONAL BURNOUT PREVENTION MEASURES

- Self awareness and mindfulness training
- Work/Life balance and healthy boundaries between work and non-work life areas
- Lowering stress by
 - Practicing good self-care
 - Learning effective leadership skills
 - Exerting control where possible over your work hours Creating focus where possible on work activities that provide the most meaning

IMAGINE...

- You are able to remain centered, calm, focused and compassionate at work in the midst of chaos
- Your energetic TANK is full, life is balanced because you have proactively structured it to be this way
- You work with a well functioning team, seeing students you enjoy in a reasonable volume for a satisfying salary
- Individually none of these points are earth shattering ... however, in combination they significantly reduce Teacher Burnout

Thank you!!!

