

Navigating Burnout and Rediscovering Employee Engagement





Samm Smeltzer

May 1, 2010 ·



EXHAUSTED with so much to do. I'm a busy busy bee.
Bzzzzzzzzzzzz...



Samm Smeltzer

March 13, 2010 ·



Being a complete bum, while I recover from a long week.



Angie Subala and Noel Subala

1 comment



Samm Smeltzer

September 14, 2010 ·




The worse week I've had in a long time. Hoping the end comes soon...

3 comments



Samm Smeltzer

March 11, 2010 · 




Stuck in Raleigh, North Carolina due to Flight Delays...fun stuff. Staying the night then trying this flying thing again in the morning.

6 comments



Samm Smeltzer


November 24, 2009 · 



Pretty awful day, but I'm still smiling. 😊



Samm Smeltzer

April 22, 2010 · 



So torn between what was and what could be...

1 comment



Samm Smeltzer

January 26, 2011 · 

Pretty sure I'm spending the night in the airport.



7 comments



Samm Smeltzer

July 2, 2009 · 

When will the sun shine on me again? "Soon" I hear the wind whisper to me.



1



Samm Smeltzer

December 28, 2009 · 

is having a hard time making decisions. I don't know what to do anymore.



5 comments



Our Time Together

- ✦ Gain insight into how burnout develops and recognize the warning signs early on.
- ✦ Learn practical skills to identify burnout stages through real-world examples.
- ✦ See how burnout can erode workplace culture and learn to spot the effects.
- ✦ Walk away with actionable strategies to build a culture that prevents burnout and promotes well-being.

In 2019, the World Health Organization officially included burnout in the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11).

It was classified as a non-medical condition but rather an occupational phenomenon. In the ICD-11, burnout is defined as:

Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. 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;
- reduced professional efficacy.

Burnout refers specifically to phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life.

In Classical Oriental Medicine, disease is viewed as the breakdown of harmony within the body.



The causes for this breakdown typically fall in three primary categories:

- **Internal factors**
- **External factors**
- **Miscellaneous factors**

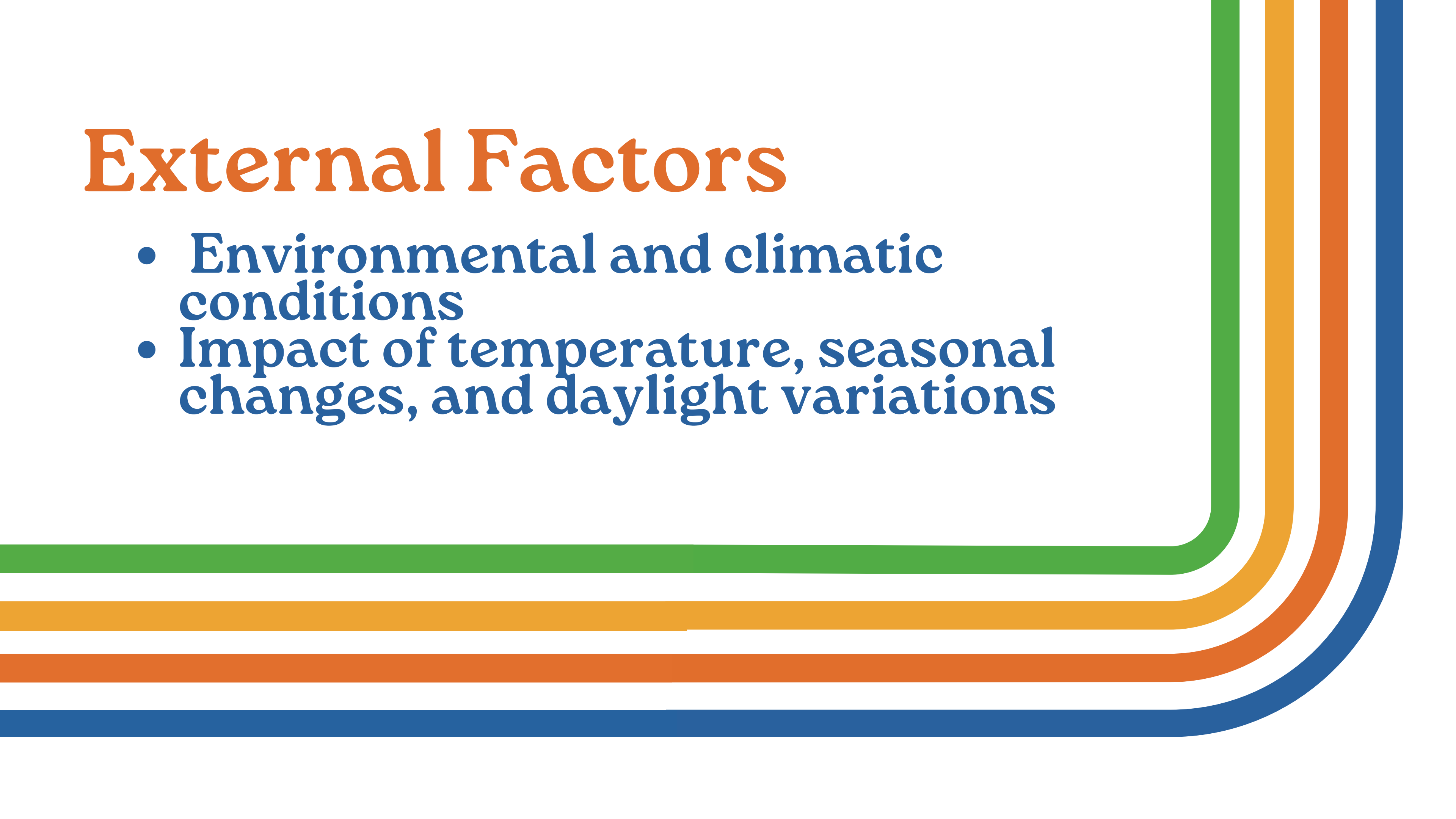
Internal Factors

- Arise from within us
- How we process the world, our thoughts, and feelings



External Factors

- Environmental and climatic conditions
- Impact of temperature, seasonal changes, and daylight variations

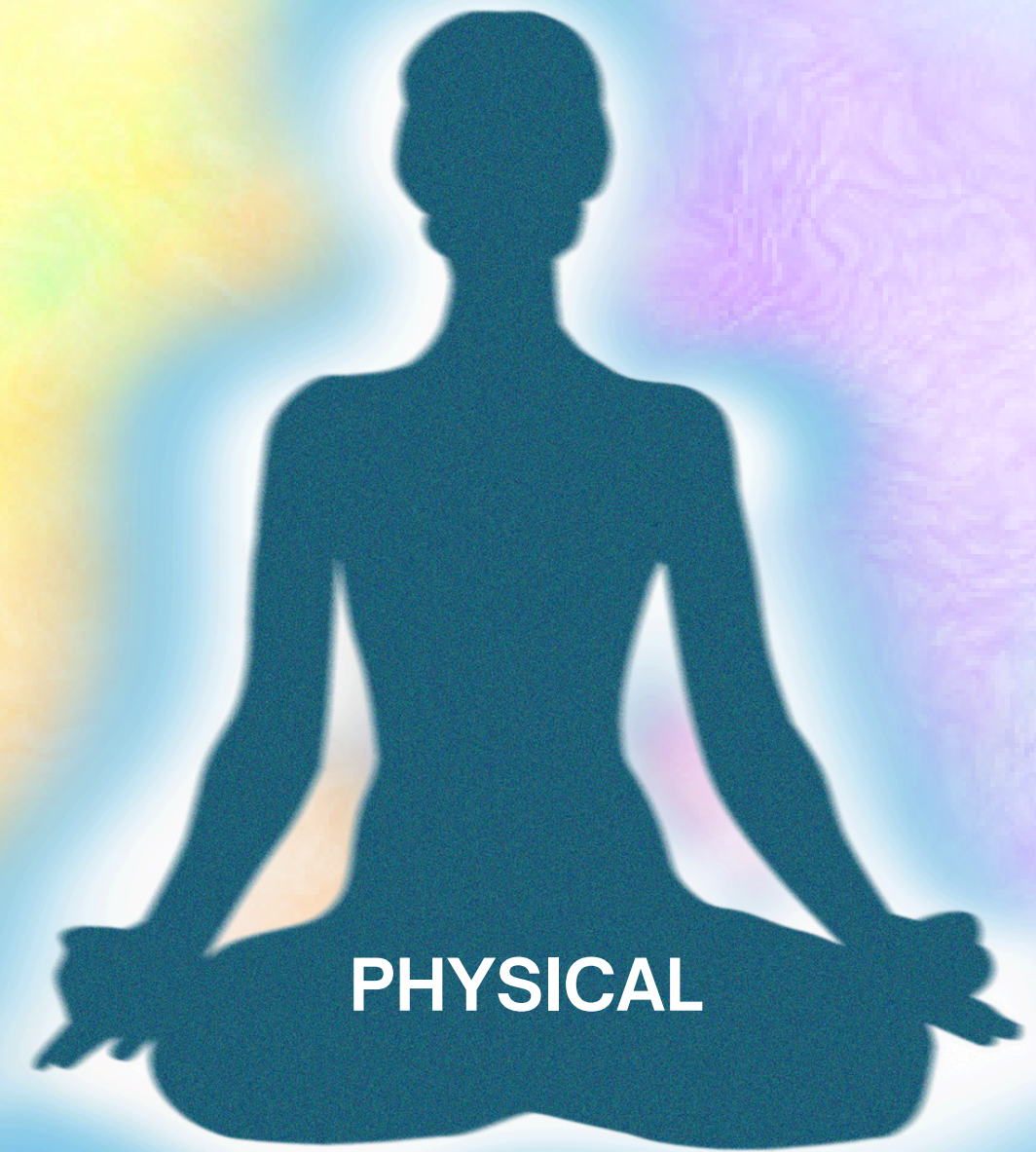


Miscellaneous Factors

- Predominantly lifestyle-related
- Includes health, diet, exercise, workload, and life experiences



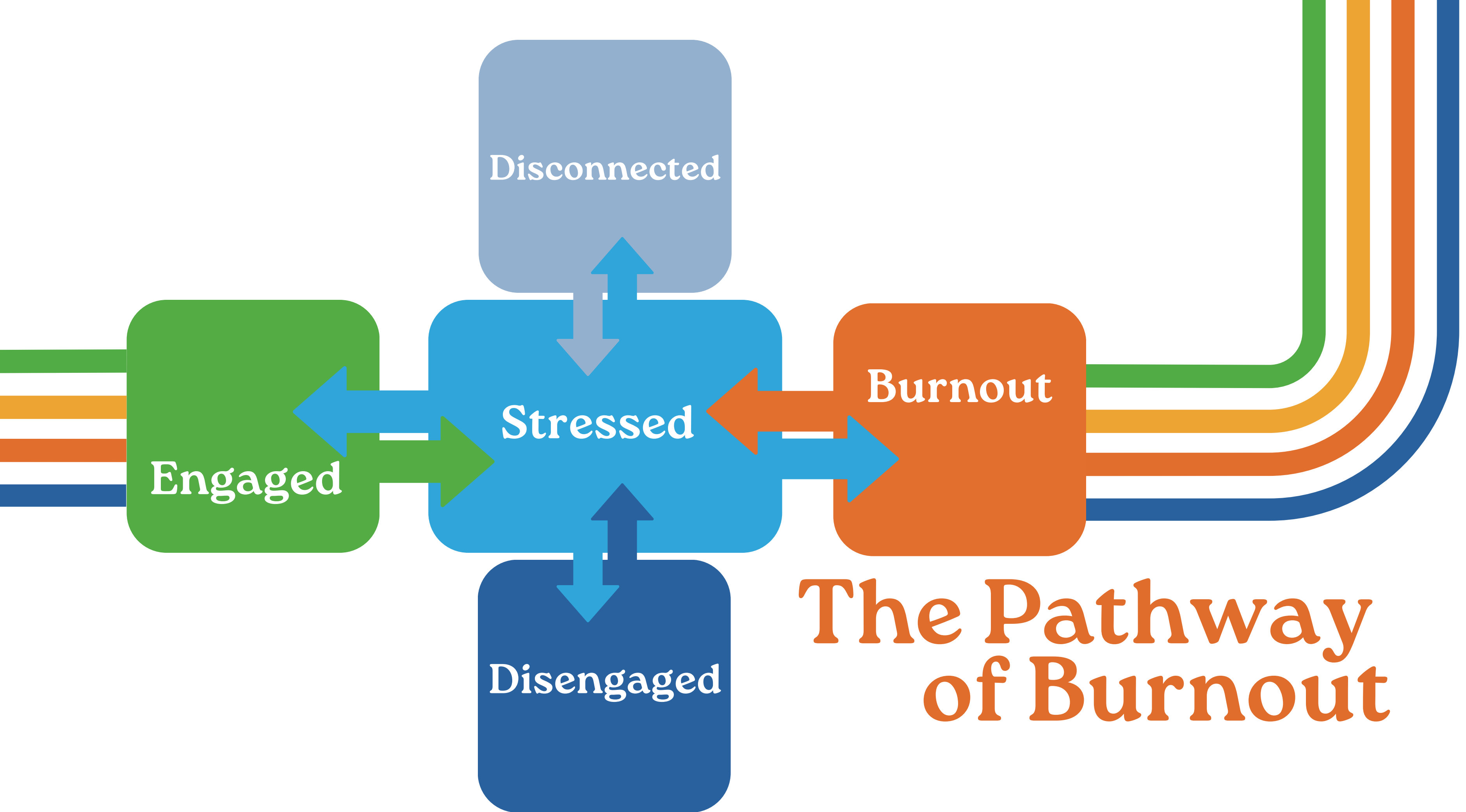
Measuring Burnout



PHYSICAL

EMOTIONAL

SPIRITUAL



The Engaged Stage

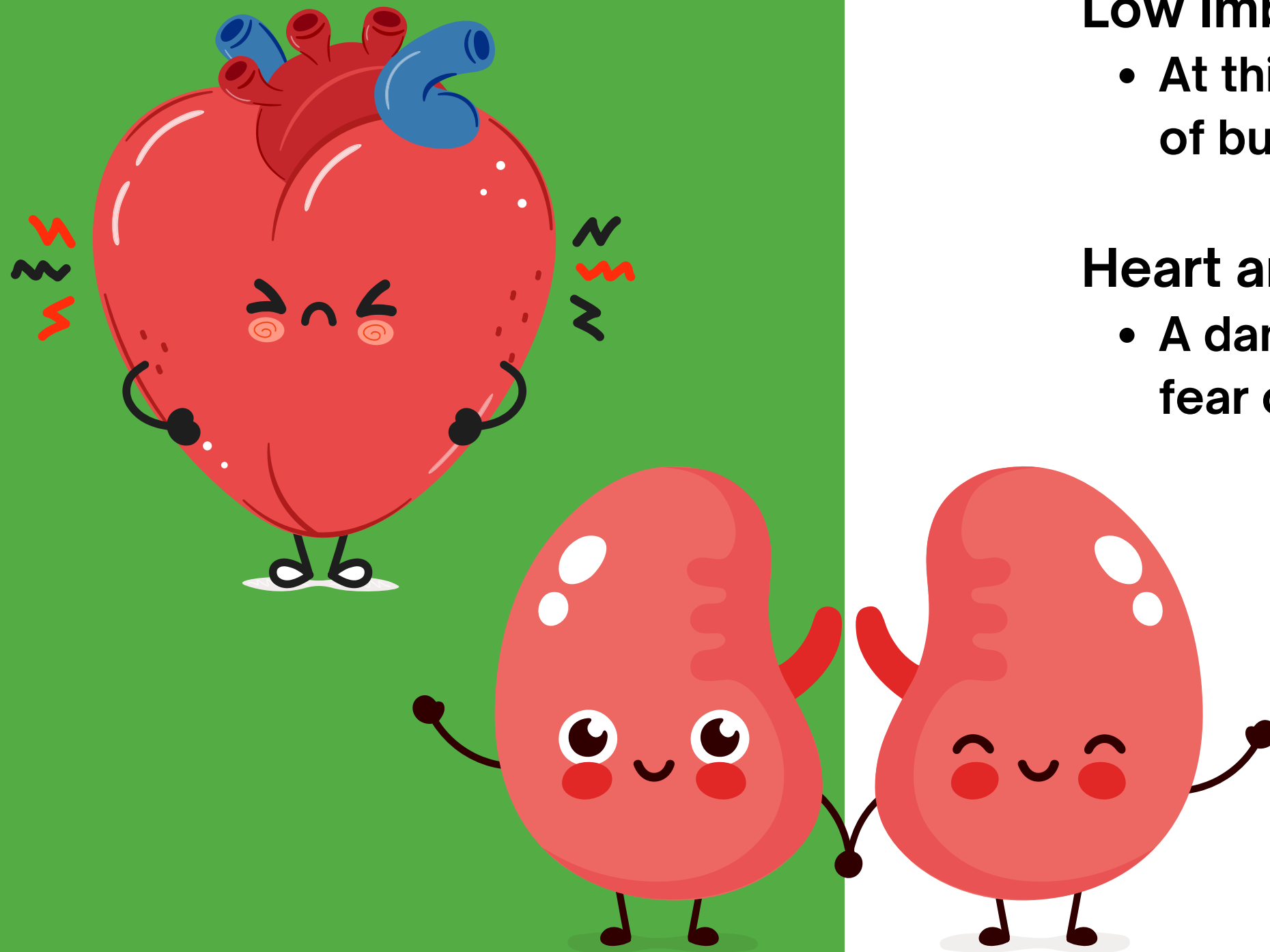
Initial Baseline of Burnout Pathology

Low Imbalances:

- At this stage, imbalances are minimal, but early signs of burnout progression are present.

Heart and Kidney Energy Relationship:

- A dance between the emotions of excess joy and fear of the future begins.



The Engaged Stage

Professional Passion and Excess Joy:

- Connection between “professional passion” and excess joy.
- This expected passion can trigger chaotic energy, often described as work-related stress.
- Stress is not yet overwhelming but chronic stress can progress burnout.

Mild Fear of the Unknown:

- This interacts with Heart energy, often masked as excitement.
- If the individual enters the workplace without an imbalance in sympathy and receives support, excitement stays mild.
- Lack of support or existing imbalances can cause mild fear to grow.



The Engaged Stage



Sympathy Imbalance:

“Everyone needs support at times in their lives. People who did not feel sufficiently supported in their childhood tend to crave and demand an exceptional and inappropriate amount of support and caring later on in life. Alternatively they may find it very difficult to accept care and support from others. When they receive sympathy or support, it produces feelings of disquiet, rather than the feelings of comfort intended.”

Angela and John Hicks,
Five Element Constitutional Acupuncture

Progression Risk:

- In extreme cases, lack of support leads to paralyzing fear. This can cause further progression to the next stage of burnout.

The Burnout Stage

Opposite of Engagement

High Imbalances:

- Individual likely experiences imbalances in all major emotional areas.
- These imbalances lead to extreme exhaustion and a sense of being barely functional.



The Burnout Stage



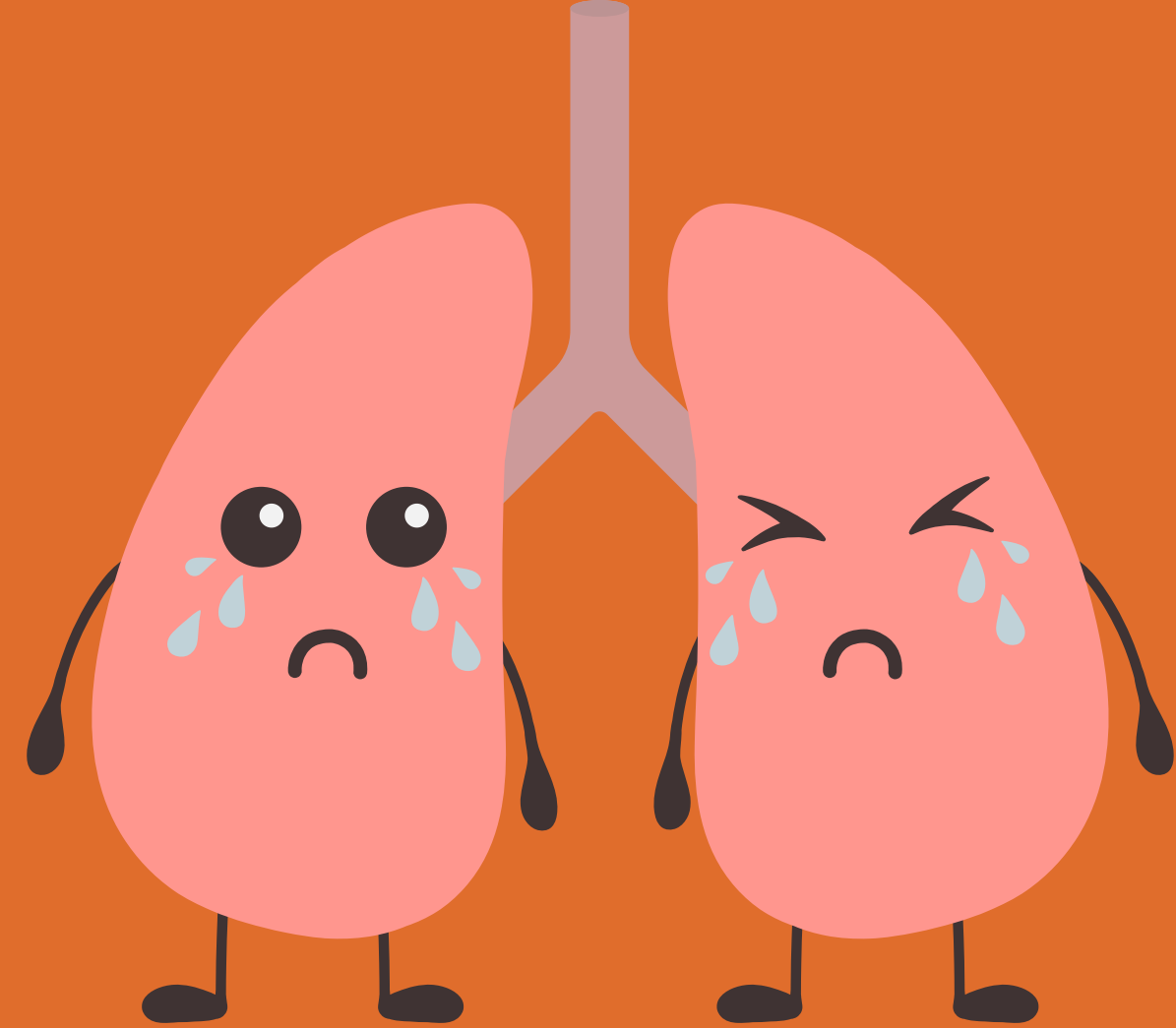
Anger and Frustration:

- Stemming from the inability to create desired changes in the workplace.
- Leads to increased cynicism and decreased productivity.

Lack of Joy and Sympathy:

- Caused by a lack of support and connection from the organizational culture.
- Workload prevents fulfillment of these needs outside of work.





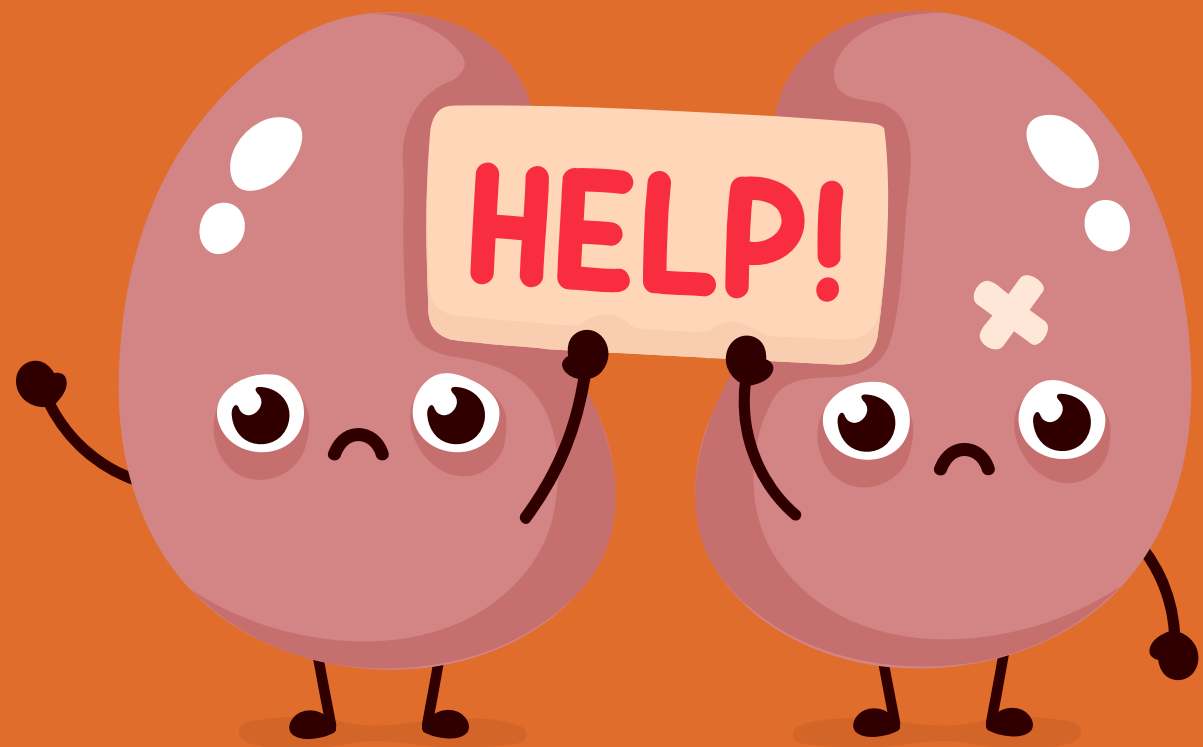
The Burnout Stage

Fear Imbalance:

- Driven by concerns about the future if they remain in the current environment.
- Includes fear of suffering, unhappiness, and further loss of self or relationships.

Grief as a Severity Indicator:

- Grief often centers around disappointment in the organization's unmet promises.
- Reflects the broken trust in the agreed terms of employment and workplace culture.





Understanding Energetic Imbalances

Exhaustion and Productiveness

- **Exhaustion measures available energy.**
- **Productiveness reflects the remaining capacity to function.**

What's Your Bottle?



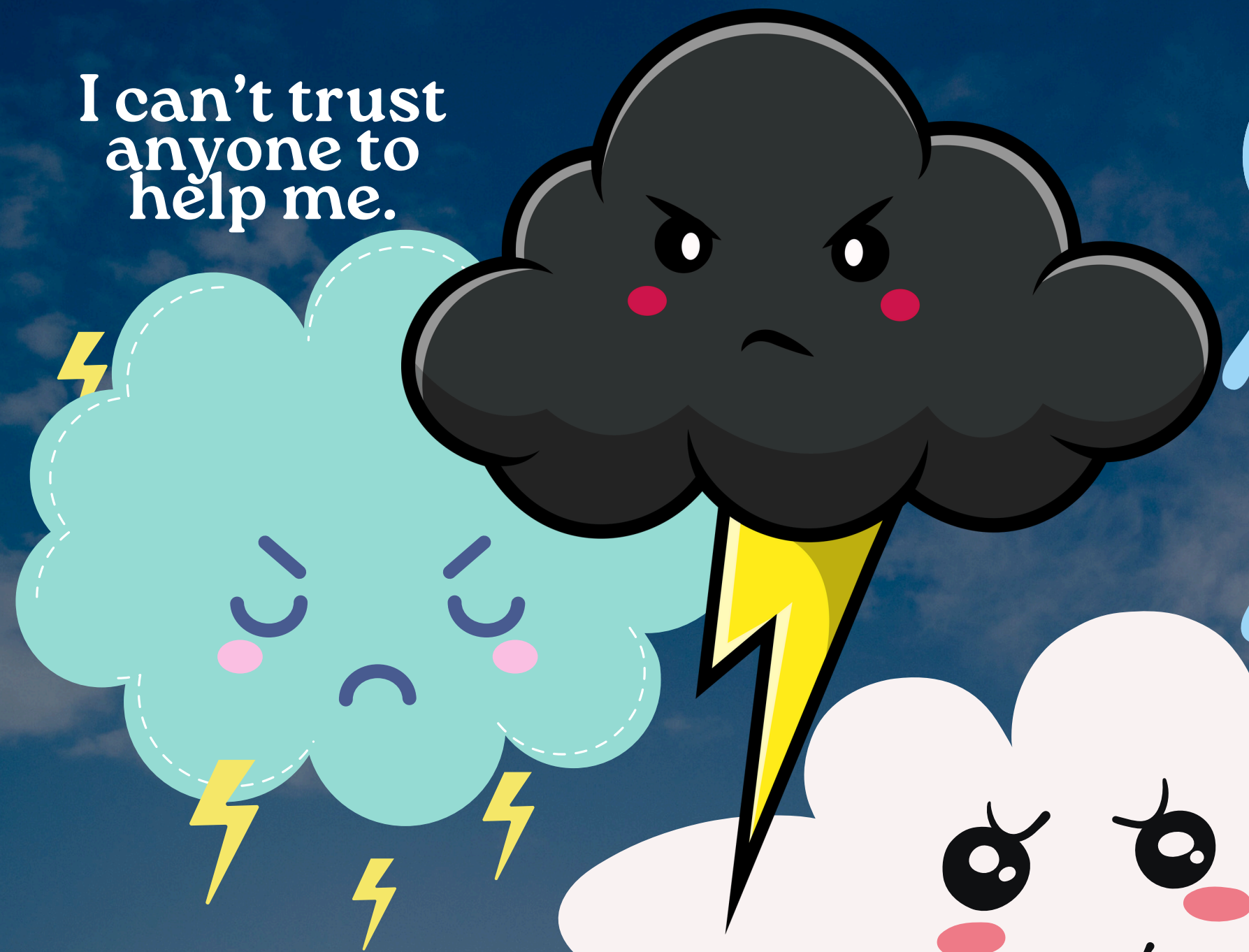


Cynicism and Energetic Clusters

- Cynicism creates energetic thought clusters.
- Prolonged negative thoughts lead to stagnation and energetic blockages.

I'm always stressed.
There's no way out.

I can't trust
anyone to
help me.



I'm not good enough.



Everyone is out
to get me.

Stressed

Characteristics:

- Low to moderate exhaustion and cynicism, low productiveness.

Impact:

- Limited free capacity drained by negative energetic clusters.

Imbalances:

- Lack of joy and sympathy, often tied to workplace cultural issues.



Disconnected

Characteristics:

- High exhaustion, low to moderate cynicism and productivity.

Impact:

- Chronic excess workload leads to energy depletion, increased cynicism, and unproductiveness.

Imbalances:

- Fear, triggered by low energetic reserves, creating a survival mindset.



Disengaged

Characteristics:

- High cynicism, low to moderate exhaustion and productiveness.

Impact:

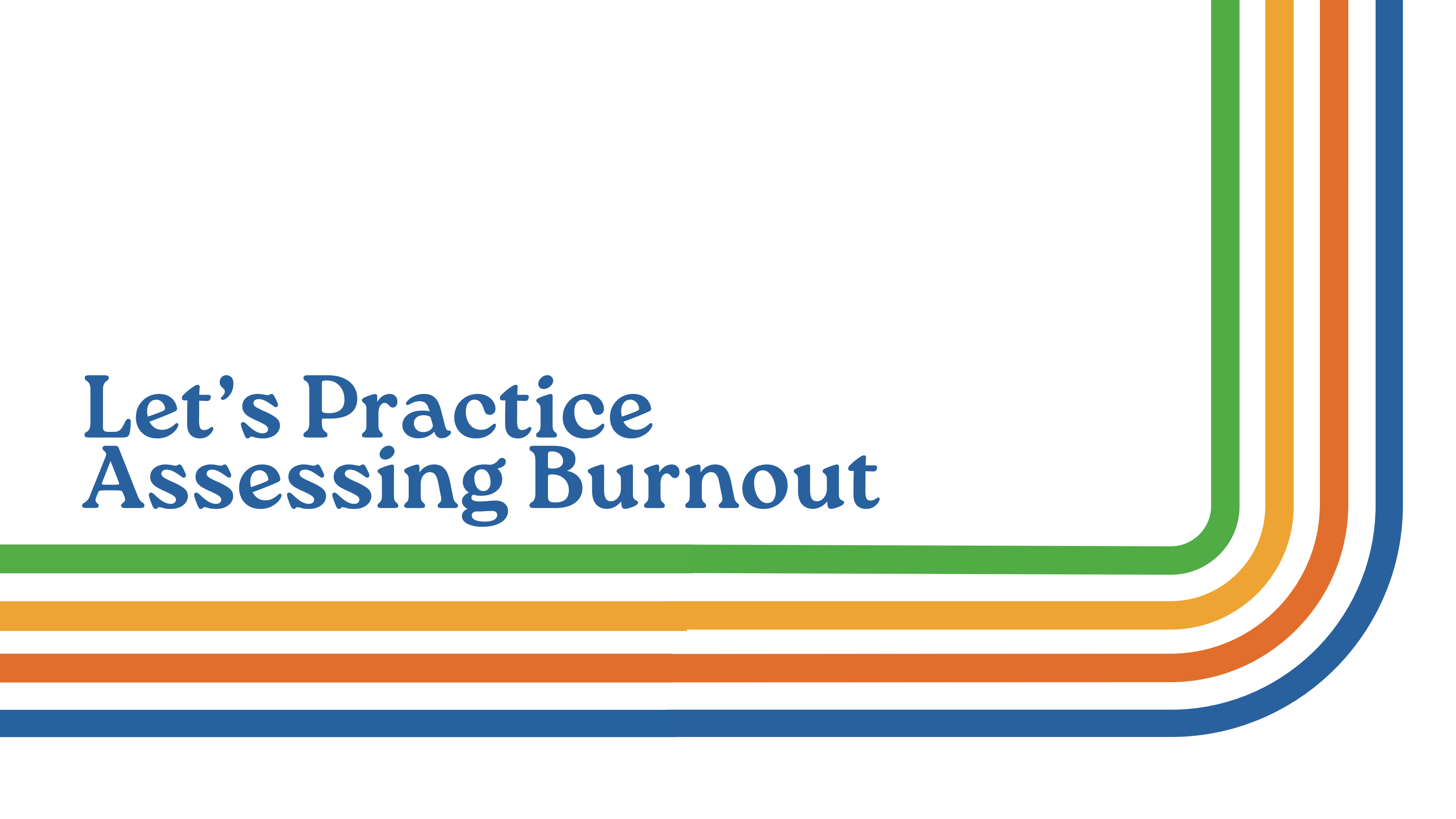
- Pre-existing energetic clusters thickened by toxic work environments or past experiences.

Imbalances:

- Anger, lack of joy, and sympathy, with a belief that change is impossible and difficulty forming meaningful relationships.



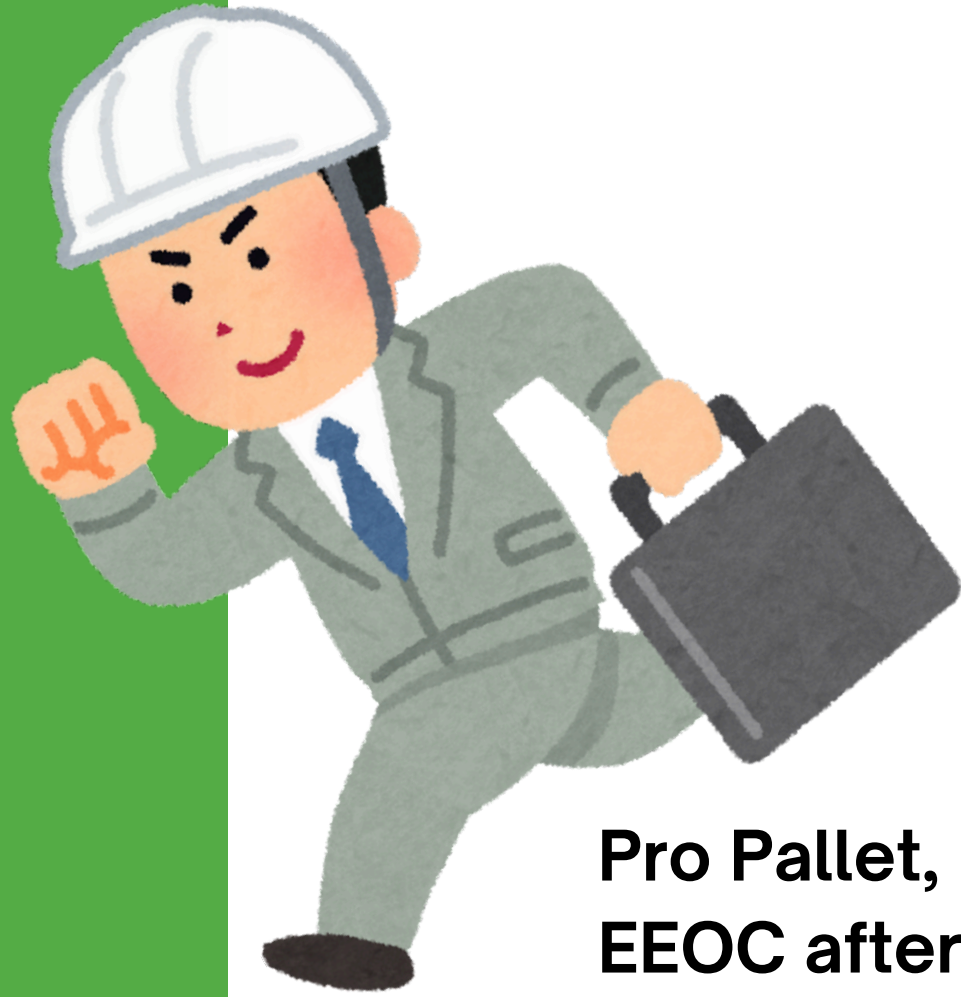
Let's Practice Assessing Burnout





Impact of Burnout on Organizational Culture





Pro Pallet to Pay \$50,000 in EEOC Retaliation Suit

Pro Pallet, LLC, a construction company in Pennsylvania, settled a lawsuit with the EEOC after retaliating against a human resources manager who investigated a sexual harassment complaint. The company removed the HR manager from her duties, reassigned her responsibilities, and excluded her from meetings, which led to her resignation.



Engaged

The HR manager initially showed engagement by taking action on a sexual harassment complaint.

Stressed

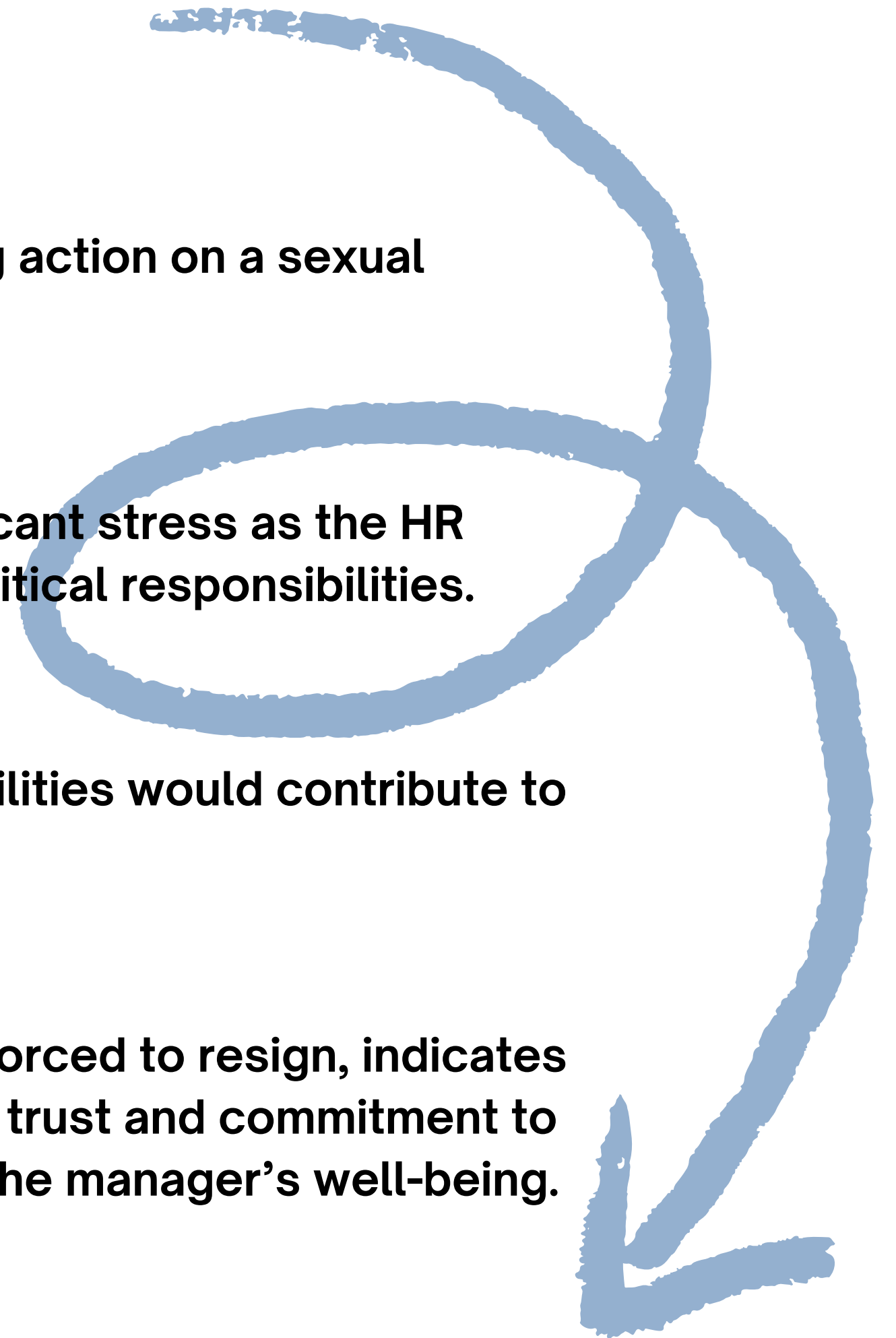
The retaliatory actions by Pro Pallet likely led to significant stress as the HR manager faced job reassignment and exclusion from critical responsibilities.

Disconnected

The manager's exclusion from meetings and responsibilities would contribute to feelings of disconnection from the organization.

Disengaged

The culmination of retaliatory actions, including being forced to resign, indicates a state of disengagement. This stage involves a loss of trust and commitment to the company, compounded by the negative impact on the manager's well-being.



Ripple Effect of Retaliation

Toxic Work Environment

Retaliation can create a toxic environment where employees feel unsafe or unsupported. This toxicity often spreads, affecting the morale of the entire team and leading to increased conflict, decreased collaboration, and a general sense of disillusionment.

Erosion of Trust

When employees see that an HR manager who reports misconduct is punished rather than supported, it undermines trust in the organization's commitment to fairness and ethical behavior. Employees may become wary of reporting issues, fearing retaliation or lack of support.

Reduced Engagement

As trust erodes and the work environment becomes toxic, overall employee engagement declines. Employees may become less invested in their work, leading to lower productivity, creativity, and commitment to organizational goals.

Accelerated Burnout Stages

Exponential Impact

The accelerated progression from stress to disengagement means that burnout affects not just the individuals involved but also spreads throughout the organization. This widespread disengagement can lead to higher turnover rates, increased absenteeism, and a general decline in organizational effectiveness.

From Disconnected to Disengaged

As disconnection deepens, employees may enter the disengaged stage. This transition is marked by a significant drop in enthusiasm and commitment. They may become less proactive, feel alienated from their colleagues, and exhibit a noticeable decline in performance.

From Stressed to Disconnected

In the wake of retaliatory actions, employees who are already stressed may quickly move into the disconnected stage. The stress of witnessing unfair treatment and the lack of supportive measures can lead to feelings of detachment and disengagement from their roles and the organization.

Where is Your
Organization Currently
Accelerating Burnout?



Stop Acceleration

1



Embrace Balance

2



**Move to Intention
Over Motivation**

3



**Energy
Self-Awareness**

Thank you!
Your Free Gift.

