



Episode 182: Recognising the Microtraumas that Stack Up and Lead to Burnout

with Dr Claire Plumbly

Burnout is prevalent — has been, still is, and seems like it will be for the foreseeable future. While it affects countless people, burnout is a bit more pronounced in the healthcare industry. These professionals face challenges, incredibly busy schedules, and demanding tasks. It's deeply ingrained in them to just accept what they're facing; any form of saying no leads to feelings of guilt and anxiety.

'Burnout' has been talked about a lot, especially these past few years, but one thing many of us don't recognise is burnout doesn't just result from big stresses. Dr Claire Plumbly joins us in this episode to discuss what little traumas do to us. She also talks about the importance of understanding and reinforcing boundaries, getting some time away, and changing our attitude towards guilt for saying no.

If you're experiencing burnout and chronic stress and want to see ways how to overcome them, this episode is for you.

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Quote to remember:

'The emotions will start to change when you change your interactions with them.'

What You Will Learn

Burnout extremely common in the healthcare industry. Of course, this may be due to the demanding nature of the tasks involved, especially in matters of life and death. However, this prevalence may also be a result of toxic cultures, the difficulty of enforcing boundaries, and the piling up of little traumas.

This activity aims to help you recognise that, first and foremost, burnout isn't just from what we can say big traumas. It also comes from having to endure and accept little stresses that you might have considered normal because it happens to many people around you as well.

Completing this short exercise will also help you explore the value of recharging and getting some time away. After all, it's only natural to feel depleted when you don't have enough left to give.

Finally, the activity will touch on a topic that many in the healthcare industry will relate to: the difficulty of saying no and enforcing healthy boundaries. Numerous healthcare professionals instantly feel guilt when they say no, but let me tell you right now — it should be the norm. Of course, this isn't about neglecting your job. Rather, it's knowing what's healthy for you and those around you.

Activity: Tackling the Little T's (Traumas) that Act as Burnout Building Blocks

Q1. Take the time to assess what you consider normal but are actually stressful. What things would you say are the little traumas that have been contributing to your chronic ongoing stress?



Q2. What do you think is the importance of recognising that these little traumas are piling up to cause burnout?

Q3. Recharging your batteries and getting some time away can help you combat burnout. What do you think will recharging do for your burnout?

- a. What little things can you do daily to avoid draining yourself?

- b. What are some bigger plans (such as vacations) that you can set to recharge your batteries?

Q4. What do boundaries mean for you, both at work and in your personal life?

Q5. Take some time to list instances where you feel like you have to cave in and abandon your boundaries. For each example, write what you can do to enforce these boundaries in a healthier way.

a.

b.



C.

Q6. Reflect on your thoughts and emotions about the action of saying no. Would you say you have a healthy attitude towards it? How can you embrace this action better and be able to exercise it more?

CPD time claimed:

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