

WORKING WITH DIVERSE AUDIENCES OVER TIME

Attachments

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Burnout Quiz

Please review the symptoms of burnout below and circle the number that most closely corresponds to your feelings over the last six months. One (1) is low (I have not experienced this). Four (4) is high (I feel this way a lot of the time lately).

- 1 2 3 4 Complaining of fatigue, or of being overworked, or being exhausted
- 1 2 3 4 Loss of enthusiasm
- 1 2 3 4 Loss of energy
- 1 2 3 4 Fighting changes
- 1 2 3 4 Being inflexible
- 1 2 3 4 Becoming defensive easily
- 1 2 3 4 Allowing key relationships to deteriorate
- 1 2 3 4 Becoming disorganized
- 1 2 3 4 Becoming accident prone
- 1 2 3 4 Poor recall and/or memory
- 1 2 3 4 Avoiding responsibility
- 1 2 3 4 Withdrawing from people and everyday activities

Add up the total of the numbers you circled.

Results:

If you scored 1 to 14, your burnout risk is MODERATE.

If you scored 15 to 28, your burnout risk is HIGH.

If you scored 29 to 48, your burnout risk is EXTREME.

Community Resources for Multi-Need Audiences

Human Services Agencies _____

Health Departments _____

Faith-based Organizations _____

Community Action Programs _____

Consumer Credit Counseling _____

Community Colleges _____

Local Public Universities _____

Local Drug Rehabilitation Programs _____

Alcoholics Anonymous _____

Women's Centers _____

Homeless Shelters _____

Community Emergency Assistance Programs _____

Women's Auxiliary Groups _____

Youth Intervention Programs _____

Local Rescue Missions _____

Economic Development Organizations _____

Employment Security Commission _____

Food Banks and Pantries _____

Other _____

Note: The techniques for identifying specific resources in your community is provided in Unit 4 on identifying assets.

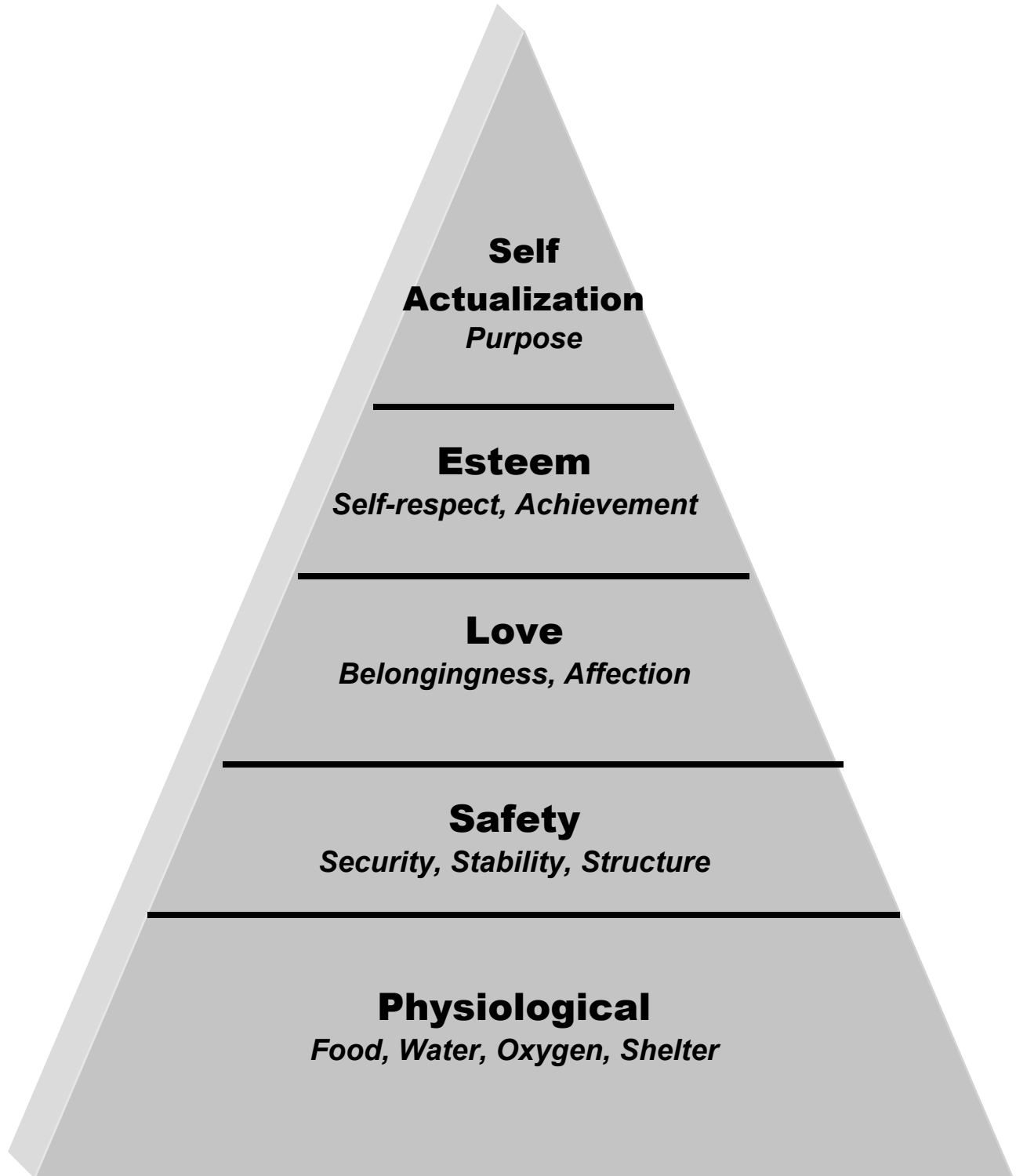
Eleven Strategies for Avoiding Burnout

1. Develop a realistic picture of yourself; know what you're feeling and why. Allow yourself time to explore your thoughts and feelings. Keep a work journal or a note section of your planner to jot down your feelings throughout your workday.
2. Set realistic goals for yourself. If your goals and the tasks to get you there do not have built-in space and time for rejuvenating, then scale down the goals.
3. Recognize the symptoms of stress and burnout. Review the symptoms and be honest with yourself about symptoms you have recognized in yourself.
4. Ask for help when it's needed. Turn to a supervisor, co-worker, counselor, etc.
5. Develop a structural and personal support system. (Consult websites or printed office newsletters about anti-burnout tips. Utilize the resources provided by your employer, such as personal time.
6. Retain hope. Remain hopeful that you can help others while maintaining a sense of balance for yourself.
7. Develop a detached concern for recipients of your efforts. Help yourself and your clients by keeping them on-task with the resources you are providing. Direct and guide them without becoming personally involved in their lives. After all they are seeking your guidance, not a personal relationship, and the best way for you to assist is to maintain this professional distance.
8. Maintain an active personal social life outside of work. To avoid the temptation of personalizing client relationships, make sure that you spend time at least once per week with friends.
9. Take time-outs when you need them. Leave your client work to have lunch or take a break. Take advantage of vacation time and other benefits to rejuvenate yourself.
10. Maintain a regimen of proper nutrition and exercise. This is primary. Your own health is paramount to having the ability to work in a position helping others.
11. Accentuate the positive. Each day, remind yourself of the things you did accomplish, as opposed to berating yourself over the things you did not accomplish.

Common Barriers When Working with Multi-need Audiences

- Language issues
- Problems with accessibility (lack of wheelchair ramps or Braille materials, etc.)
- Compounding problems (substance abuse, mental illness, etc.)
- Inappropriate presentation of materials (e.g., pamphlets written at an elevated or advanced reading level)
- Financial barriers (service providers incorrectly assume transportation, child care, fees, etc. are not an issue)
- Distraction because basic needs are not fulfilled (food, water, shelter)
- Other: _____

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Breaking Down Barriers

LANGUAGE

—Use interpreters. On your volunteer applications, create a space for individuals to add any experience that they may have interpreting other languages into English.

—Use language dictionaries. Keep language dictionaries in your office for basic translations. (You might find these at library or used bookstores.)

ACCESSIBILITY

—Install wheelchair ramps (seek funding, utilize volunteer capabilities, use architectural student volunteers to design, etc.).

CLIENTELE GROUPS NOT REPRESENTED BY STAFF

—When hiring staff, encourage individuals from these groups to apply (advertise in alternative papers and newsletters).

PRESENTATION OF MATERIALS

—Assemble an ad hoc committee (utilize university communications students) to review the pamphlets and leaflets in your office for their relevance to your clientele.

SERVICES

—Review the Community Resources in Unit 6 for other services that will help your clients attend programs.

— Review your local transportation provider's information on bus routes, etc. and keep copies of these materials in your office, along with any subsidy information.

DISTRACTION BECAUSE BASIC NEEDS ARE NOT FULFILLED

—Using the Community Resources from attachment 6:2, identify sources for food, water, and shelter (food pantries, shelters for homeless and battered women, etc.). Keep up-to-date information from these agencies in your office.

Practical Steps to Stay Motivated

- Write down the initial objectives for working with the client(s). (For example: getting a client to attend a parenting workshop.)
- Anticipate potential barriers (language, age, trust, transportation, etc.) and develop strategies and means for providing resources in the presence of these barriers.
- Make a list of these resources before speaking with or meeting with the client(s).
- Where possible, present clients with a diverse and familiar contact point, such as individuals who speak the same language or are of the same ethnic background. This may help offer a source of comfort and trust.
- Save any contact information about ways to work around barriers (translators, transportation services, food banks, literacy programs, community advocates, etc.). These are invaluable sources that can be utilized again, or may lead to additional contacts.
- Volunteer to serve on ad hoc committees for community initiatives involving the groups you are serving. You will learn a lot that will enhance the way you deliver your service, and you will be fulfilling your need to give beyond the barriers of your position.