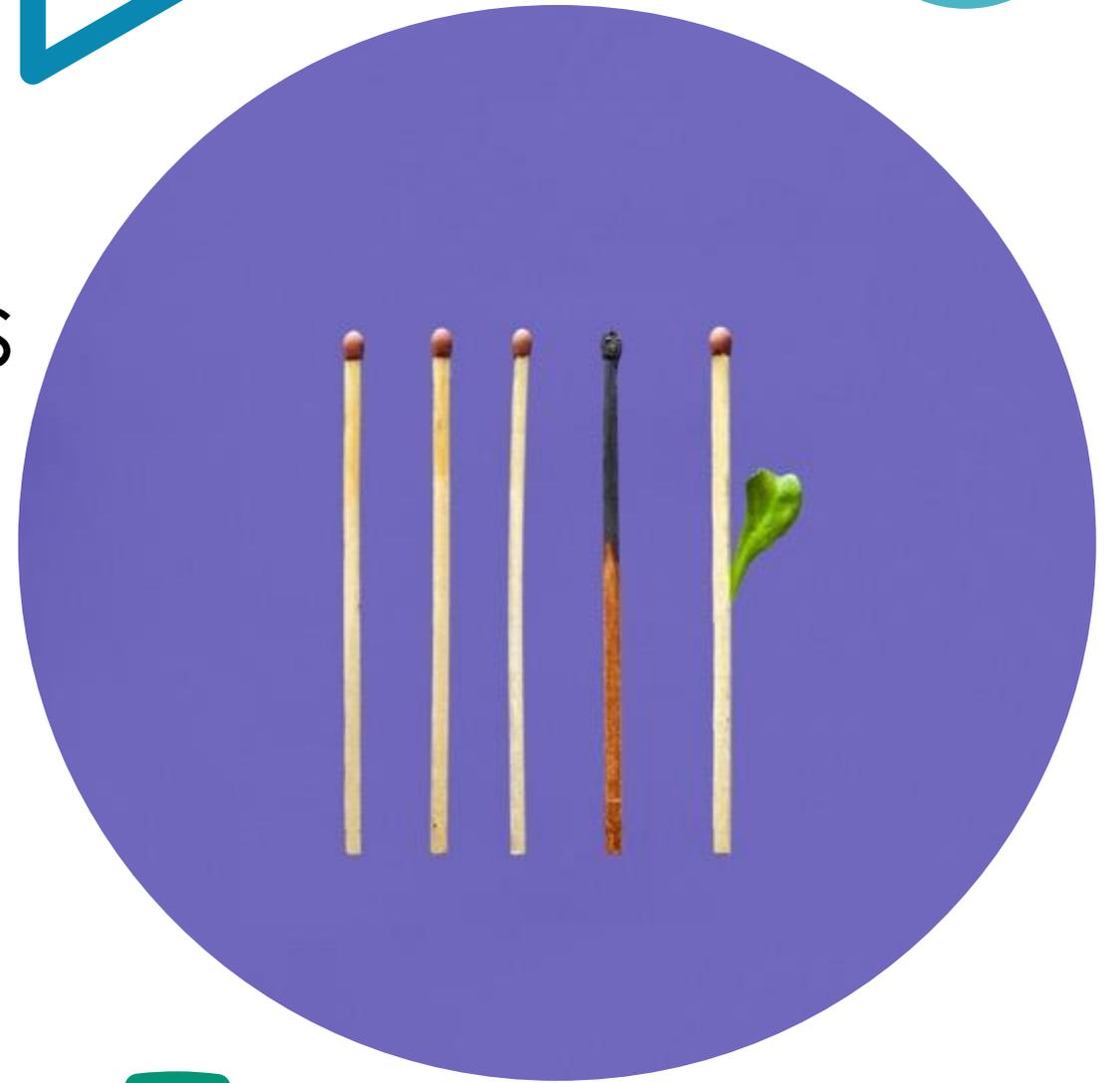


# Burnout Awareness for Coaches: Why It Matters and What You Need.

Ellen Kocher, ICF MCC,  
NBHWC, MHWC, WWS





## Ellen Kocher

Inspiring Health & Wellness Coach,  
Workplace Wellbeing Specialist, S...



## The Smart Coach's 2026 Guide to NBHWC & ICF CE Training

*Elevate Your Coaching Business with Expert  
Training & Proven Growth Strategies*

# Objectives

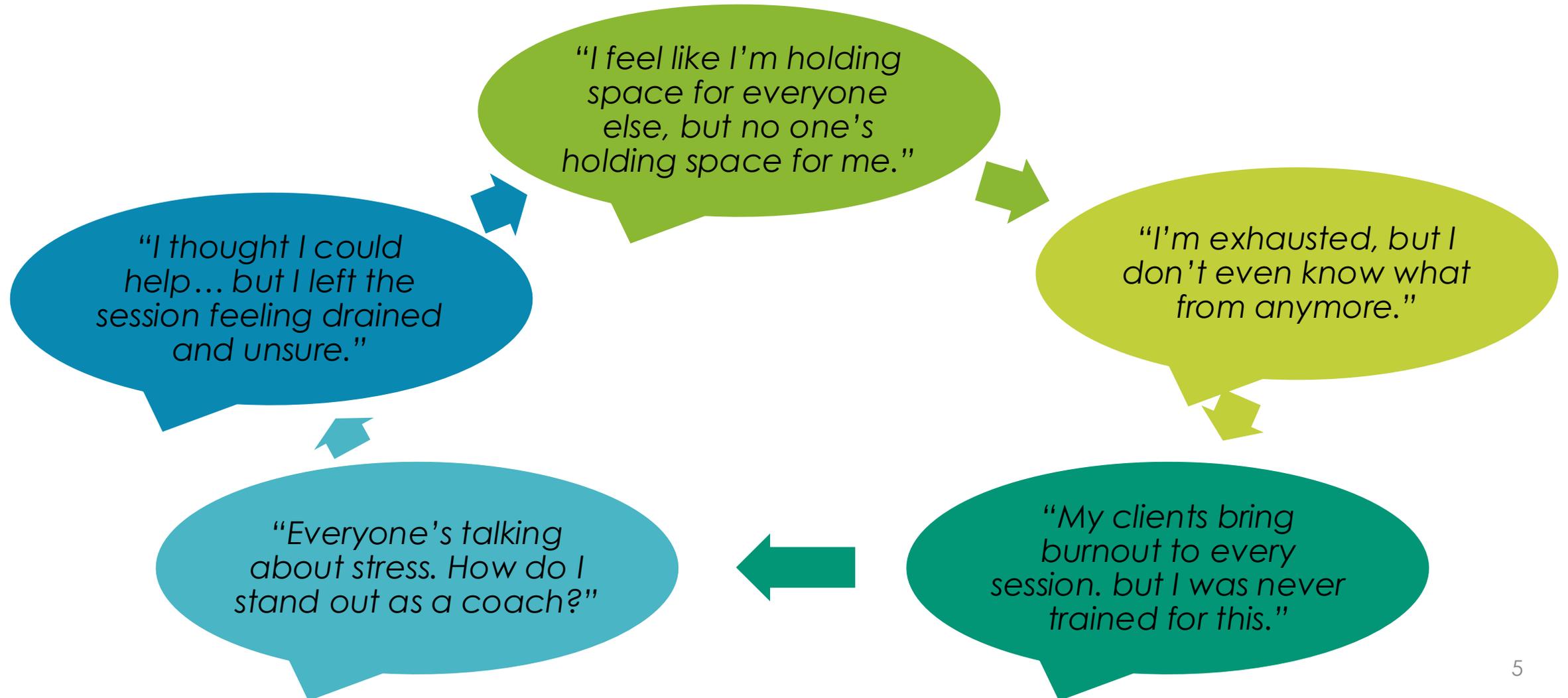
- ✓ Articulate **business case** for burnout & mental well-being coaching
- ✓ **Distinguish** between burnout, chronic stress, & clinical mental well-being concerns
- ✓ **Self-Assess** readiness to coach mental well-being & burnout
- ✓ **Recognize** evidence-informed coaching strategies to help clients (and self!) recognize, prevent, & manage burnout
- ✓ **Provide** you with this **fully sourced** presentation to create the ripple effect

You?



# What I hear...

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# Today

1. The Coaching Landscape
2. The Business Case
3. Self-Assessment #1
4. Self-Assessment #2
5. Prevention Strategies Self-Assessment #3
6. What's Next?



1.  
The Coaching  
Landscape

# Coaching Landscape

- ✓ 123,200 “coach practitioners”
- ✓ 54% increase since 2019
- ✓ 56,000 ICF-accredited coaches
- ✓ 143 countries
- ✓ Industry thriving, expanding rapidly

*\*ICF 2024*



# Coaching Landscape

- ✓ 70,000–80,000 coaches active in Germany
- ✓ 120,000+ individuals registered under “coaching-related” activities in commercial / self-employment registries
- ✓ ~3,000–4,000 ICF-credentialed coaching professionals listed in the ICF Germany / ICF Global directory



# The Coaching Landscape Has Changed

85% of coaches see mental well-being needs rising

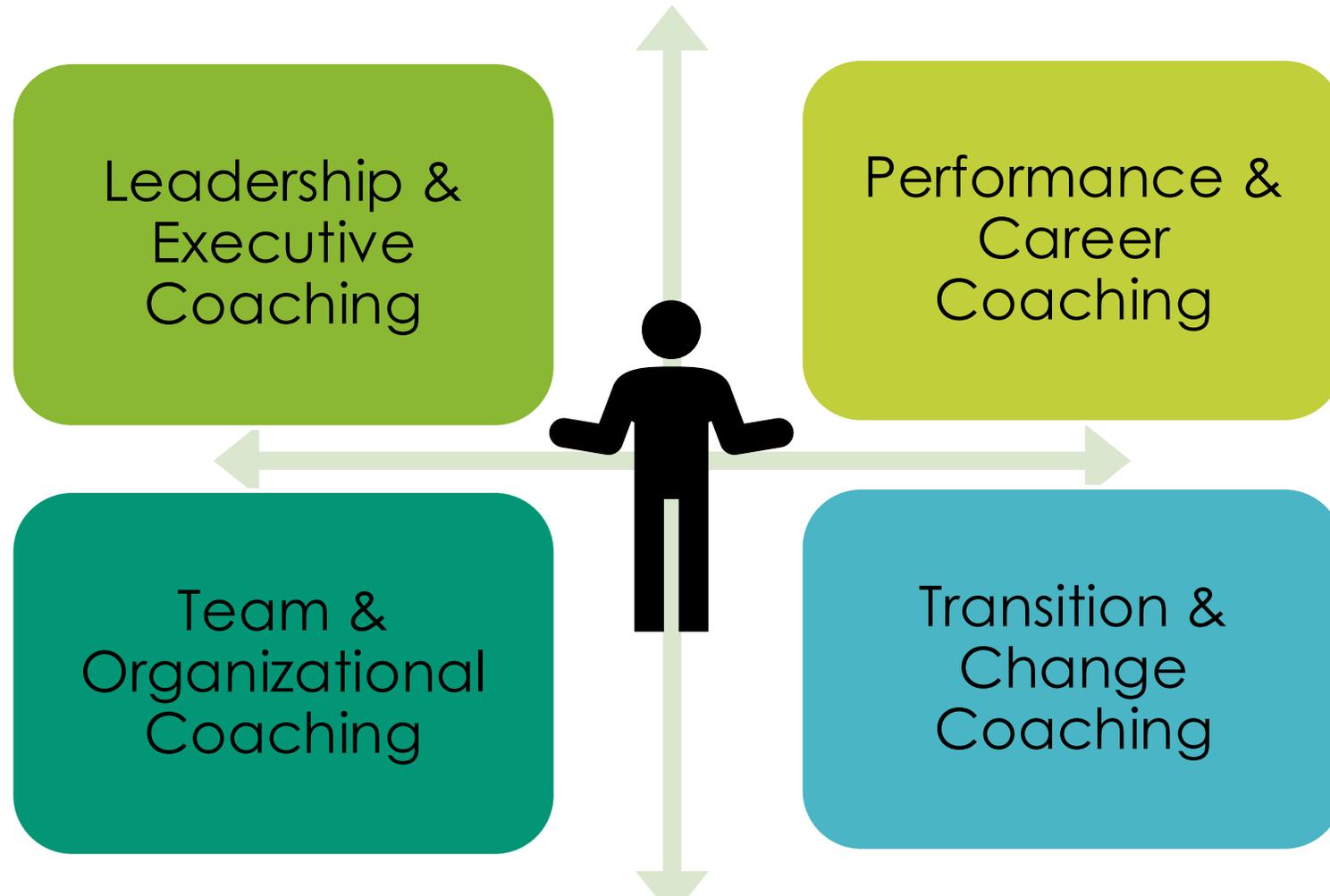
Burnout is now a workplace risk factor

Organizational demand is accelerating

Coaching supports resilience & sustainable performance

Training gaps remain significant

# Burnout Literacy Strengthens Existing Coaching Practices



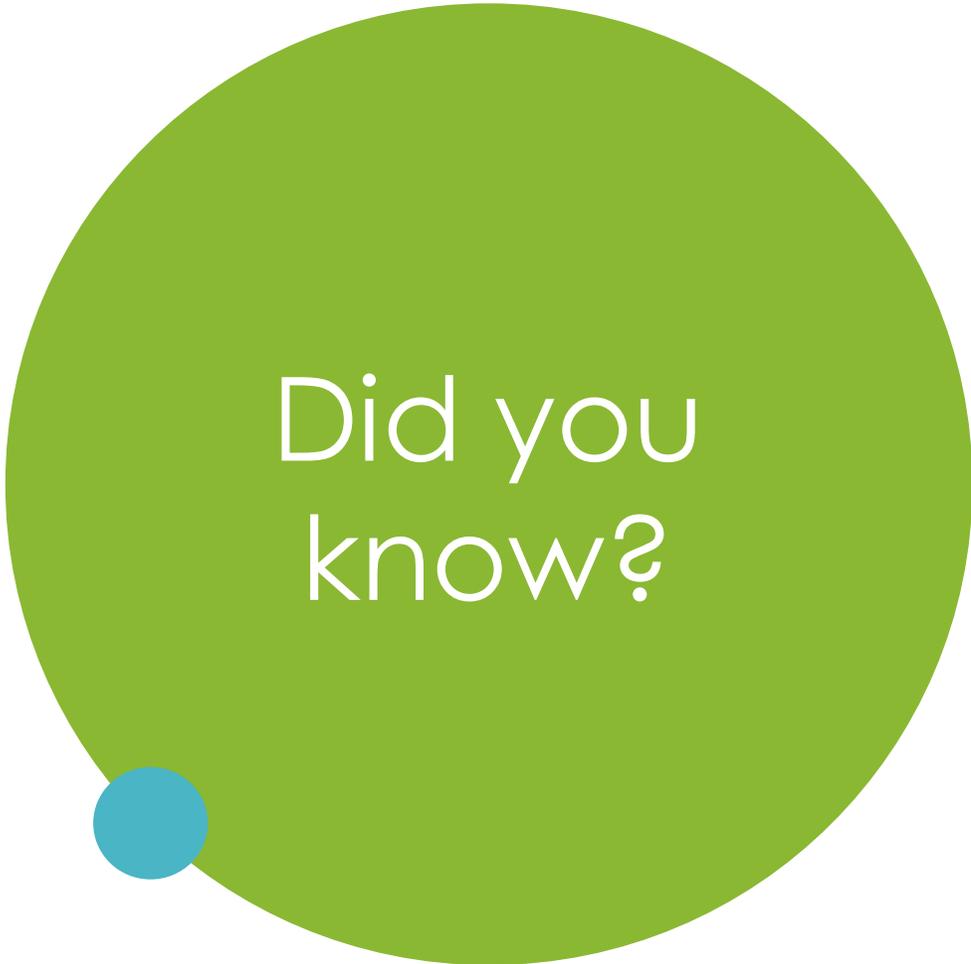
# What the Coaching Market Expects

- ✓ Comfort navigating stress, overload, sustainability
- ✓ Ability to work across performance & well-being
- ✓ Clear professional boundaries & referral awareness
- ✓ Evidence-informed, prevention-oriented approaches
- ✓ Credibility with organizational stakeholders





2.  
The Business  
Case



Did you  
know?



Gallup & Workhuman research estimates that burnout costs the global economy approximately **\$322 billion** annually in lost productivity and turnover.

# The Growing Mental Health Crisis

- ✓ 77% experience work-related stress
- ✓ 41% report high stress levels daily
- ✓ 75% report having experienced burnout symptoms
- ✓ 60% say stress negatively impacts their health
- ✓ Depression & anxiety > 12 billion lost workdays/yr
- ✓ Burned-out employees nearly 3x more likely to be job hunting
- ✓ 1 million workers absent daily due to stress-related issues
- ✓ 750,000 deaths per year linked to overwork-related conditions
- ✓ 74% of employees report worsening mental health at work

# Why Mental Well-Being Coaching is emerging

87%

cite burnout as top challenge

74%

of companies increasing investment in well-being

94%

of employees expect mental health, stress management support

***Mental Well-Being Coaching is no longer optional; it's a strategic necessity.***

# The Business Case for Coaching

- ✓ Coaching delivers a 7x ROI
- ✓ Coaching significantly reduces burnout, emotional exhaustion
- ✓ Improves stress management by 39%
- ✓ 70% of coached employees improved work performance
- ✓ 23% higher employee engagement
- ✓ 22% lower turnover rates
- ✓ 30% reduction in healthcare costs

***Investing in mental well-being coaching gives a competitive advantage.***

# Mental Well-Being Coaching: Bridging the Gap

- ✓ Generic wellness programs fail to address individual needs
- ✓ HR & leadership require scalable, proactive well-being solutions
- ✓ Mental well-being coaching provides personalized, high-impact strategies
- ✓ Coaches can empower employees and leaders to prevent, detect, and manage burnout effectively

***Coaches who are knowledgeable bridge the gap between well-being initiatives and real results.***

# Coaching vs. Therapy

## Coaching:

- ✓ Future-focused: Solutions, goal-setting, accountability.
- ✓ Resilience-building: Supports mindset shifts, stress management.
- ✓ Action-driven: Encourages self-awareness, productivity strategies.
- ✓ Work-life balance: Helps create sustainable habits, professional well-being.

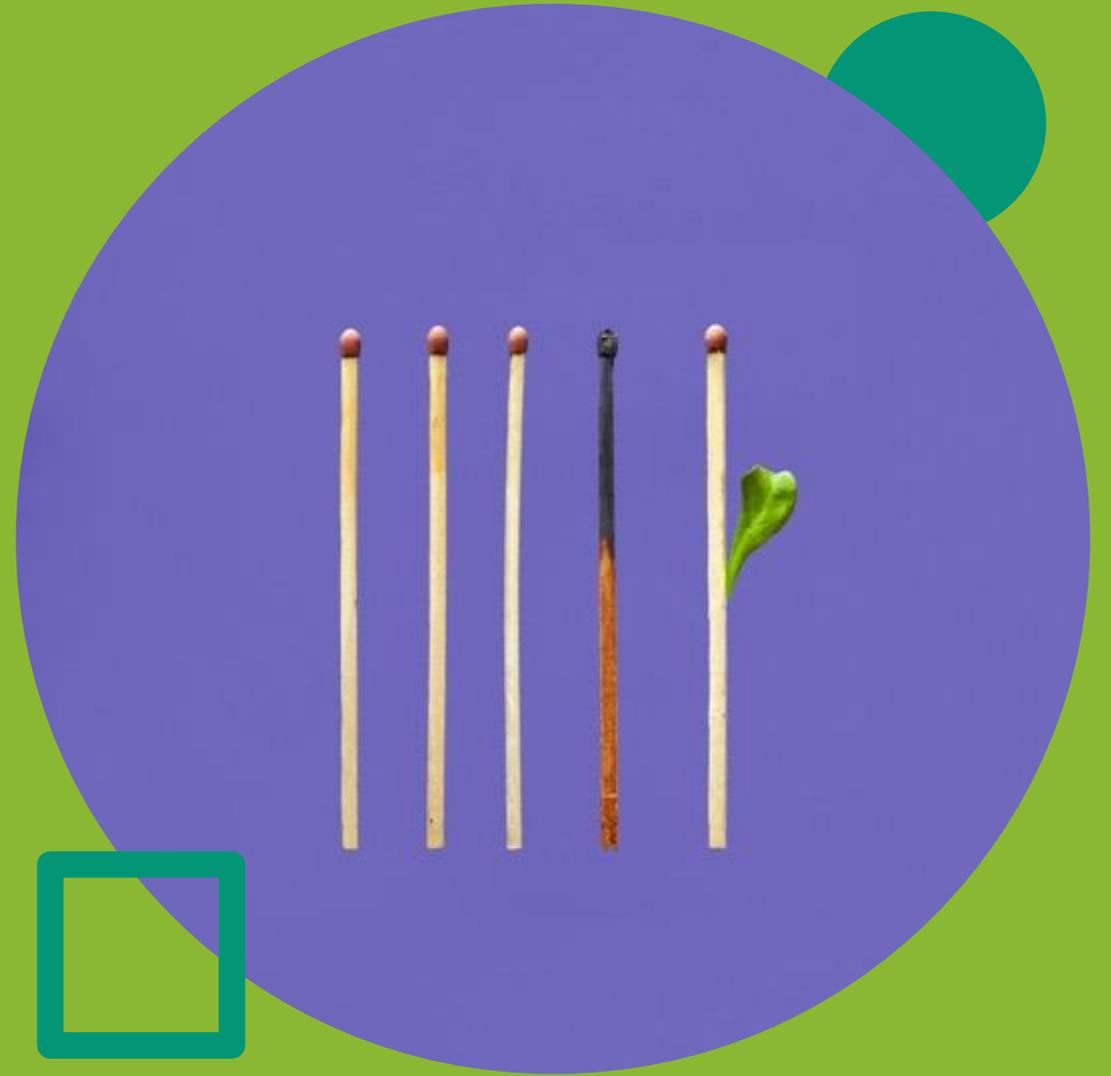
## Therapy:

- ✓ Past-focused: Addresses trauma, emotional distress, mental disorders.
- ✓ Healing-oriented: Provides coping mechanisms, psychological support.
- ✓ Licensed professionals: Delivered by mental health experts.
- ✓ Treatment-based: Focused on emotional recovery, mental wellness



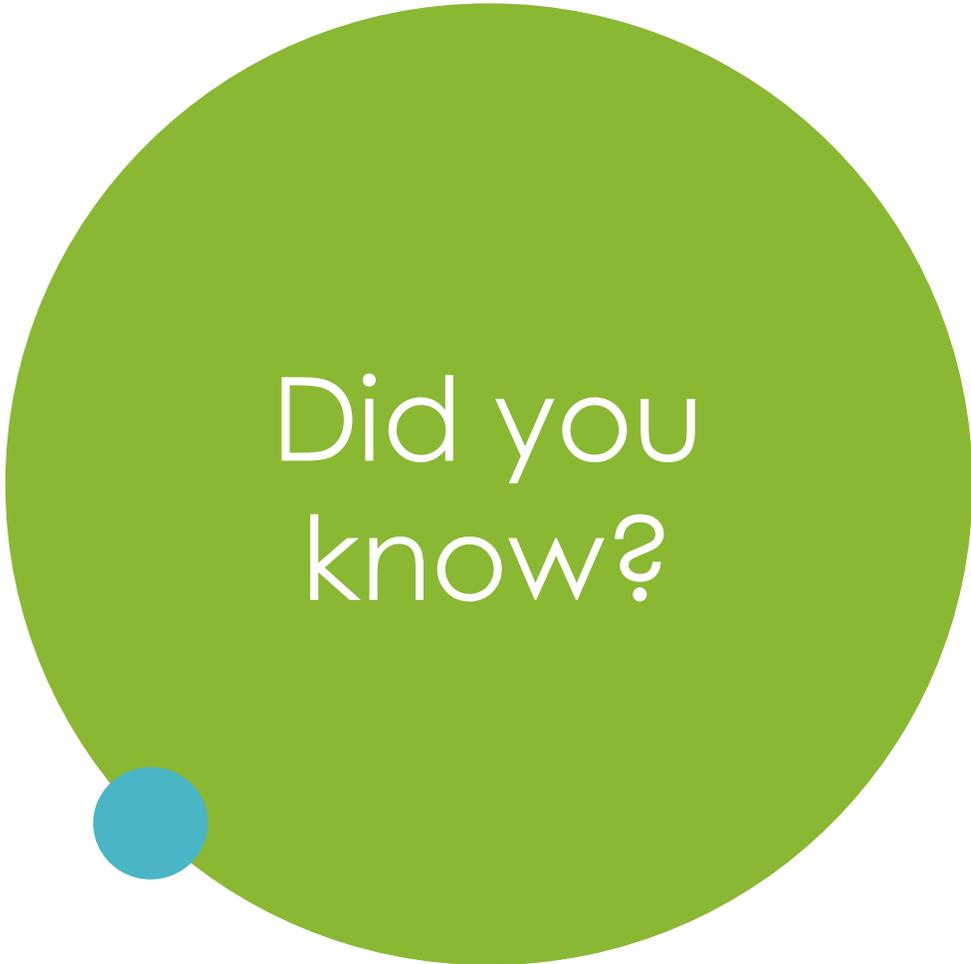
Health & Wellness Coaches and ICF Coaches are **not** licensed mental health providers and must avoid using the title *mental health coach*; safer alternatives include *mental well-being* or *mental wellness coach*.

What did  
you learn?





3.  
Self-  
Assessment  
#1



Did you  
know?



Coaches can miss signs of burnout in clients because they look too much at goal achievement, and not enough at energy, detachment, or emotional cues.

# Quiz: Are You Equipped to Coach Burnout & Mental Well-Being?

- Which of the following is **officially** recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a workplace-related syndrome?
  - Clinical depression
  - Generalized anxiety disorder
  - Burnout**
  - work dissatisfaction
- Which of these symptoms falls **outside** the coaching scope and may indicate clinical mental health concern?
  - Fatigue and loss of motivation at work
  - Frustration with a team or manager
  - Persistent thoughts of hopelessness and suicide**
  - Low engagement in professional development
- True or False:** Burnout can be resolved effectively through better time management alone.
- Which of the following are coach-appropriate strategies to help prevent burnout? (Select all that apply)
  - Diagnosing chronic stress
  - Teaching boundary-setting techniques**
  - Facilitating self-reflection and values alignment**
  - Recommending medication or therapy
- Which approach has been **scientifically proven** to significantly improve resilience and workplace well-being?
  - Gratitude practices**
  - Avoiding difficult conversations
  - More breaks and fewer deadlines
  - Weekly performance reviews

# What ICF Coaches Already Bring to Mental Well-Being

Partner	Build	Recognize	Facilitate	Apply	Detect	Support
with clients through a co-created, reflective process that honors their expertise and resourcefulness	trust, safety, and empathy through presence and active listening	lifestyle and behavioral patterns that impact stress and resilience	growth through awareness, accountability, and aligned action	evidence-informed frameworks for mindset, resilience, and sustainable change	when clients may need support beyond coaching and refer appropriately	long-term development through reflection, learning, and goal integration

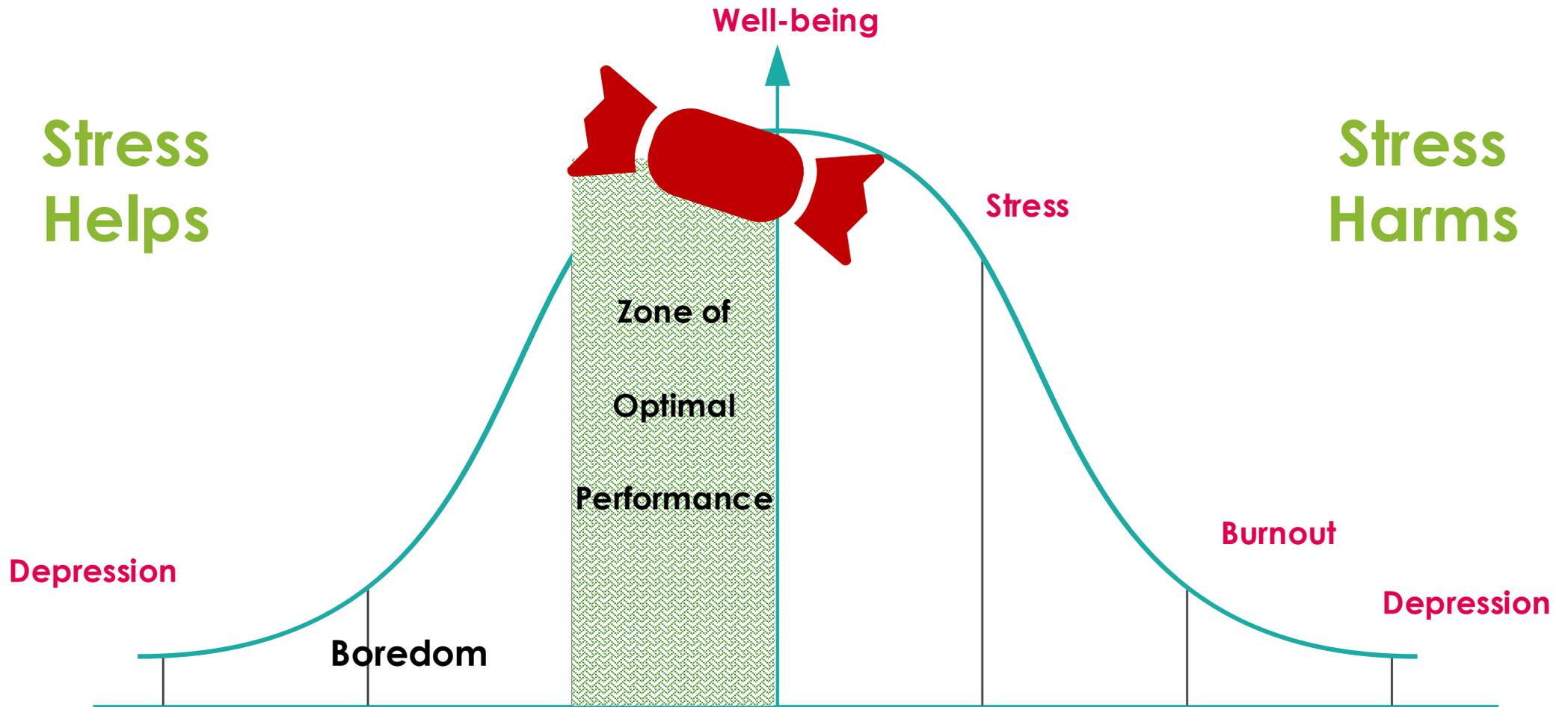
# Skills to Deepen or Upskill For Burnout & Workplace Contexts

Sharpen	Learn	Develop	Build	Strengthen	Gain	Understand
Understanding of burnout, chronic stress, and the human dynamics behind performance decline	to recognize early “red flags” in clients and teams (detachment, cynicism, emotional fatigue)	workplace-focused coaching tools: boundaries, communication, workload balance, psychological safety	confidence to facilitate conversations around sensitive topics (stress, well-being, stigma, change fatigue)	collaborative pathways with HR, EAP, and other professionals when clients need broader support	expertise in group and team coaching for well-being, performance, and culture transformation	how to link coaching outcomes to organizational impact, engagement, retention, sustainable performance

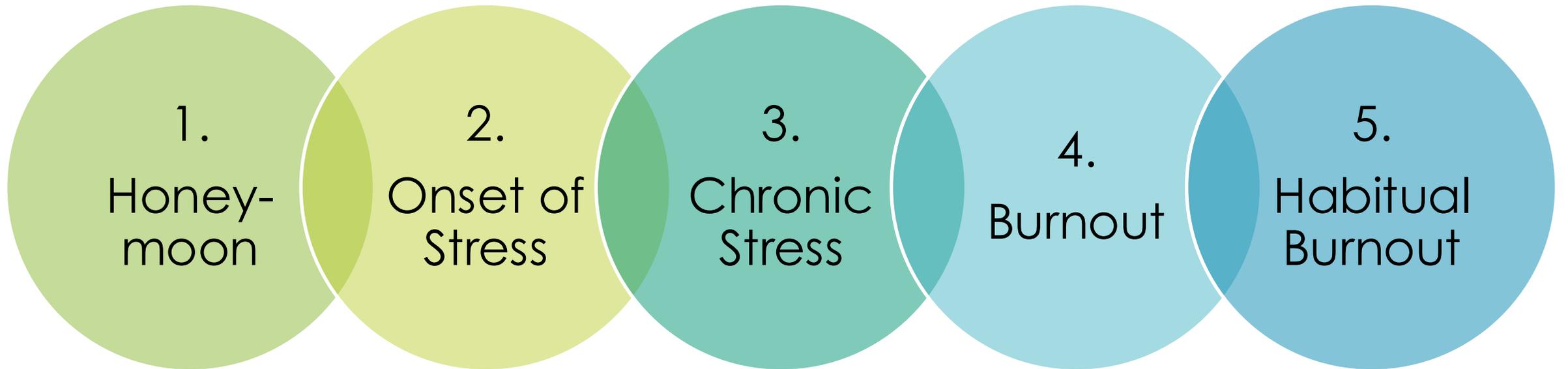


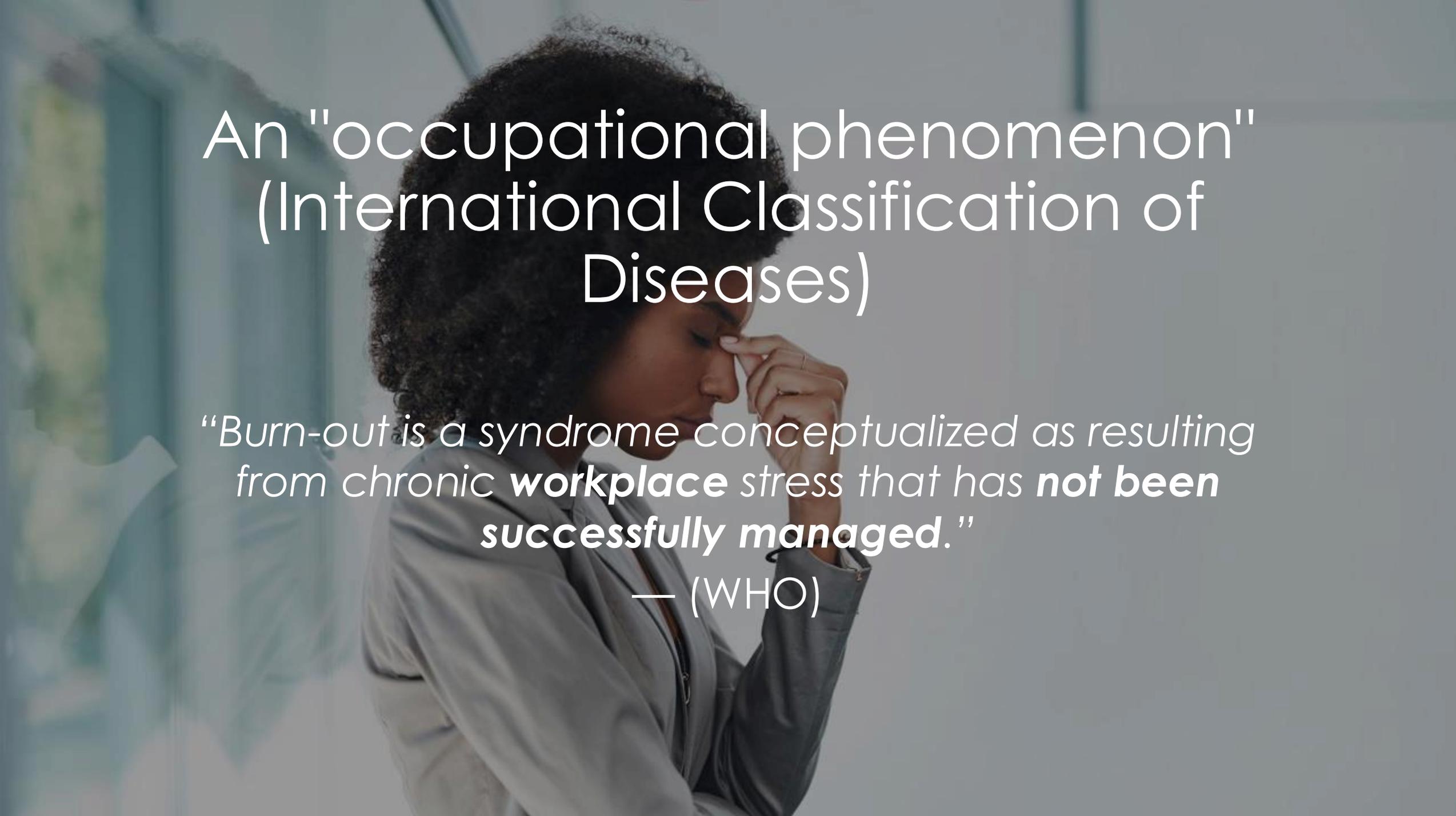
4.  
Self  
Assessment  
#2

# Yerks Dodson Law



# 5 Stages of Burnout





An "occupational phenomenon"  
(International Classification of  
Diseases)

*“Burn-out is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic **workplace** stress that has **not been successfully managed.**”*

— (WHO)

**Stress** exists on a continuum.  
**Burnout** is a **state** of **chronic** workplace stress represented by 3 dimensions



**EXHAUSTION**

You feel chronically physically and emotionally drained. The result is emotional and cognitive detachment to cope with overload.



**CYNICISM**

Everyone starts to bug you and rub you the wrong way. You start to distance yourself from these people actively. The result is less empathy and caring.



**INNEFFICACY**

Inefficacy is a “why bother, who cares” attitude that appears as you struggle. It becomes more difficult to feel a sense of accomplishment and impact in your work.

# Signs & Symptoms

- ✓ **Heightened irritability**, impatience, or frustration in response to minor stressors
- ✓ **Fluctuations in mood**, ranging from periods of low mood or sadness to episodes of irritability or anger
- ✓ **Cynical or negative outlook** towards work, colleagues, or tasks
- ✓ **Withdrawal or avoidance** of social interactions, isolation, or withdrawal from colleagues and friends
- ✓ **Reduced effectiveness**, efficiency, or motivation in completing tasks and meeting deadlines
- ✓ **Frequent absences** from work, tardiness
- ✓ **Fatigue**, headaches, gastrointestinal issues, changes in appetite and sleep
- ✓ **Noticeable imbalance or overload in professional and personal life. Difficulty disconnecting from work, setting boundaries, prioritizing self-care.**

# Depression versus Burnout

## Depression

A mental health disorder characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a lack of interest or pleasure in activities.

**Fatigue  
Concentration  
Sleep  
Appetite**

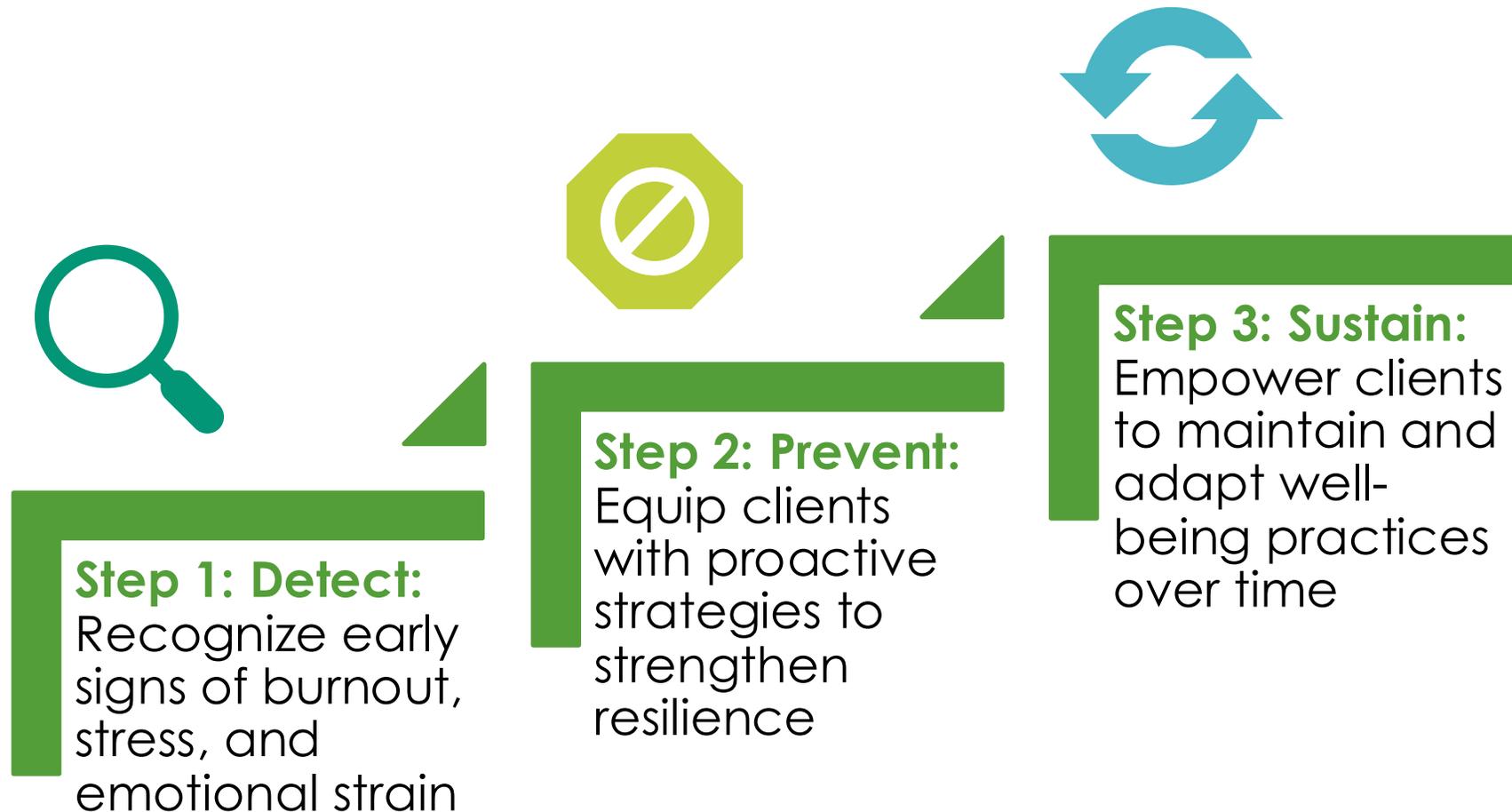
**Burnout  
can lead  
to  
depression  
if not  
addressed  
early**

## Burnout

A state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress, often related to work.

# The Detect-Prevent-Sustain™ Model

A Coaching-informed framework supporting mental well-being



# Mental Health Coaching Skills Self-Assessment (Yes - Somewhat - No)

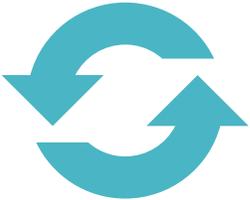
## **Step 1 Detect: Recognizing Early Signs of Mental Well-Being Challenges**

- 
1. Can you spot early red flags that may signal burnout, prolonged stress, and potential depressive symptoms that impact work-life balance?
  2. Do you know when to refer?
  3. Can you support clients in exploring their patterns of chronic stress or imbalance?

## **Step 2: Prevent: Equipping Clients With Proactive Strategies for Mental Well-Being**

- 
1. Do you partner with clients to explore and apply evidence-informed strategies for managing stress?
  2. Can you facilitate mindset shifts that enhance resilience and reduce vulnerability to burnout or low mood?
  3. Can you partner with clients to prioritize and cultivate healthy work-life integration?

## **Step 3 Sustain: Empowering Clients to Maintain Mental Well-Being Over Time**

- 
1. Can you support clients in identifying, refining practices that help them stay grounded and balanced?
  2. Are you skilled in helping clients monitor their energy, motivation, and mood patterns over time?
  3. Can you help clients recognize when their mental well-being strategies need adjusting or reinforcement?

# Mental Health Coaching Skills Interpreting your Results

## **Mostly “Yes”**

You're well-equipped to support clients using a coach approach around burnout, stress, and well-being. Keep building your skills through continued education and reflective practice.

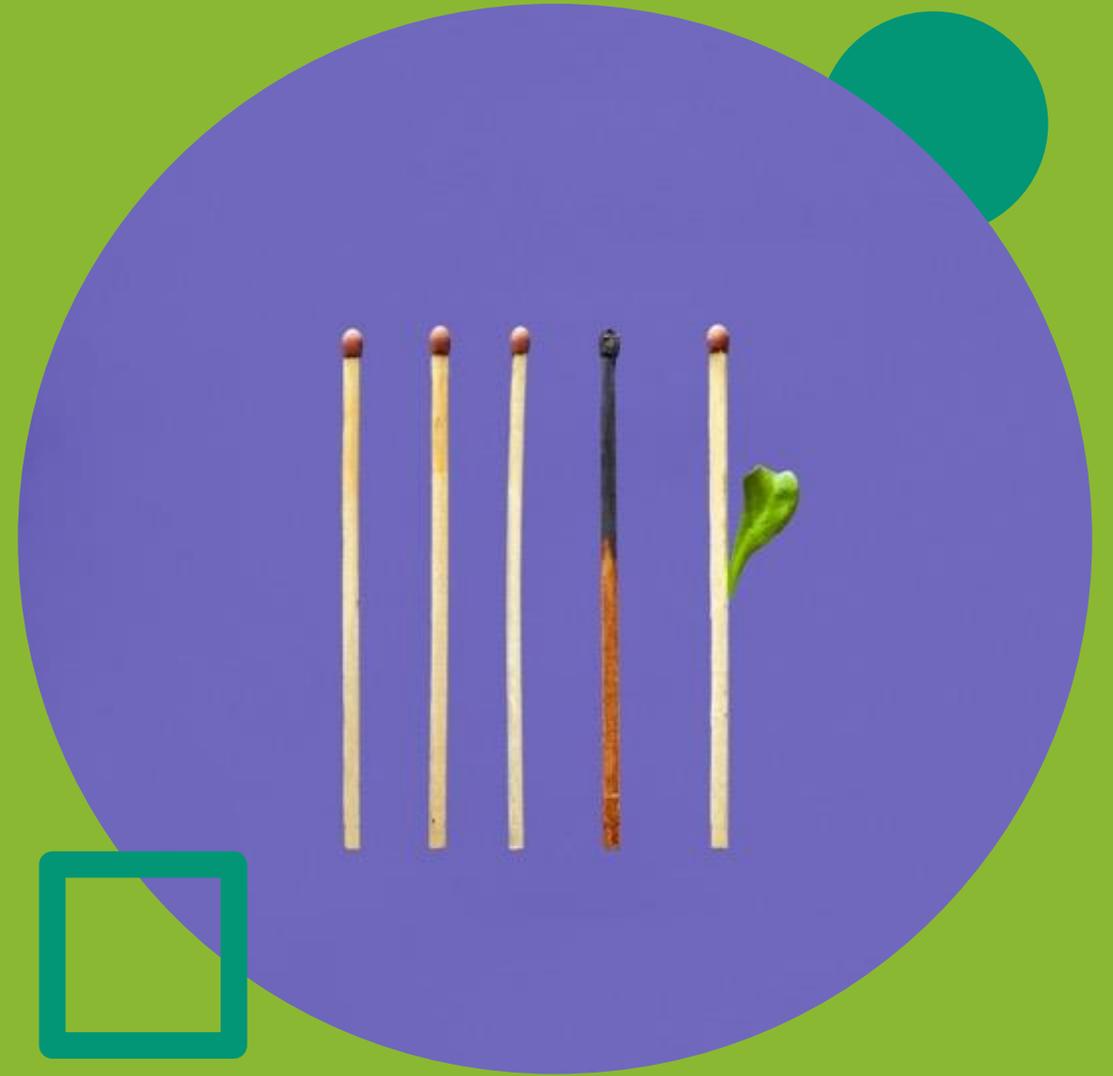
## **Mostly “Somewhat”**

You're on the right path. Consider targeted learning or mentorship in areas where you'd like to build more confidence.

## **Mostly “No”**

This may be a signal to deepen your training before coaching in this area. Look for foundational resources, peer learning, or expert guidance to support your development.

What's your score?

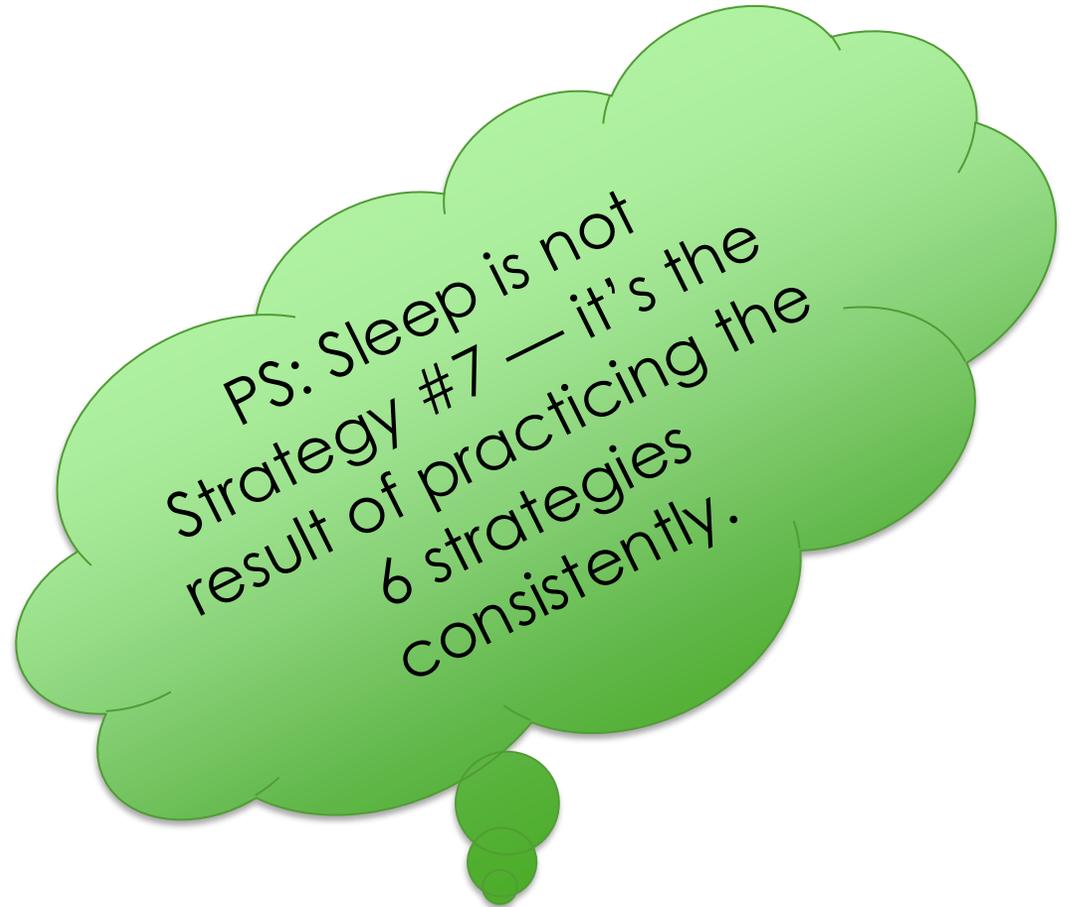




5.  
Prevention  
Strategies

# 6 Strategies for Mental Well-Being

1. Deep Breathing
2. Physical Activity
3. Positive Interactions
4. Laughter
5. Affection
6. Creative Expression



# Strategies Self- Assessment



**Score 0:** you experience rarely



**Score 1:** you experience occasionally

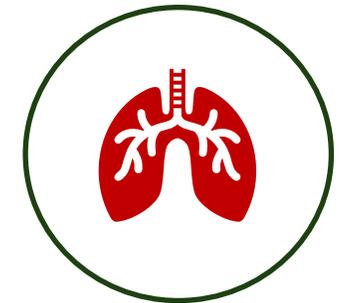


**Score 2:** you experience often

1.  
Deep  
breathing:  
Did you  
know?

A single five-minute session of deep, slow breathing notably calms the nervous system, increases heart rate variability, and lowers anxiety, especially among older adults .

**Score**



2.  
Physical  
activity:  
Did you  
know?

Even brief walks or simple movement significantly increase cerebral blood flow and oxygenation in the brain, boosting focus and resilience under stress

**Score**



3.  
Positive  
Interactions:  
Did you  
know?

Engaging in supportive conversation or connection releases serotonin and oxytocin, countering cortisol and enhancing emotional resilience, a key buffer against chronic stress.

**Score**



## 4. Laughter

Genuine laughter can reduce cortisol (the stress hormone) by more than 30%, even in a single session, while also boosting endorphins and immune function.

**Score**



## 5. Affection

Physical affection, hugs, touch, close presence, counteracts stress by enhancing parasympathetic activity, reducing blood pressure, and releasing feel-good oxytocin, supporting emotional stability.

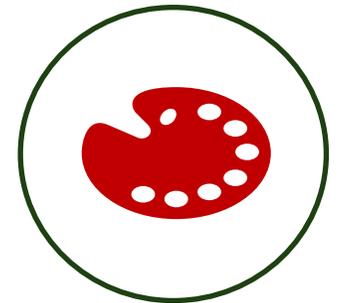
**Score**



## 6. Creative Expression

Activities like journaling, drawing, or music stimulate early sensory processing in the brain, boosting cerebral oxygenation and providing a neural reset under stress.

**Score**



Your Overall  
Score?



# Example workplace burnout session

- I. What is Burnout?
- II. Context
- III. Causes
- IV. Signs & Symptoms
- V. What is Resilience?
- VI. Life-Balance Exercise
- VII. Coach-Approach Intro
- VIII. Moving Forward & Resources





5.  
What's  
Next?



# One Small Step?

What do you plan to do to better master mental health and burnout coaching?



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# Goodie Bag!



August 21, 2025

# Mental Well-Being: A Coach's Must- Have Toolbox



[Home](#) / [Post](#) / Mental Well-Being: A Coach's Must-Have Toolbox

# Workplace-Ready Burnout Training

**Level 1 “From Burnout to Balance: Spot It, Stop It, Solve It.”** 2-hour course equips coaches with the knowledge, strategies, tools, and confidence needed to deliver impactful workshops and coaching sessions focused on burnout. (2CE NBHWC and ICF). (\$80)

**Level 2: Turnkey Slide Decks & Resources**  
**(\$300 USE CODE ICF for \$50 OFF)**



# Burnout Training Options

- ✓ **Workplace Ready: Turnkey: Level 1** “From Burnout to Balance: Spot It, Stop It, Solve It.”  
2-hour course equips coaches with the knowledge, strategies, tools, and confidence needed to deliver impactful workshops and coaching sessions focused on burnout. (2CE NBHWC and ICF). **Level 2: Slide Decks & Resources.**
- ✓ **American Institute of Stress Certified Stress Coach Program**
- ✓ **Resilience Coaching for Stress and Burnout by The Institute for Life Coach Training:**
- ✓ **Certified Health and Wellness Coach Program by AFPA**
- ✓ **Well-Being Coach Certification Program by Anthropeia**
- ✓ **Functional Medicine Coaching Academy (FMCA)**

# Life Stress Inventory

The American Institute of Stress:

Self-assessment tool : [Holmes-Rahe Life Stress Inventory](#) [The Social Readjustment Rating Scale](#)

[Winter Issue “Contentment”](#)



# Depression versus Burnout

## Clinical Depression

**Definition:** A mental health disorder characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a lack of interest or pleasure in activities.

### Symptoms:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Fatigue and decreased energy
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Insomnia or oversleeping
- Appetite and/or weight changes
- Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts
- Feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt
- Physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders, and chronic pain

### Causes:

- Genetics
- Biochemical factors (e.g., neurotransmitter imbalances)
- Environmental stressors (e.g., trauma, loss)
- Psychological factors (e.g., personality traits, coping skills)

### Treatment:

- Medications (e.g., antidepressants)
- Psychotherapy
- Lifestyle changes (e.g., regular exercise, healthy diet)
- Support groups or networks

## Burnout

**Definition:** A state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress, often related to work.

### Symptoms:

- 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
- Irritability and frustration
- Difficulty concentrating
- Lack of satisfaction from achievements
- Physical symptoms such as headaches or stomach problems
- Changes in sleep habits

### Causes:

- Excessive workload and long working hours
- Lack of control over work tasks
- Unclear job expectations
- Dysfunctional workplace dynamics
- Lack of social support
- Work-life imbalance

### Treatment:

- Recognizing and addressing the signs early
- Reducing workload or taking breaks
- Seeking support from colleagues, friends, or family
- Practicing self-care and stress management techniques
- Professional help (e.g., counseling or therapy)

# Depression versus Burnout

## Key Differences:

### 1. Origin:

**Depression:** Can arise without a direct cause and is often due to a combination of genetic, biochemical, and environmental factors.

**Burnout:** Directly related to chronic workplace stress and is generally reversible by changing the work environment or reducing stressors.

### 2. Scope of Impact:

**Depression:** Affects all areas of life, not just work. It's pervasive and persistent across various contexts.

**Burnout:** Primarily related to the professional environment. Symptoms can improve once the person steps away from the source of stress (e.g., vacation).

### 3. Emotional Symptoms:

**Depression:** Includes profound sadness, feelings of worthlessness, and thoughts of suicide.

**Burnout:** Involves emotional exhaustion, detachment from work, and reduced performance but not necessarily feelings

of worthlessness or suicidal thoughts.

### 4. Physical Symptoms:

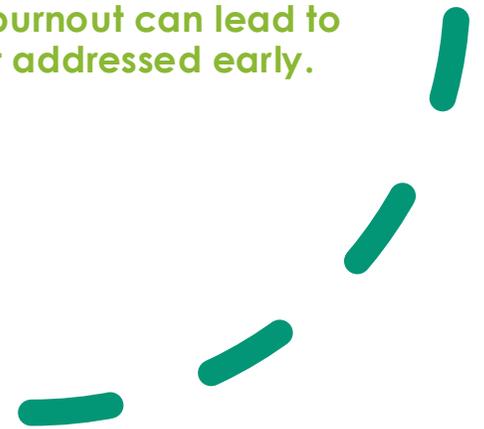
**Depression:** Can lead to significant physical symptoms and changes in appetite, sleep, and energy levels.

**Burnout:** Primarily involves fatigue and physical symptoms related to stress, but not the full range of physical symptoms seen in depression.

## Overlap:

**While there are clear differences, there is also overlap between the two conditions. Both can lead to fatigue, difficulty concentrating, and changes in sleep and appetite.**

**In some cases, burnout can lead to depression if not addressed early.**



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# Book Recommendation

Therapeutic Presence: A Mindful Approach to Effective Therapy 1st Edition by [Shari Geller PhD](#) (Author), [Leslie S. Greenberg PhD](#) (Author)

## THE THERAPEUTIC PRESENCE

SECOND EDITION

A MINDFUL APPROACH TO  
EFFECTIVE THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIPS



Shari M. Geller  
Leslie S. Greenberg

# ICF ethical position: Coaching alongside therapy

**From an ICF perspective, coaching and therapy may occur in parallel, provided clear boundaries, transparency, and scope are maintained. The ICF does not prohibit coaching clients who are in therapy. What it requires is ethical discernment and role clarity.**

## Core ethical principles

### 1. Clear distinction of roles

Under the International Coaching Federation Code of Ethics, coaches must:  
Clearly distinguish coaching from therapy, counseling, or mental health treatment  
Avoid diagnosing, treating, or attempting to resolve clinical mental health issues  
Stay within the coaching scope, focused on awareness, choice, action, and learning  
Coaching addresses *how clients move forward* — not *why they feel unwell*.

### 2. Informed consent and transparency

Ethically, the coach must:  
Clarify the nature of coaching and how it differs from therapy  
Confirm that the client understands the distinct purposes of each relationship  
Revisit this clarity if the client's situation changes  
This is explicitly required under Ethical Standard 3 (Professional Responsibility).

### 3. Complementarity is acceptable — substitution is not

ICF ethics support coaching as complementary to therapy when appropriate.  
However, it is unethical to:  
Present coaching as a replacement for therapy  
Continue coaching if the client is using sessions to process trauma, acute distress, or untreated mental health conditions  
If this occurs, the coach must pause or refer.

### 4. Ongoing assessment of client capacity

Coaches are ethically responsible for monitoring whether the client is:  
Emotionally and psychologically able to engage in coaching  
Using coaching to move forward rather than stabilize or heal  
If coaching begins to cross into therapeutic territory, ethical action is required.

### 5. Collaboration — only with consent

With explicit client consent, a coach may:  
Acknowledge that therapy is occurring  
Align at a high level (e.g., goals, boundaries)  
But:  
The coach does not coordinate treatment  
The coach does not share session content unless explicitly authorized

### What ICF ethics clearly prohibit

A coach must not:

- ✓ Treat or interpret mental health conditions
- ✓ Encourage a client to stop therapy
- ✓ Ignore signs of harm, instability, or dependency
- ✓ Continue coaching when it is no longer appropriate

### Ethical bottom line

Coaching someone who is also in therapy is ethical — coaching someone *instead of* therapy, when therapy is needed, is not.  
When boundaries are clear, consent is informed, and scope is respected, coaching and therapy can coexist ethically and effectively.