



# Strategies for Preventing and Managing Burnout

*Supporting the Implementation Support Practitioner:*

*Identifying and Mitigating Role-Related Challenges*

May 12, 2022



# The Center for Implementation

## About Us

The Center for Implementation (TCI) operates from the view that knowledge generated from implementation science — the research behind how best to implement change — should be in the hands of practitioners in organizations, communities, and systems.

We make the science of implementation practical and accessible. Our mission and moral imperative are to ensure that people around the world are applying theory and evidence-informed change methods to improve outcomes.

TCI was founded in 2018 and has been growing rapidly ever since. This expansion is driven by our international reputation for producing clear and practical guidance on applying implementation science that enhances change efforts across various fields and sectors.

Our vision is to see hundreds of thousands of people worldwide actively applying implementation science to design, implement, spread, and scale their change initiatives.

## Our Approach

Our expertise is in developing innovative processes that are informed by implementation science and designed for creating real-world change.

Dr. Julia E. Moore and Dr. Sobia Khan, TCI's senior members, have built a bridge between implementation science and implementation practice by synthesizing and translating complex implementation science concepts into easy-to-understand actionable steps.

Our true specialization lies in how we train, support, and empower professionals working to make change in organizations and systems to implement in more evidence-based ways (i.e., drawing from what works to foster individual, organizational, and systems change).





# The Center for Implementation

## Our Services

### Training

We provide online courses and workshops to build capacity across all stages of implementation. *Inspiring Change 2.0*, our free mini-course on the foundations of implementation science, has been accessed by over 6000 individuals from 92 countries. Our two comprehensive online courses – *Designing for Implementation* and *Implementation, Spread, and Scale* – have been taken by hundreds of professionals across the globe.

### Implementation Supports

We also support teams and organizations in building implementation infrastructure to implement, spread, and scale interventions. We work collaboratively with organizations and systems to build implementation capacity (building tailored tools, training, and providing technical assistance) by embedding implementation science within organizations so they can create deeper and long-lasting change.

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Visit our website to learn more about our services:

<https://thecenterforimplementation.com/our-services>



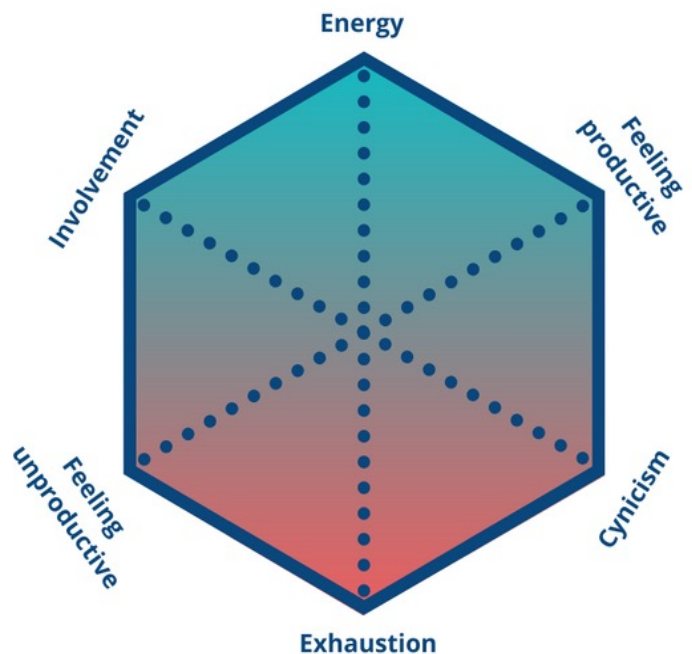
# What is burnout?

Burnout is a work-related phenomenon. People often think of burnout as an on and off switch, you are either burnt out or you are not. But the reality is much more nuanced. Burnout exists along a spectrum. In fact, burnout exists along three different spectrums. You maybe on the burnout end of one spectrum, in the middle of a second spectrum, and not at all burnt out on the third spectrum. When you take a more nuanced approach to understanding how you are experiencing burnout, it can set you up to better understand the kinds of strategies that will help you prevent and address your own experience of burnout.

## Burnout spectrums

This burnout hexagon (adapted from Maslach's Burnout Inventory) illustrates the three different spectrums in which you can experience burnout:

- > Energy to exhaustion
- > Involvement to cynicism
- > Feeling productive to feeling unproductive

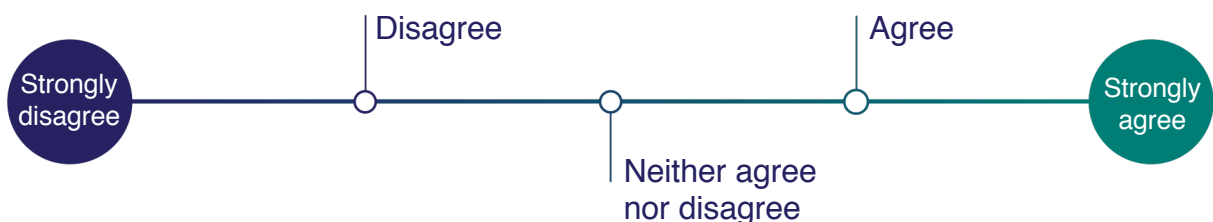




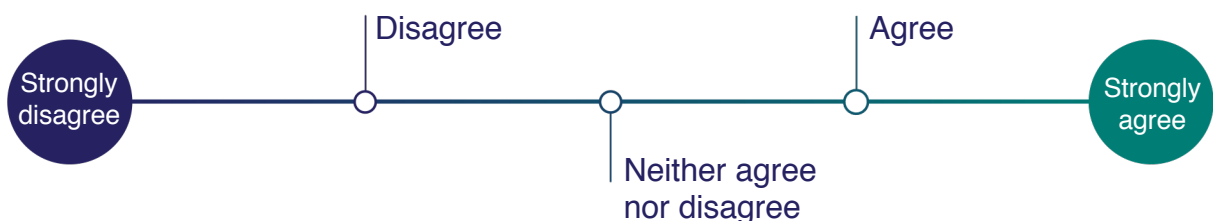
# Energy to exhaustion spectrum

The energy to exhaustion spectrum is what we often think of when we consider burnout. This is the emotional element of burnout. When you are experiencing burnout on the spectrum, the thing that is often most noticeable is your lack of energy. Sometimes that comes in the form of physical exhaustion, and sometimes it comes in the form of emotional exhaustion, feeling as though you are completely at your wits' end and can't even process any more information.

I'm not just tired, I'm drained.



Physically I am prone to headaches, digestive upset, or muscle aches not otherwise explained.





# Energy to exhaustion spectrum

I feel overwhelmed or like I can't keep up with my work.



I have trouble falling asleep (or falling back asleep) because I'm thinking about work.



I don't feel I have enough energy for people or tasks outside of work.

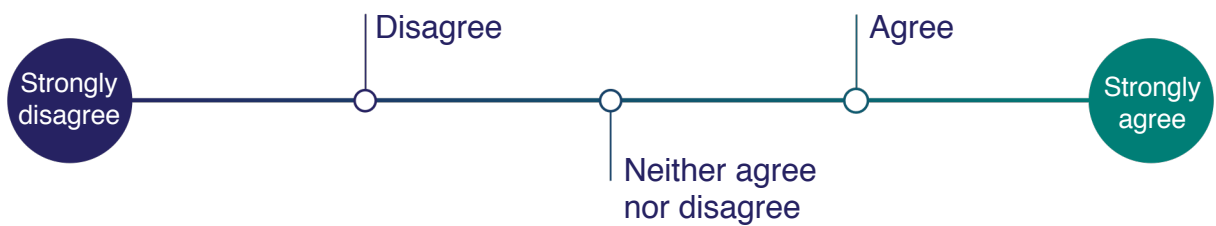




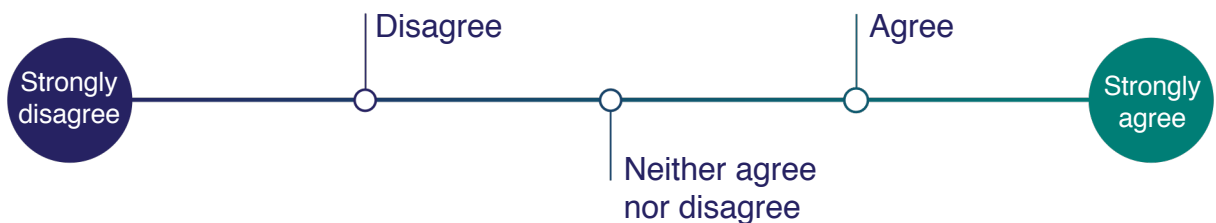
# Involvement to cynicism spectrum

The involvement to cynicism spectrum is the mental element of burnout. This aspect of burnout leaves you feeling negative and disconnected from other people and/or your work. Unlike the energy to exhaustion spectrum, which you are likely to notice in yourself (although you might ignore it), other people are more likely to notice this aspect of burnout in you before you do. Likely they will notice negativity, especially negativity that had not been there in the past

I feel detached from the work I'm doing.



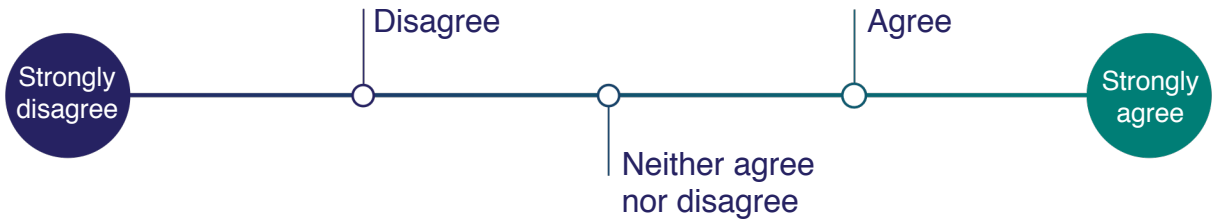
I find myself feeling angry or irritable with my colleagues (whether I show it or not).



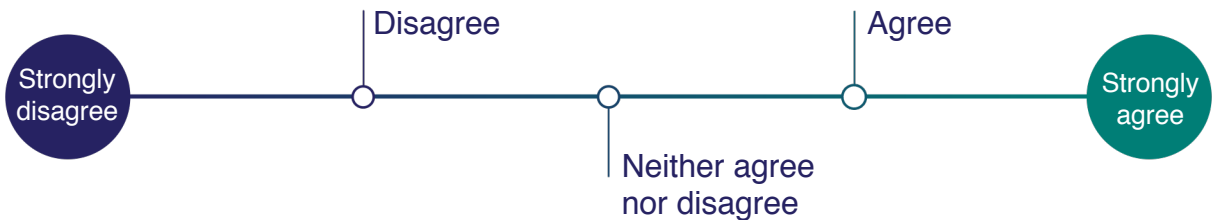


# Involvement to cynicism spectrum

I wonder what the point is in terms of my work.



I find myself becoming increasingly skeptical/unable to trust clients or colleagues.



I think or dream about leaving my job on a regular basis.







# Feeling productive to feeling unproductive spectrum

The feeling productive to feeling unproductive spectrum is the behavioral element of burnout. This is often the hardest one to recognize and to understand. This is about how you are responding to your environment. The easiest way to think about it has to do with your own feelings of productivity. Note that it is not about how productive you actually are; it's about how productive you feel.

I feel unproductive even though I'm really busy.



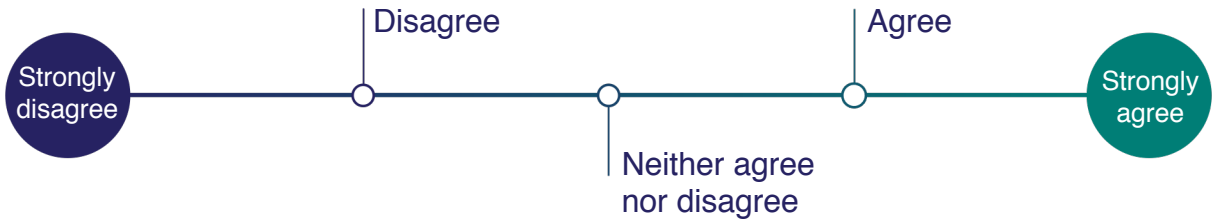
I compare myself to others who do similar work and don't feel like I measure up.



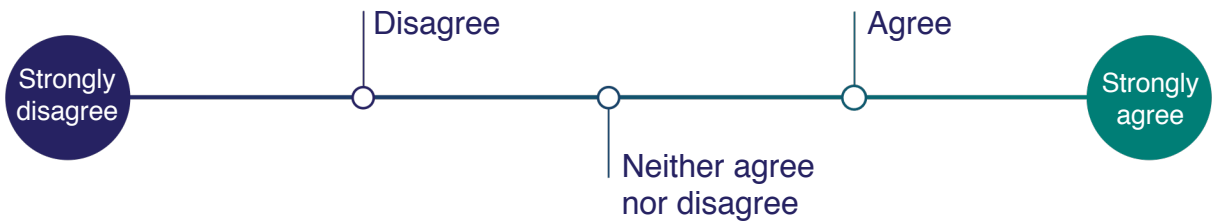


# Feeling productive to feeling unproductive spectrum

I am quick to question the value of the work I do.



I feel less appreciated at work than I have in the past.



I'm afraid I'll be exposed as a fraud at work.





# Strategies to combat burnout

## Strategies to increase energy

- **Create a personal energy-exhaustion map by asking yourself:**
  - What brings me energy?
  - What depletes my energy?
  - What requires an energy investment, but is worth it?
- **Distraction (escaping the moment)**
  - Best when mind is racing/stuck, when needing an energy boost
  - Be mindful of difference between healthy distractions and “shadow comforts”. This is distraction with intention as opposed to autopilot/“zoning out”.

## Strategies to increase involvement

- **A writing exercise to vent**
  - Open a blank electronic document and switch the font to a symbol font. Just type — let it out! No censoring
  - Switch font and review or better yet just delete it
- **Self-soothing (enjoying the moment)**
  - Best when wanting to unwind — focuses on the 5 senses
  - Ask yourself, “What would comfort me?”
  - It doesn’t have to be calm — sometimes music with a heavy beat or an intense workout can be soothing





# Strategies to combat burnout

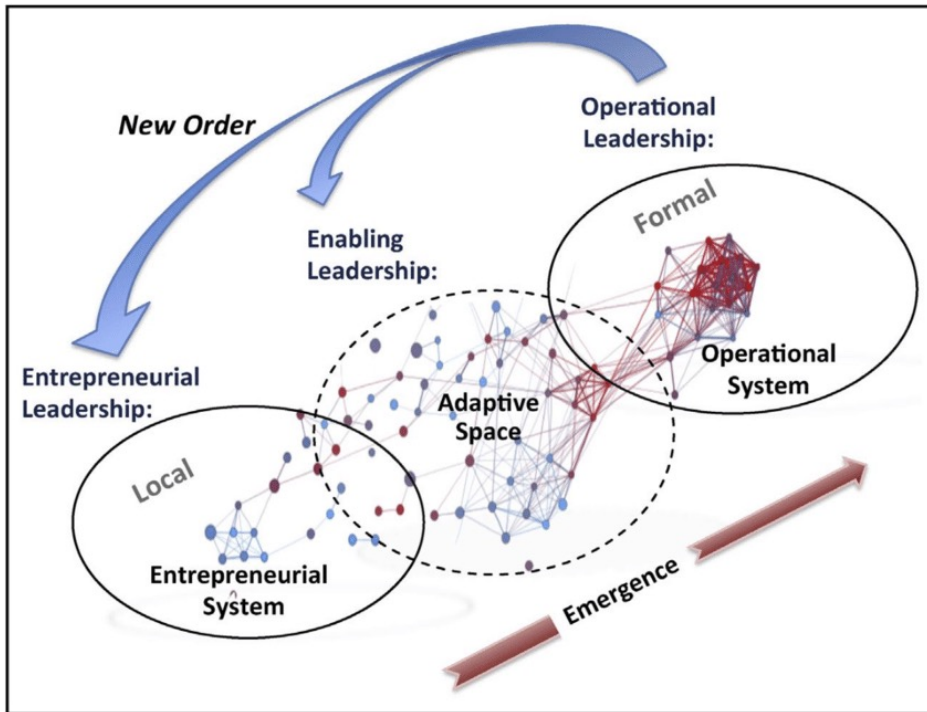
## Strategies to increase feeling productive

- **Turn "What if?" into "Even if..."**
  - Notice if you are in the anxiety spiral. "What if?" questions tend to get us into catastrophic thinking patterns.
  - Shifting to an "Even if..." statement sets us up for viewing our resilience
  
- **Grounding (being in the moment)**
  - Best when feeling overwhelmed — orients you to the present
  - Examples: counting, breathing, mindfulness activities



# Taking a systems perspective

Building organizations and systems that consider and respond to how implementation happens in real life



## > Resource

- > Uhl-Bien, M., & Arena, M. (2017). Complexity leadership: Enabling people and organizations for adaptability. *Organizational Dynamics*, 46(1), 9–20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2016.12.001>



# Taking a systems perspective

Burnout is created by a confluence of factors

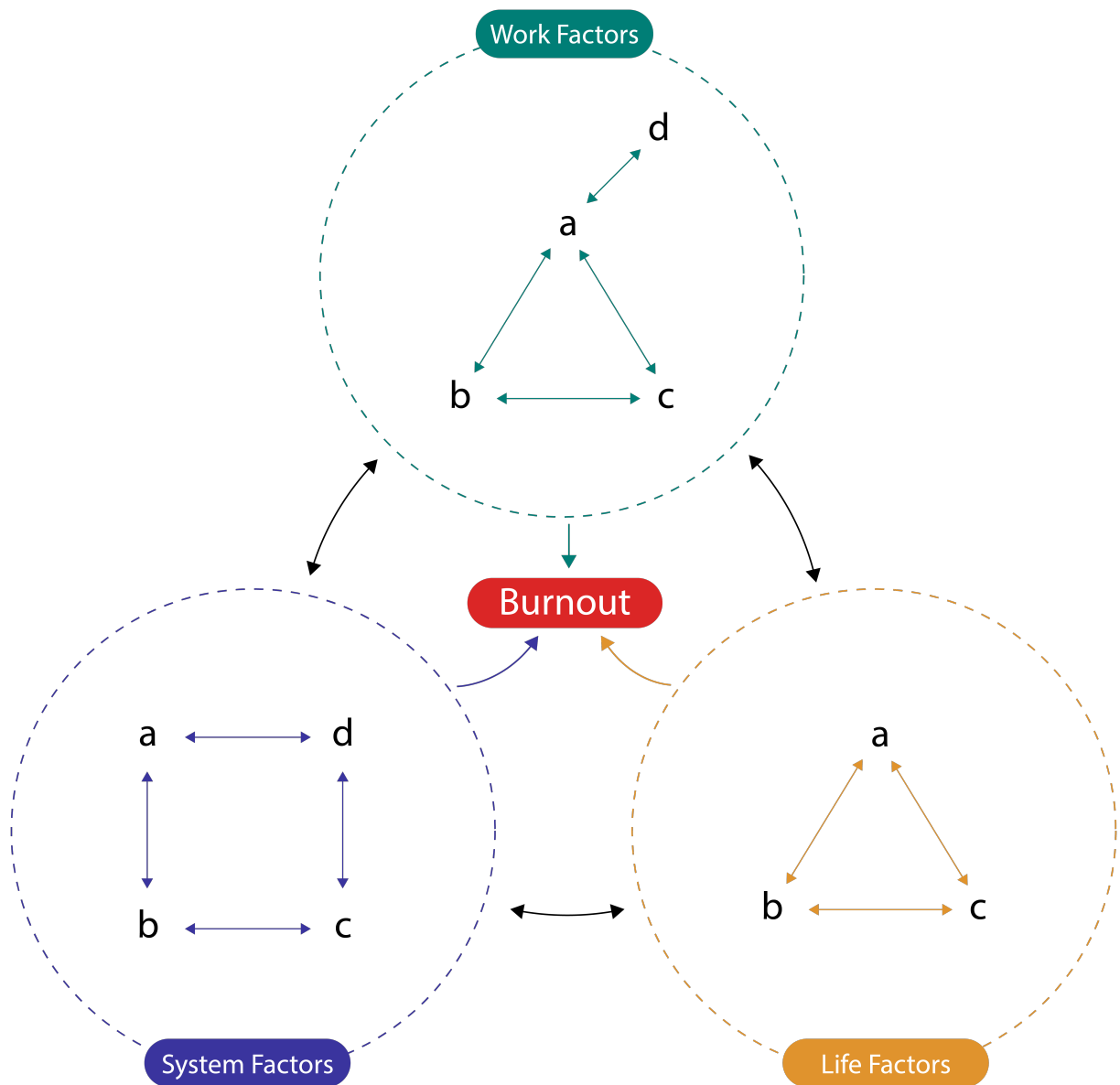


Figure developed by The Center for Implementation





# Taking a systems perspective

## Upstream solutions to burnout

- › Building compassionate and connected spaces
- › Meaning and doing what you say
- › Setting implementation support practitioners up to work in fair and just ways



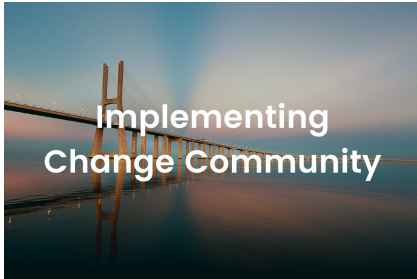
### › Resource

- › [https://www.dismantlingracism.org/uploads/4/3/5/7/43579015/okun\\_-\\_white\\_sup\\_culture.pdf](https://www.dismantlingracism.org/uploads/4/3/5/7/43579015/okun_-_white_sup_culture.pdf)



# Additional TCI Resources

## Implementing Change Community (ICC)



Join the ICC if you want to virtually connect with others around the world who are planning for and supporting implementation, receive (or observe!) implementation coaching, have regular access to live Q&A sessions, and find out about or share unique resources.

**[Implementing Change Community](#) (Join anytime!) The ICC is designed to make implementation support affordable and accessible.**

## Embracing Complexity: Fostering Change Using Systems Thinking



If you are trying to implement in a complex system, join us for our online special training series, **[Embracing Complexity](#)**.

**(Open for registration every May.)**