# Chapter 43 Burnout

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# Abstract

Burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job. It is defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy. As a reliably identifiable job stress syndrome, burnout clearly places the individual stress experience within a larger organizational context of people's relation to their work. Burnout impairs both personal and social functioning. This decline in the quality of work and in both physical and psychological health can be costly—not just for the individual worker, but for everyone affected by that person. Interventions to alleviate burnout and to promote its opposite, engagement with work can occur at both organizational and personal levels. The social focus of burnout, the solid research basis concerning the syndrome, and its specific ties to the work domain make a distinct and valuable contribution to people's health and well-being.