

### **Main authors:**

*Prof. Dsc Snezhana Ilieva, Bulgarian Inclusion Support Team, Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Kristina Boyadzhieva, Bulgarian Inclusion Support Team, Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Andrean Lazarov, Bulgarian Inclusion Support Team, Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Stanislav Georgiev, Bulgarian Inclusion Support Team, Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Latinka Kovacheva, 94 SU "Dimitar Strashimirov", Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Nevena Apostolova, 94 SU "Dimitar Strashimirov", Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Penka Nikolova, 94 SU "Dimitar Strashimirov", Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Prof. PhD Pilar Gutiez Cuevas, Asociación Madrileña De Profesionales De La Atención Temprana, Madrid, Spain*

*Prof. Vivana S. Sanchez Bobadilla, Asociación Madrileña De Profesionales De La Atención Temprana, Madrid, Spain*

*José M. Ruiz Rodríguez, Asociación Madrileña De Profesionales De La Atención Temprana, Madrid, Spain*

### **Co-authors:**

*Petar Kalpakchiev, 94 SU "Dimitar Strashimirov", Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Velislava Nikolova, 94 SU "Dimitar Strashimirov", Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Violeta Guyzeleva, 94 SU "Dimitar Strashimirov", Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Vladislava Ubina, 94 SU "Dimitar Strashimirov", Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Zlatka Yaneva, 94 SU "Dimitar Strashimirov", Sofia, Bulgaria*

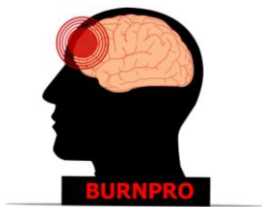
*Prof. Crisálida Rodríguez Serna, Asociación Madrileña De Profesionales De La Atención Temprana, Madrid, Spain*

*Prof. Castellar López Guinea, Asociación Madrileña De Profesionales De La Atención Temprana, Madrid, Spain*

*Javier Alonso Gutiez, Asociación Madrileña De Profesionales De La Atención Temprana, Madrid, Spain*

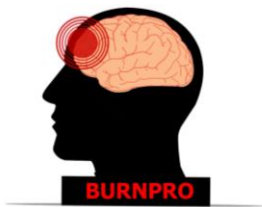
*Delyan Plachkov, Bulgarian Inclusion Support Team, Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Figen Sekin, World Innovative Sustainable Solutions, Istanbul, Turkiye*



## Table of contents

Introduction.....	4
1. Definition of Burnout .....	6
2. Burnout, mental health and wellbeing .....	7
2.1. Stressors in teacher’s work.....	9
2.2 Signs of mental health issues among teachers .....	11
2.3. Stages of Burnout – symptoms according to its stages .....	15
2.4 Mental health self-care of teachers .....	21
2.4.1. Improvement of emotional intelligence skills .....	21
2.4.2. Stress coping strategies and psychological resilience .....	23
2.4.3. Mental health self-care activities and practices .....	25
Conclusion .....	29
References .....	31



## Introduction

Teaching is one of the most stressful occupation in the world. The majority of teachers complains from stress and Burnout and also reports mental health problems. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, many studies have found that there has been a lot of teacher overload. One of the additional burdens has been that they have had to teach online. In addition, when they returned to face-to-face classes, they had to follow all the hygiene rules so that the COVID-19 virus would not spread. It is therefore not surprising that, during this pandemic period, high levels of psychological symptoms have been reported among teachers. A total of nine studies from eight different countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North and South America, were reviewed and the pooled prevalence of Burnout among teachers was 52%, which is higher than Burnout rates reported for health professionals.<sup>1</sup> Preventive and informational work is essential as a method of prevention. This is why we believe that it is important that good practices be implemented in different schools in different countries in order to improve the mental health of teachers.

Currently, most schools lack these resources, or the resources they have are oversaturated. After all, the mental state of the teachers can influence the mental state of the students and that is why it is important to take care of it.

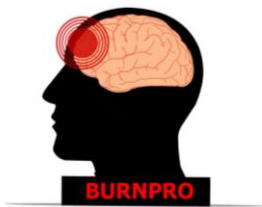
Considering that psychological symptoms usually tend to worsen without help, it would be important to prevent this Burnout situation among teachers from getting worse and to put resources in place as soon as possible so that they can take care of their mental health.

We consider the importance of the following actions, which will help the overall mental health resilience of teachers in partners' countries (Bulgaria, Spain and Turkiye), but also on EU level:

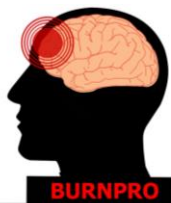
---

<sup>1</sup> Prevalence of Burnout among Teachers during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Meta-Analysis by Naiara Ozamiz-Etxebarria,<sup>1,\*</sup> Idoia Legorburu Fernandez, Darren M. Lipnicki, Nahia Idoiaga Mondragon and Javier Santabárbara, Paul B. Tchounwou, Academic Editor

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



- Consider the processes of self-assessment of professionals via [Result 2 Self-assessment tool for recognition of risks of Burnout syndrome](#).
- Development of better awareness about the issues caused by lack of cognitive behavioral strategies that allow them to eliminate or mitigate the source of stress, avoid the experience of stress, or neutralize the negative consequences of that experience.
- Promote the formation of social skills and social support of professional teams.
- Eliminate or reduce the stressors of the organizational environment that give rise to the development of the syndrome



## 1. Definition of Burnout

**Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed** (*definition by World Health Organisation*).

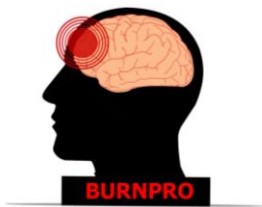
It is characterized by three dimensions:

- feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion;
- increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and
- reduced professional efficacy.

Psychological stress can be external and related to the environment, but may also be caused by internal perceptions that cause an individual to experience anxiety or other negative emotions surrounding a situation, such as pressure, discomfort, etc., which they then deem stressful.

*"Managing your stress well can help you feel better physically and psychologically and it can impact your ability to perform your best."*

<b>Stress vs. Burnout</b>	
<b><i>Stress</i></b>	<b><i>Burnout</i></b>
Characterized by over-engagement	Characterized by disengagement
Emotions are overreactive	Emotions are blunted
Produces urgency and hyperactivity	Produces helplessness and hopelessness.
Loss of energy	Loss of motivation, ideals, and hop
Leads to anxiety disorders	Leads to detachment and depression
Primary damage is physical	Primary damage is emotional
May kill you prematurely	May make life seem not worth living



Teachers need better understanding about stress and Burnout causes, symptoms and consequences and to develop skills to manage their stress at work. They should take responsibility for self-care and to sustain their work effectiveness and mental health.

## 2. Burnout, mental health and wellbeing

Mental health is a level of psychological well-being or an absence of mental illness. It is “the psychological state of someone who is functioning at a satisfactory level of emotional and behavioral adjustment”. Mental health influences how individuals think, feel, and react and determines how they cope with stress, relate to others and make choices.

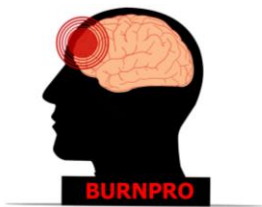
Positive mental health is more than the absence of mental illness. From the perspective of positive psychology, mental health may include an individual's ability to enjoy life, to create a balance between activities and efforts and to develop psychological resilience.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health includes "subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, inter-generational dependence, and self-actualization of one's intellectual and emotional potential, among others."

Mental well-being is an integral part of health and is defined as *"a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his/her own abilities, can cope with normal stress, work productively and fruitfully and is able to contribute to his/her community"* (WHO).

Mental health consists of three main components: emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

**Emotional well-being** includes positive affect and happiness, interest in life and satisfaction.



**Psychological well-being** includes self-acceptance, purpose in life, personal growth, personal mastery, autonomy and positive relationship with others.

**Social wellbeing** refers to positive functioning and involves having something to contribute to society (social contribution), feeling part of a community (social integration), believing that society is becoming a better place for all people (social actualization), and that the way society works makes sense to them (social coherence).

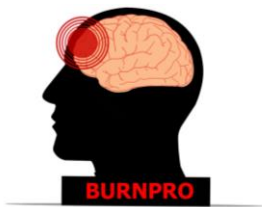
People with good mental wellbeing can cope with stress and negative experience, manage the responsibilities of daily life, have good relationships with others and be satisfied with one's own life. They are prone to be more optimistic and have positive affectivity which in turn maintain and increase their mental health. The higher levels of positive affectivity, the more cheerfulness, active, confident, enthusiastic and energetic a person will be. People with high levels of positive affectivity are more productive, motivated, satisfied, goal-oriented in their job and have healthier coping styles.

Stressful events, such as job changes, correlate with insomnia, impaired sleeping, and health complaints. Research indicates the type of stressor (whether it is acute or chronic) and individual characteristics such as age and physical well-being before the onset of the stressor can combine to determine the effect of stress on an individual. An individual's personality characteristics, genetics, and childhood experiences with major stressors and traumas may also dictate their response to stressors.

On the other hand, lower levels of positive affectivity can be related to sadness, lethargy and distress that affect their perceptions and behavior and could increase anxiety and depression.

The teaching profession has been traditionally associated with high levels of stress and Burnout that impact the health of teachers and worsen the effectiveness of their work.



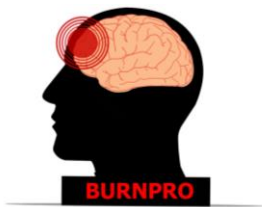


High levels of stress in the teaching profession are related to the emotional demands of work and the need to interact intensively with a wide range of people. If teachers cannot cope with the level of stress, this will automatically influence academic achievement, emotions and behavior of students. It has been established that high levels of stress experienced by teachers, significantly reduces their satisfaction with the job and have a direct relationship with health problems.

### 2.1. Stressors in teacher's work

Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress at work. There are many **typical (common) factors** for occupational stress:

- Characteristics of the work itself, such as responsibility, degree of risk, insufficient autonomy in its performance
- High demands and overload
- Work-life balance
- Relationships with colleagues and socio-psychological workplace climate
- Ineffective management models and leadership styles
- Lack of social support and feedback from colleagues and management
- Organizational policies and practices
- Conflicts in the workplace
- Frequent and continuous job changes
- Conflicting requirements in the performance of the work
- Poor working conditions
- Lack of security
- Inadequate remuneration

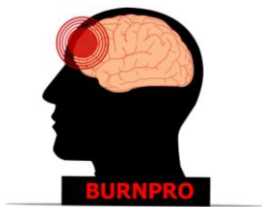


**Specific factors** for teachers' occupational stress can be described as:

- Behaviour of students and discipline in classroom
- Administration, documentation, and reporting requirements
- Changes in the school curriculum
- Size and composition of the class and the school
- Requirements of society and relationships with parents
- Working with multicultural issues in classroom
- Communication difficulties and misunderstanding due of verbal and non-verbal issues
- Need to develop skills to work with children with special needs (disabilities, Roma students, refugees etc.).

Highest significance to stress is attributed to the behavior of students, which predicts the occurrence of Burnout and failure of teachers to cope with stress. These factors for strain are implicit for the teaching profession and cannot be avoided as the causes of stress and Burnout, and therefore they require specific approaches and practices for the management of human resources in education sector.

All these challenges require teachers to apply stress management skills, improve cultural sensitivity and emotional intelligence and care for their own mental and physical health. People who are experiencing Burnout can have a negative impact on their colleagues, both by causing greater personal conflict and by disrupting job tasks. Thus, Burnout can be “contagious” and perpetuate itself through social interactions on the job. The critical importance of social relationships for Burnout is underscored by studies that show that Burnout increases in work environments characterized by interpersonal aggression. Such findings suggest that Burnout should be considered as a characteristic of workgroups rather than simply an individual syndrome.



Exhaustion is typically correlated with such stress symptoms as headaches, chronic fatigue, gastrointestinal disorders, muscle tension, hypertension, cold/flu episodes, and sleep disturbances. These physiological symptoms correlate those found with other indices of prolonged stress.

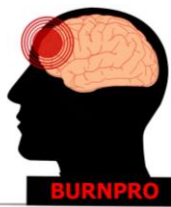
## 2.2 Signs of mental health issues among teachers

There are several studies, which show that teachers experience higher stress at the workplace and the risk of developing symptoms like post-traumatic stress disorder increases and became a treat for their mental health.

There are some early emotional and behavioural sign warnings that indicate a mental health problem:

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Withdrawing from people and usual activities
- Conflicting or fighting with family and friends
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks like taking care of your kids or getting to work
- Experiencing severe mood changes that cause problems in relationships.

Understanding the signs, symptoms and causes of mental health issues may help to identify problems and to prevent any health problems in the future. There are different causes and risks for bad mental health of teachers.



Most of them are related to their everyday occupational stress and its consequence – Burnout. Other causes can come from emotional problems, reactions and trauma of the children they interact with.

Burnout is a gradual process. It doesn't happen overnight, but it can creep up on you. The signs and symptoms are subtle at first, but become worse as time goes on. Think of the early symptoms as red flags that something is wrong that needs to be addressed. If you pay attention and actively reduce your stress, you can prevent a major breakdown. If you ignore them, you'll eventually Burnout.

**Physical signs and symptoms of Burnout:**

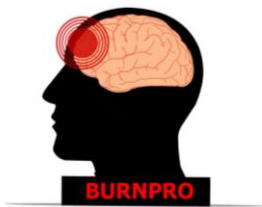
- Feeling tired and drained most of the time.
- Lowered immunity, frequent illnesses.
- Frequent headaches or muscle pain.
- Change in appetite or sleep habits.

**Emotional signs and symptoms of Burnout:**

- Sense of failure and self-doubt.
- Feeling helpless, trapped, and defeated.
- Detachment, feeling alone in the world.
- Loss of motivation. Increasingly cynical and negative outlook.
- Decreased satisfaction and sense of accomplishment.

**Behavioral signs and symptoms of Burnout:**

- Withdrawing from responsibilities.
- Isolating from others.
- Procrastinating, taking longer to get things done.
- Using food, drugs, or alcohol to cope.
- Taking frustrations out on others.
- Skipping work or coming in late and leaving early.



**Emotional exhaustion** is the central strain dimension of burnout, described as feelings of being emotionally drained by one's work. Emotional exhaustion would include frustration, depression, a lack of interest in teaching, a reluctance to try out anything new, and the blaming of students or the institution for the lack of success. Results of emotional exhaustion are absence and fatigue.

**Depersonalization or cynicism** is a negative or excessively detached response to the work itself and/or to the individuals with whom people interact while performing their job. Teachers with cynicism demonstrate poor attitudes towards students, colleagues, and the school itself, a lack of contact with others, and growing isolation. They express hostility and uncaring treatment towards other people.

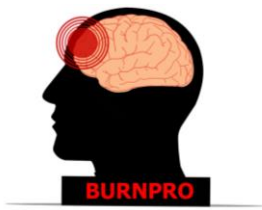
**Lack of personal accomplishment** refers to a decline in one's feelings of competence and of successful achievement at work. Teachers suffering from burnout view *personal accomplishment* negatively: they are frustrated, don't set appropriate goals, and have low self-confidence and self-efficacy. They have low motivation and poor performance.

Among the important reasons that cause stress and burnout in teachers are students' behaviour in class and violations of school discipline. Students' disrespectful attitude increases the risk of emotional exhaustion in teachers, and students' low sociability determines depersonalization and personal performance of teachers.

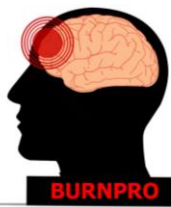
Understanding of causes of burnout gives guidance on how to avoid and combat it.

Factors most likely to lead to teacher burnout are:

- *Lack of adequate preparation* for dealing with the kinds of learning and behavior problems that teachers face in the classroom.
- *Lack of autonomy* at work.

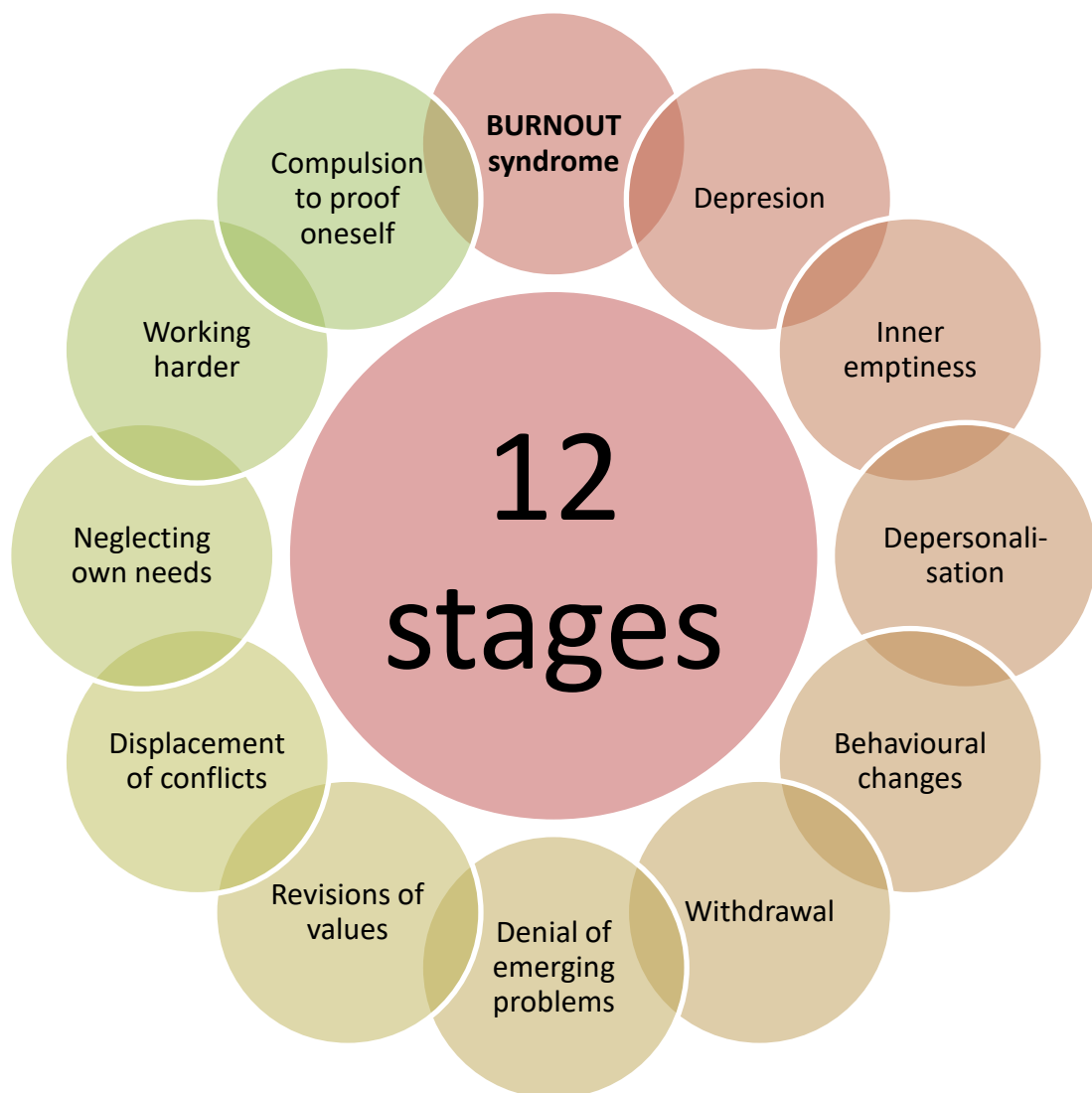


- *Difficult student behavior.* This factor is related to the abilities and motivation of students to learn. Burnout can be avoided as teachers develop classroom management skills and supports when they do face difficult behaviors.
- *Lack of support and interpersonal conflict.* Lack of opportunity to engage in meaningful exchanges of ideas with other teachers contributes to burnout, as do conflict with parents, administrators, and students.
- *Boredom.* Many teachers find that after a year or two in the classroom, each day is very much like the next, and there are few opportunities for doing new and interesting things.



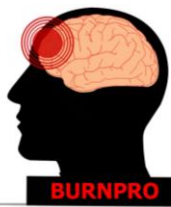
### 2.3. Stages of Burnout – symptoms according to its stages

There are a **12 stage-model** developed by psychologist **Herbert Freudenberger** and his colleagues.



#### **Stage 1: Excessive ambition**

Burnout begins in a seemingly harmless way – with enthusiasm towards your work. While many Sensitive Strivers can relate to their ambition being a positive trait that supports their career growth, inner drive in excess can stifle you. It morphs into a compulsion to prove your worth to yourself and others. You don't feel “good enough,” so you take on additional responsibilities and always feel like you need to be doing more, faster.



## **Stage 2: Working harder**

As you say “yes” to more assignments and tasks, you realize that you can’t fit everything into normal office hours. As a result, work begins to bleed into your personal life. You may answer emails on the weekend or put in 10 to 12-hour days to stay on top of your to-do list. You still find your job fulfilling, and you actually get a jolt of satisfaction when you’re praised for your dedication. At the same time, work begins to feel like an addiction and you have trouble switching off or disconnecting in the evening.

## **Stage 3: Neglecting your needs**

As a Sensitive Striver, you may default to prioritizing others’ needs ahead of your own. But this goes a step further in Stage 3 of Burnout.

You may:

- Sleep erratically
- Skip meals
- Stop working out
- Forget to spend time with family and friends

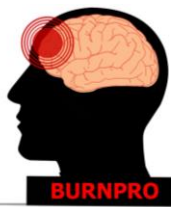
## **Stage 4: Displacing problems**

Your excessive focus on work leads you to dismiss obvious conflicts and issues happening around you. Deep down, you know something isn’t right, but finding a solution or making a change seems too overwhelming. Instead, you avoid thinking about your concerns and refocus your attention on your professional obligations. But suppressing your feelings results in feeling more jittery and panicky. You find yourself overreacting to small setbacks and slights.

## **Stage 5: Revision of values**

You begin to realize that you’ve strayed from what’s most important to you. But instead of facing that reality, head-on, you simply update your moral compass to be solely focused on work. Friends, family, and hobbies take a backseat. Self-care is dismissed as trivial. Your entire self-worth is derived from your productivity and accomplishments.





### **Stage 6: Denial of new problems**

Now that your values have changed, you begin to butt heads with others. You might perceive your colleagues as lazy or your clients as too demanding. You become increasingly intolerant, unempathetic, and cynical. You blame time and work pressure for your stress, instead of recognizing how you've changed.

### **Stage 7: Withdrawal**

During this stage, you pull back from relationships. You probably can't remember the last time you had a conversation that wasn't about work. Your social life feels small or nonexistent. You seclude yourself and may escape through guilty pleasures.

### **Stage 8: Impact on others**

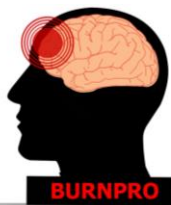
Your Burnout is now concerning your family. They notice how you've become impatient and irritable. You may do things that impact others, like forgetting to pick up your child from daycare or missing a meeting.

### **Stage 9: Depersonalization**

You feel like a shell of your former self. Depersonalization involves feeling detached from your own body, as if you were now an outsider watching your life. Every day is an exercise in going through the motions. Whereas you once felt enthusiastic about your work, you're now negative or indifferent towards it.

### **Stage 10: Inner emptiness**

You no longer see yourself as valuable. You start to feel worthless as if all your effort is for naught. You've lost your drive and daydream about quitting, moving, or leaving your career. You may turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms such as overeating or alcohol to further numb yourself.



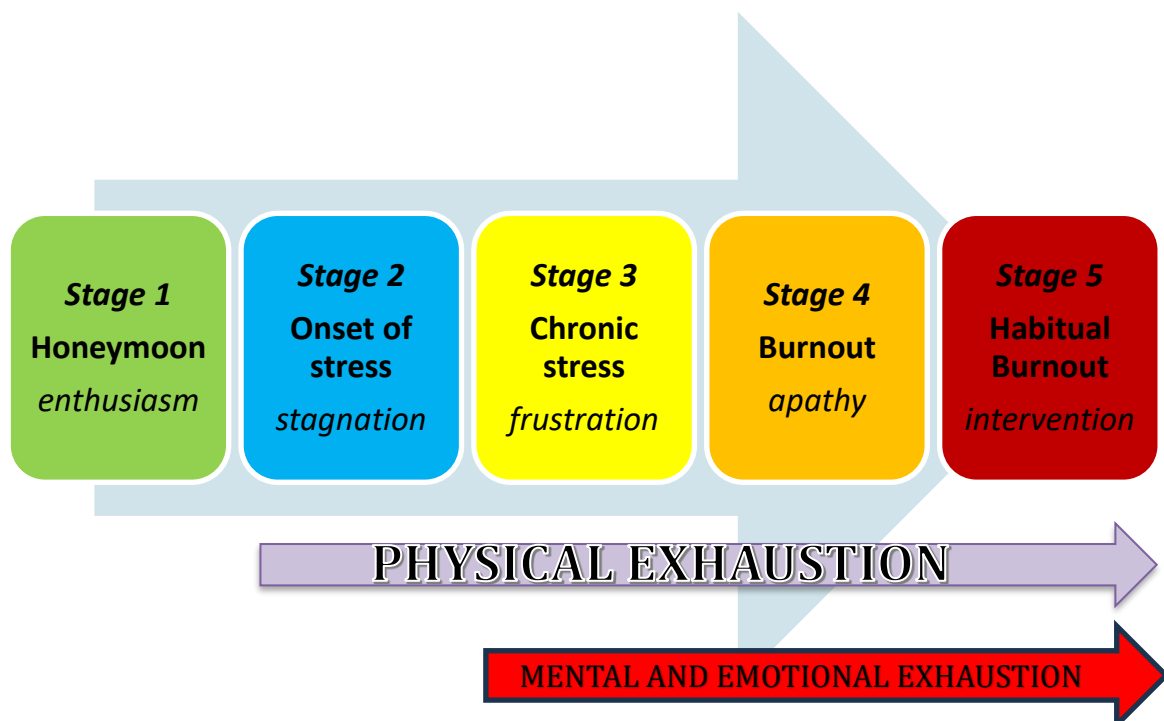
### Stage 11: Depression

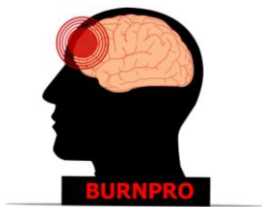
Everything becomes a blur. Life was once technicolor, but now it's gray and bleak. You're emotionally and mentally exhausted. You feel lost and unsure. Work feels completely devoid of meaning or purpose.

### Stage 12: Full Burnout syndrome

Full Burnout Syndrome occurs when you reach a breaking point. Your body may collapse or you have a mental breakdown. At this stage, medical attention is necessary. Many professionals find that they need to take extended leave from their job in order to heal. Take a moment to reflect. What stage do you see yourself in? This is important information and a call to action to act sooner rather than later. It's important to remember that Burnout is not a linear process. You don't always go from one stage to the next and the time spent in each stage can vary.

Later on, this model has been simplified, and currently, a **5-stage model** is most frequently used as following:





This 5-stage model starts with the honeymoon phase and is characterized by enthusiasm.

However, inevitably, after time this becomes associated with experiencing the stresses of the job. If at this stage, no positive coping strategies are implemented, the process of burnout risks to become initiated.

This is followed by a stage of stagnation characterized by the onset of stress. This second stage begins with an awareness of some days being more difficult than others.

Life becomes limited to work and taking care of business, while family, social life and personal priorities are neglected and suffer and common stress symptoms appear, which affect the person emotionally, but also physically.

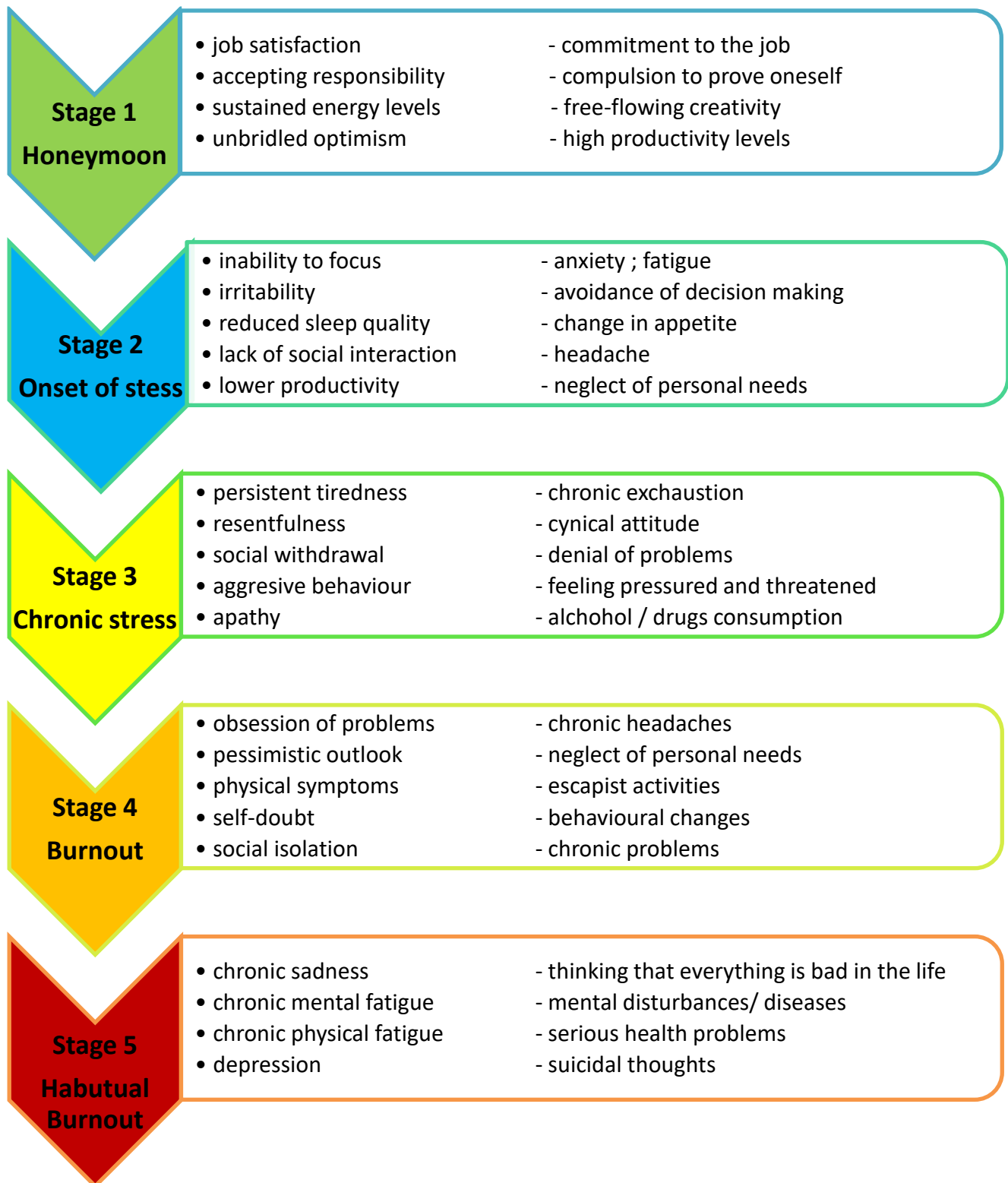
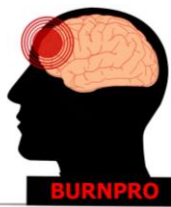
Then a stage of chronic stress develops which leads to frustration. Individuals get the feeling of failure and a sense of powerlessness.

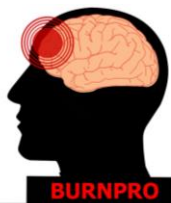
Efforts do not visibly pay off and the impression or fact of not receiving enough acknowledgement leads to one feeling incompetent and inadequate.

This then leads to the stage of apathy, where despair and disillusionment occur. People do not see a way out of the situation and become resigned and indifferent.

The final stage is habitual Burnout. In the following table you may see the summary of the may characteristics for each of the 5 stages model.

**Think about yourself and find out how resilient you are in this process.**





## 2.4 Mental health self-care of teachers

Self-care is key to remaining healthy at work with students who have histories of loss, grief, stress and trauma. Self-care for teachers is about actively looking after their own mental health and wellbeing so that they can more effectively support the young people they work with.

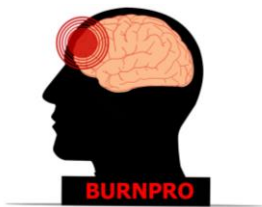
Preventing adverse health effects can be achieved by learning to cope with stress, in which teachers share experience with colleagues, identify specific factors of stress and possible coping strategies, replace their traditional perceptions and beliefs with more appropriate ones, analyze strategies for coping with discipline in the classroom and for increasing students' motivation and practice techniques for assertiveness and relaxation.

Effective stress management helps teachers to break the level of stress they have on their work and life, so they can be happier, healthier, and more productive. The ultimate goal is a balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation, and fun, and the resilience to hold up under pressure and meet challenges. There are several approaches and techniques to take self-care for mental health and to manage the stress.

### 2.4.1. Improvement of emotional intelligence skills

Emotional intelligence is a person's ability to understand one's own emotions, the emotions of others, and to act appropriately using these emotions. It includes a set of emotional, personal and social skills and abilities that affect the overall ability of the person to cope with the requirements of the surrounding environment, to manage stress and maintain good mental health and some of these are:

- Intra-personal skills are related to emotional self-awareness, self-confidence, self-love, self-actualisation and independence.
- Interpersonal skills are expressed through empathy, interpersonal relationships, and interpersonal functioning.

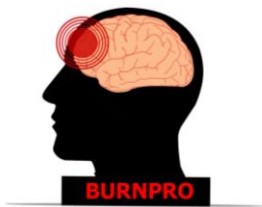


- Adaptability skills are manifested in problem solving, reality testing and flexibility (adaptability).
- Skills for coping with stress predict resilience and tolerance to stress and control over the impulse.
- Essential components of emotional intelligence are also skills associated with the general mood and positive experiences of happiness and optimism.

Emotional intelligence is a prerequisite for the development of inter-cultural sensitivity and understanding of other cultures. It also creates tolerance and reduces stress when interacting at work with representatives from other cultures. Teachers with high emotional intelligence establish good relationships with the students because they are attentive and responsive to their concerns. High emotional intelligence reduces the level of the perceived professional stress, with the result that teachers can successfully manage stress and reduce the harmful effects of it.

These are some practical tips for improvement of emotional intelligence:

- Observe your emotions and reactions to people. Try to understand how you think and interact with other people and to put yourself in their place. Are you more open and accept their needs?
- Increase your self-awareness and do self-evaluation. Are you ready to accept that you could work on some areas and to improve your emotional reactions? **Pay more attention to your own emotions.** Analyse how you respond in emotional situations. Seek feedback from people whom you trust to react with some degree of unbiased, unprejudiced response.
- Develop your ability to stay calm and to control your emotions in difficult and stressful situations. How do you react under stress? Do you become upset; do you blame others or become angry at them, even when it's not their fault?
- Take responsibility for your reactions and actions and examine its effect on others. How will they feel if you do something?



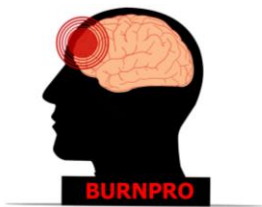
### 2.4.2. Stress coping strategies and psychological resilience

People use different approaches to cope with stress in their job and life. Coping is aimed to reduce negative consequences from stress and to maintain the well-being.

There are two main approaches to stress coping:

- **The problem-focused coping strategies** are directed to the problem and to the causes of stress. They include direct action aimed at the source of stress: consider of range of plans to handle with situation; set priorities; stand back and try to rationalize the situation; find out more about situation; seek additional information to resolve the problem and to reduce the stress. The problem-focused coping strategies are related with good mental health, well-being and work effectiveness.
- **The emotion-focused coping strategies** are aimed to reduce an emotional discomfort accompanying a stressful situation. Emotion-focused strategies include, for example, emotional relief, distracting activities, getting support from colleagues, family and friends, passive attempts to tolerate and preparing to deal with situation (do nothing and carry on as usual). The emotion-focused coping strategies have short-term effect on reducing stress and their regular use is related to psychosomatic complains, job dissatisfaction and low well-being.

**Psychological resilience** is a key factor that impacts stress coping and mental health. It is generally thought of as a positive adaptation after a stressful or adverse situation. The optimism and positive emotions are the main characteristics of resilient individuals. Resilience is not a trait that people either have or don't have. It involves actions, thoughts, and behaviors that can be learned and developed.

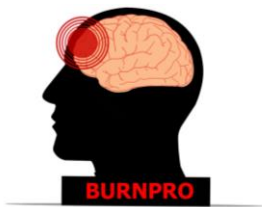


**We suggest 11 ways to build resilience:**

1. **Accept that change is a part of living.** All of life involves change. Accepting that fact, you will be better served by focusing on things that you can change and putting a plan together to do so.
2. **Make connections.** Good relationships are important: family, friends, co-workers, and others. Accept help if you need it, and don't be afraid to ask for it.
3. **Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems.** You can't change what's happened, but you can look toward the solution and act accordingly.
4. **Take decisive actions.** Acting decisively, even during stressful or adverse situations, helps build self-confidence and resilience.
5. **Move toward your goals.** Create realistic goals and take steps to achieve them. Even small steps are a sign of progress. Keep moving forward.
6. **Look for opportunities for self-discovery.** You can often learn something good from any situation, even tragedies and hardship.
7. **Nurture a positive view of yourself.** Develop your confidence and problem-solving ability helps to build resilience.
8. **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** Try visualizing what you want, instead of worrying about how you'll attain it.
9. **Take care of yourself.** Pay attention to the physical and mental aspects of personal caretaking. This keeps mind and body primed and ready to deal with situations requiring resilience.
10. **Keep things in perspective.** Try to look at the broader, long-term view and avoid blowing things out of proportion.
11. **Find additional ways of strengthening resilience.** These may include journal writing, meditation, or spiritual practices.

Psychological resiliency influences how teachers perceive the stressful events, how to evaluate own personal resources to cope and what strategy to cope with stress they will choose. Resilient people try to be problem oriented and prefer to use proactive approach to handle stress that help them not only to manage stress but prevent it in future.





### 2.4.3. Mental health self-care activities and practices

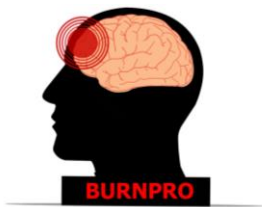
Self-care consists on long-term proactive and regular activities that will be different for everyone. Self-care may include:

- Engaging in activities and practices that give you energy, lower your stress and contribute to your wellbeing (E.g. exercising regularly, eating well and fostering positive relationships).
- Doing these activities regularly.
- Noticing when your stress is manageable, and your physical and emotional wellbeing is enhanced.
- Making a commitment to your health and wellbeing for today and into the future.

There are several well-known and approved into practice activities and techniques what implementation will reduce the stress and keep wellbeing and health. Most of them are related to personal control on healthy habits, lifestyle, social relationship, positive feelings and thoughts and it is personal choice and motivation to use them.

#### ***Maintaining healthy habits and lifestyle***

- **Eat a healthy diet.** Well-nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress, so be mindful of what you eat.
- **Reduce caffeine and sugar.** The temporary "highs" caffeine and sugar provide often end in with a crash in mood and energy. By reducing the amount of coffee, soft drinks, chocolate you'll feel more relaxed, and you'll sleep better.
- **Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs.** Self-medicated, alcohol or drugs may provide an easy escape from stress, but the relief is only temporary. Don't avoid or mask the issue at hand, deal with problems head on and with a clear mind.
- **Get enough sleep.** Good sleep fuels your mind, as well as your body. Feeling tired will increase your stress because it may cause you to think irrationally.
- **Do physical exercises.** Physical activity is a huge stress reliever. Exercise releases endorphins that make you feel good, and it can also serve as a valuable distraction

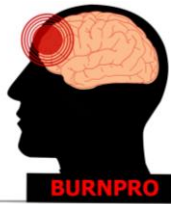


- from your daily worries. There are some easy ways to incorporate exercise into your daily schedule: put on some music and dance around; use the stairs at home or work rather than an elevator; park your car in the farthest spot in the lot and walk the rest of the way; pair up with an exercise partner and encourage each other as you work out; walk to the grocery store. Doing regular exercises will reduce negative consequences of stress and improve well-being.
- **Apply relaxation techniques.** Relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation, and deep breathing activate the body's relaxation response, a state of restfulness, that is the opposite of the fight or flight or mobilization stress response. As you learn and practice these techniques, your stress levels will decrease.

### ***Social support network***

Social support is the physical and emotional comfort given to us by our family, friends, co-workers and others. Building and maintaining social support networks is a powerful buffer of stress and can improve resiliency to stressors. There is nothing more calming than spending quality time with another human being who makes you feel safe and understood.

Social support can come in many different forms: emotional support; instrumental support and practical help and assistance; informational support. In stressful situations people need of overall support and from all concrete forms but you will reduce the negative consequence of stress if you receive the right form of support in given situation. That is why is important to know and to identify who will support you for what. The social support itself don't manage the stress and its harmful effects but is a secure buffer preventing your well-being and health.

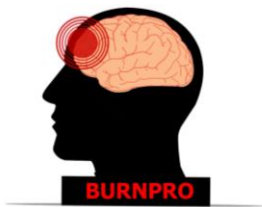


**There are some practical advices to develop and maintain social support network:**

- **Create a wide net.** Look to different relationships for different kinds of support. But remember to look to people you can trust and count on, to avoid disappointing, negative interactions that can make you feel worse.
- **Be proactive.** Often people expect others to reach out to them, and then feel rejected when people don't go out of their way to do so. Make time for friends and family. If you're there for others, they'll be more likely to be there for you.
- **Take advantage of technology** when face-to-face communication is not possible. Call of friend or use scape.
- **Follow your interests** and connect with people who like the things you like.
- **Seek peer support.** If you're dealing with a specific stressful situation, you may not find the support you need from your current network. Consider joining a support group to meet others who are dealing with similar challenges.
- **Improve your social skills.** Contact many people and try to find common interests and topics of discussion.
- **Ask for help.** If you lack a strong support network and aren't sure where to start, there are resources that may be able to help you identify services, support groups and other programs in your community.

### ***Positive thinking and self-talk***

Positive thinking is proved to be powerful approach to keep mental health and to stay satisfied by own job, life, personal development. It relates to optimism and is very appropriate in unhappy, emotionally exhausting and stressful situations. Research has found that positive thinking can aid in stress management and is linked to a wide range of positive consequences for overall health and well-being. Therefore, positive thinking plays an important role in positive psychology, a subfield devoted to the study of what makes people happy and fulfilled.



Being a positive thinker is more than taking a proactive approach to your life. Instead of feeling hopeless or overwhelmed, positive thinking allows you to see the best in other people, to develop an optimistic outlook in bad and unpleasant situations and to view yourself and your abilities in a positive light. It might not be easy, but it will have a positive impact on your mental, emotional, and physical health.

Positive thinking is a step-by-step process to change negative thoughts and self-talk with positive one.

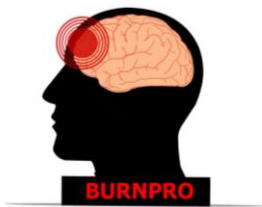
A few common strategies involve learning how to identify negative thoughts and replacing these thoughts with more positive ones.

- Avoid negative self-talk. It is very difficult to learn how to avoid the negative inner monologue but if succeed in doing this you take an important big step to improve your health.
- Use humour to challenge negative thoughts.
- Cultivate optimism. Some people are “born” optimists, but it is possible to learn an optimistic approach and to control your pessimistic view. Try to change pessimistic scenario with optimistic beliefs and expectations.
- Keep working on it. Positive thinking can take effort in the face of challenging situations.

Inner monologue and self-talk give the chance to make desired changes in your behaviour, stress reactions and life. It involves a lifelong commitment to looking inside yourself and being willing to challenge negative thoughts and make positive changes.

### ***Work – life balance and recreation activities***

- **Increase your job and life satisfaction.** Find out of meaning of your work. Your work has high social significance and you contribute to the personal development of young generations. People satisfied by the job itself are more healthy, happy, and productive. Their overall job satisfaction has a spillover effect on life satisfaction. That is why is necessary to see your job positively and enjoy contacts



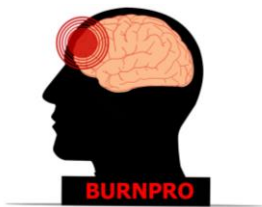
and working with children. You grow up them and contribute to their future success, happiness and development.

- **Improve your work-life balance.** Stress is a common feature of a poor work-life balance. Find free time for yourself, for your hobbies and personal interests.
- **Set aside leisure time.** Include rest and relaxation in your daily schedule. Don't allow other obligations to encroach. This is your time to take a break from all responsibilities and recharge your batteries.
- **Do something you enjoy every day.** Make time for leisure activities that bring you joy. Allow you a small joy.
- **Keep your sense of humour.** This includes the ability to laugh at yourself. Laughter reduces stress and relieves tension and helps you to keep your positive feelings, optimism, and life satisfaction. When you can view life from a humorous angle, it is difficult to focus on the things that cause stress.

**Being healthy, happy, and satisfied with your job and life depends mainly on your willingness, motivation, and efforts. You could balance between work and life, manage your stress and to contribute to other's people wellbeing.**

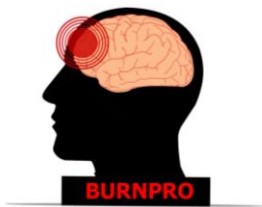
## Conclusion

Being a teacher is a very difficult task having in mind a rate of changes in their job. There is a wide range of factors that principally affect stress, job satisfaction, turnover of teachers and worsen their health. Working with children and especially educating and helping children with heavy personal history and traumatic experience is a big challenge. The quality and effectiveness of teaching depends on skills to manage stress and to take care of your health.



It is not possible to prescript a right recipe and advise what to do to cope with stress and negative events in your job and life. In some cases, and for some people one approach will be useful and will give positive results, but the same approach could be inapplicable in another situation or even more – it is possible to have a harmful effect. You could use a variety of strategies and approaches to manage your stress, to control your negative emotions and to keep your optimism, positive thinking and feeling.

The decision to change yourself and to become more satisfied, healthy, and effective is our own responsibility. You could find the right way to manage your stress, to feel satisfied and to be proud of the meaningfulness of your job.



## References

1. Bar-On, (2006). R. The Bar-On model of emotional-social intelligence (ESI). *Psithema*, 18, 13-25.
2. Chang, M. An appraisal perspective of teacher burnout: Examining the emotional work of teachers. *Educational Psychology Review*, 2009, 2, 193-218.
3. Cherris, C. (1995). *Beyond burnout. Helping teachers, nurses, therapists, and lawyers recover from the stress and disillusionment.* Psychology Press.
4. Childhood trauma reactions. Teacher self-care. The University of Queensland, Australia.
5. Figley, C.R. (Ed). (1995) *Compassion Fatigue: Coping with secondary traumatic stress disorder in those who treat the traumatized.* New York: Brunner/Mazel.
6. *Handbook of good human resource practices in the teaching profession.* International Labour Office. – Geneva: ILO, 2012.
7. Keyes C. (2014). Mental health as a complete state: How the salutogenic perspective completes the picture. In: Bauer, G., Hämmig, O. (Editors). *Bridging occupational, organizational and public health.* Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 179–192.
8. Maslach, C. (1999). Progress in understanding teacher burnout. In: Vanderberghe, R., Huberman, A. (Eds.), *Understanding and preventing teacher burnout.* Cambridge University Press, 211-222.
9. Naseem, Z., & Khalid, R. (2010). Positive thinking in coping with stress and health outcomes: Literature review. *Journal of Research and Reflections in Education*, 4(1): 42-61.
10. Perry, C., Ball, I. (2007). Dealing constructively with negatively evaluated emotional situations: The key to understanding the different reactions of teachers with high and low levels of emotional intelligence. *Social Psychology of Education*, 10, 443-454.
11. Vesely, A., Saklofske, D., Lescheid, A. (2013). Teachers -The Vital Resource: The Contribution of Emotional Intelligence to Teacher Efficacy and Well-Being. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, 28, 71-89.
12. World Health Organization. WHO mental health. [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/en/)
13. Freudenberger's 12 stages. <https://www.burnoutgeese.com/freudenberger-burnout.html>