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Extinguishing the flames of burnout through pathoplasticity

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Pathoplasticity is a theory which utilizes the influence of personality style on mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety disorders and trauma experiences in order to develop successful treatment strategies for those dealing with mental health challenges. Burnout is defined as the physical, mental and emotional exhaustion, diminished interest in work, and doubt in one's value according to Stamm (2010). Burnout is associated with feelings of hopelessness and difficulties in dealing with work or in doing one's job effectively (Stamm). Concurrently Maslach (1982) defined burnout as a psychological response to chronic work stress that is typically characterized by feelings of exhaustion, depersonalization or cynicism and diminished personal accomplishment or inefficacy. From the perspective of the environment, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2003) propose a model of socially induced burnout. Personal and environmental factors influence levels of burnout among physical therapists. Cultural factors and individual factors may also influence and explain different responses chosen by physical therapist professionals when dealing with burnout. In accordance to a socially induced model of burnout individual intervention strategies would need to be tailored based on interpersonal style of the individual experiencing burnout. Principles of pathoplasticity suggest that a tailored treatment strategy may influence treatment outcomes but focusing on various groupings of similar interpersonal behavior styles. This presentation will discuss how principles of personality style and pathoplasticity may help to influence successful strategies for mitigating burnout in the physical therapy profession.

Biography

Susan G Klappa is a Professor in Doctor of Physical Therapy program at Briar Cliff University in Sioux City IA. She completed her PhD in Education, Curriculum & Instruction from the University of Minnesota with a focus on Community Engagement. She completed her MPT degree from St. Catherine University and Master's degree in Physical Education. She has a special interest in "Disaster relief work, global and local public health". Her research interests explore how inter-professional collaboration, disaster relief work and international community engagement influence the formation of professional identity among physical therapists.

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