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BURNOUT IS A MYTH

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The term „burnout“ does not denote a psychiatric category, but a psychological label for the experience of a long-lasting exhaustion and loss of interest. Burnout is not an explicitly recognized disorder in prominent classifications of diseases. It is rather a state of emotional exhaustion and reduced sense of personal accomplishment than a syndrome or a disease. It can be assessed, e.g., by The Maslach Burnout Inventory which uses a three dimensional description of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. Some authors argue for an "exhaustion only" model that sees exhaustion as the hallmark of „burnout“. Engagement, which is characterized by energy and efficacy, may be regarded as the opposite to burnout, which is characterized by exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy. On the other hand, this condition is described in the ICD-10 as "Problems related to life-management difficulty" (Z73, i.e., not among mental disorders but among Factors influencing health status and contact with health services, Z00-99). As this condition is also described in DSM-IV as "adjustment disorder", the concept of „burnout“ seems to be redundant and useful only out of medicine as a journalistic label for a reaction which can be classified otherwise.

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