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# BURNOUT PREVENTION IN HUMANITARIAN AID

## PREVENTION TECHNIQUES

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# 1. COPING AND PREVENTION

We have seen in previous presentations that **burnout** arises as a response to chronic work stress.

Knowing its manifestations we will know how to prevent it and improve coping strategies.

These strategies can be :

cognitive

&

behavioral

When people are in a situation that causes them **stress**, they usually take some kind of action to eliminate that **discomfort**.

The way a person reacts to an adverse event depends on:

- Their expectations
- Quantity and quality of their coping strategies
- Levels of anxiety
- Perception of their job role

## 2. COPING STRATEGIES

**A) INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES**

**B) INTERPERSONAL AND GROUP STRATEGIES AT WORK**

**C) ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES**

# A) INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES

PROBLEM-FOCUSED COPING STRATEGIES

EMOTION-FOCUSED COPING STRATEGIES

# PROBLEM-FOCUSED COPING STRATEGIES

1. Identify the problem and its effects
2. List the objectives to solve the problem
3. Generate possible solutions to the problem
4. Evaluate the consequences of the solutions
5. Choose a solution and delimit it
6. Put it into practice
7. Evaluate how that solution has been useful

*Problem  
solving training*

# PROBLEM-FOCUSED COPING STRATEGIES

- Establish priorities
- Increase available time
- Reduce the perception of urgent working conditions
- Distinguish between what is urgent and what is important

*Training for  
effective time  
management*

# EMOTION-FOCUSED COPING STRATEGIES

- Expressing feelings, thoughts, wishes or needs truthfully and directly
- Knowing how to say no
- Considering your own needs as important as those of others
- Technique: role playing

*Assertiveness  
training*

# EMOTION-FOCUSED COPING STRATEGIES

- Active listening skills: you have to be calm, and learn to distinguish between your own emotions and those of the person you are listening to.

- Internal reflection: identify feelings and control emotional reactions.

*Self-knowledge*

# EMOTION-FOCUSED COPING STRATEGIES

We do not have to change our thoughts but observe them and in this way we can learn from them and relate to them.

*Meditation*

Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction Therapy uses meditative techniques and has been very helpful in reducing stress and increasing self-awareness and positive emotions.

## B) INTERPERSONAL AND GROUP STRATEGIES AT WORK

Encourage **social support** within the work environment:

- Active listening, non-judgmental
- Provide technical support
- Create needs and challenging thoughts
- Feedback
- Emotional support
- Make him/her reflect
- Challenging beliefs about his or her self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy

## C) ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

Humanitarian workers are highly motivated to help people.

When these people and the coordinators recognize their work, the workers feel more valued and less inclined to develop burnout.

But often this is not the case, and expectations do not match the work experience.

It is important to make a previous approach to be able to solve the discrepancies between their expectations and reality.

## C) ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

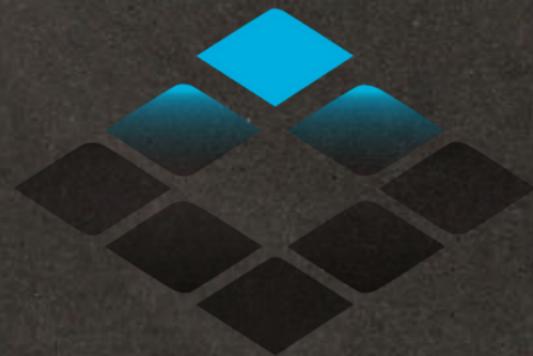
Personal counseling is necessary.

Provide **briefing** before each mission and **debriefing** afterwards.

- Briefing: Information about the worker's position (culture, politics, language of the country and working conditions). Previous knowledge helps the worker's emotional preparation.
- Debriefing: to return to daily life after a mission. It is generally performed 24 to 72 hours after the mission (Mitchell's model).



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION



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