

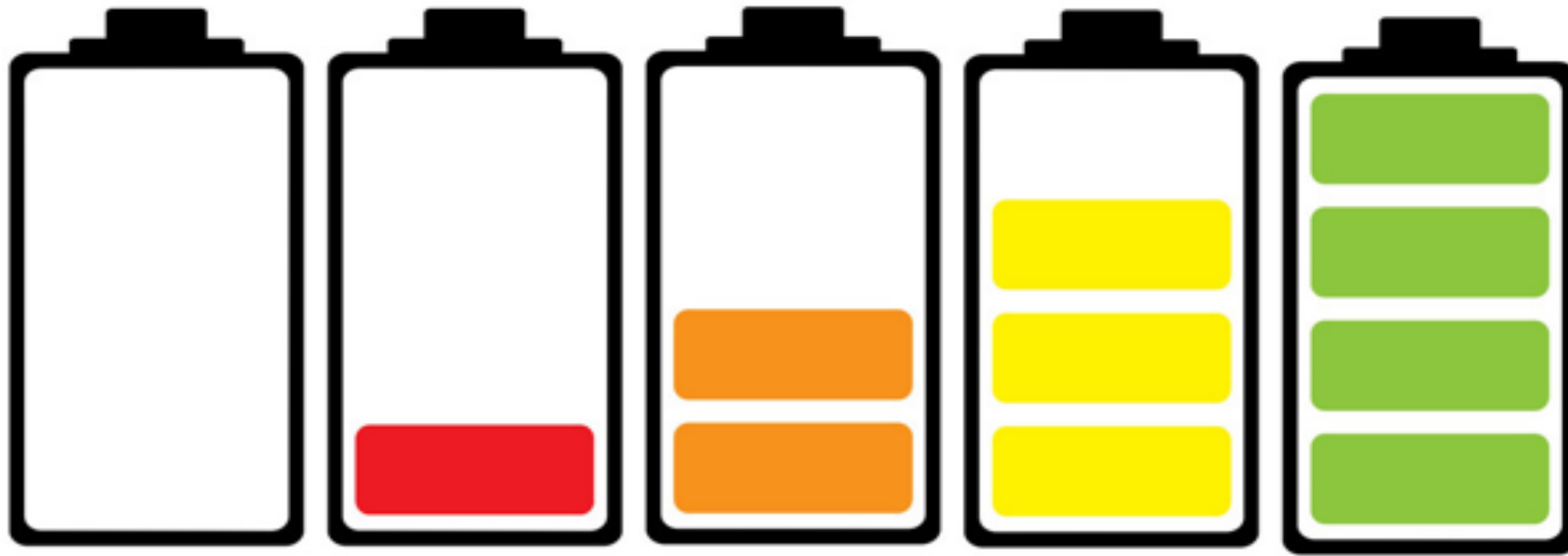
Running on Empty: Burnout in the Legal Profession

PMAS
LUNCH AND LEARN
JANUARY 16, 2020

D.C. Bar
Lawyer Assistance Program

Let's check in





*HOW FULL IS YOUR BATTERY?
WHAT IMPACTS YOUR BATTERY LIFE?*

WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?

Today





I'M QUITTING LIFE TO BECOME A BURRITO



WHAT IS BURNOUT?

- physical or mental collapse caused by overwork or chronic stress
- predictable, building over time and resulting in work dissatisfaction
- associated with high workload and few rewards
- related to the work environment
(organizational, political, or administrative issues)

PRIMARY SYMPTOMS OF BURNOUT



Persistent exhaustion



Feeling negative
towards one's career



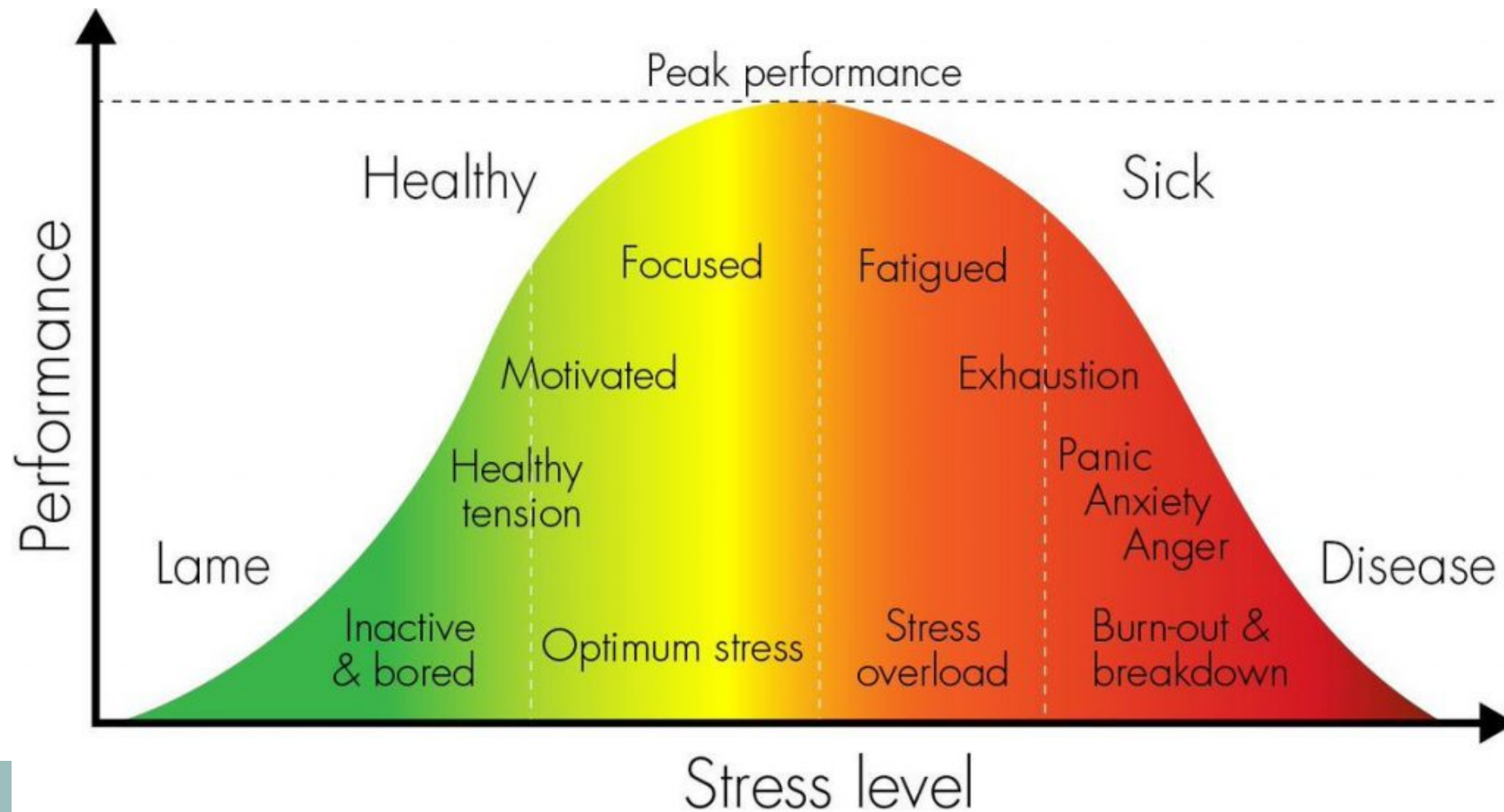
Reduced productivity

STRESS vs BURNOUT

- Overengagement
- Reactive or over reactive emotions
- Sense of urgency and hyperactivity
- Lost or diminished energy
- Leads to anxiety
- Physically tolling



- Disengagement
- Blunted or distant emotions
- Sense of helplessness
- Motivation is lost or diminished
- Leads to feeling depressed
- Emotionally tolling



THE WARNING SYSTEM

CAUSES OF BURNOUT

Lack of autonomy

Values conflict

Unclear goals or expectations

Dysfunctional environment

Excessive workload

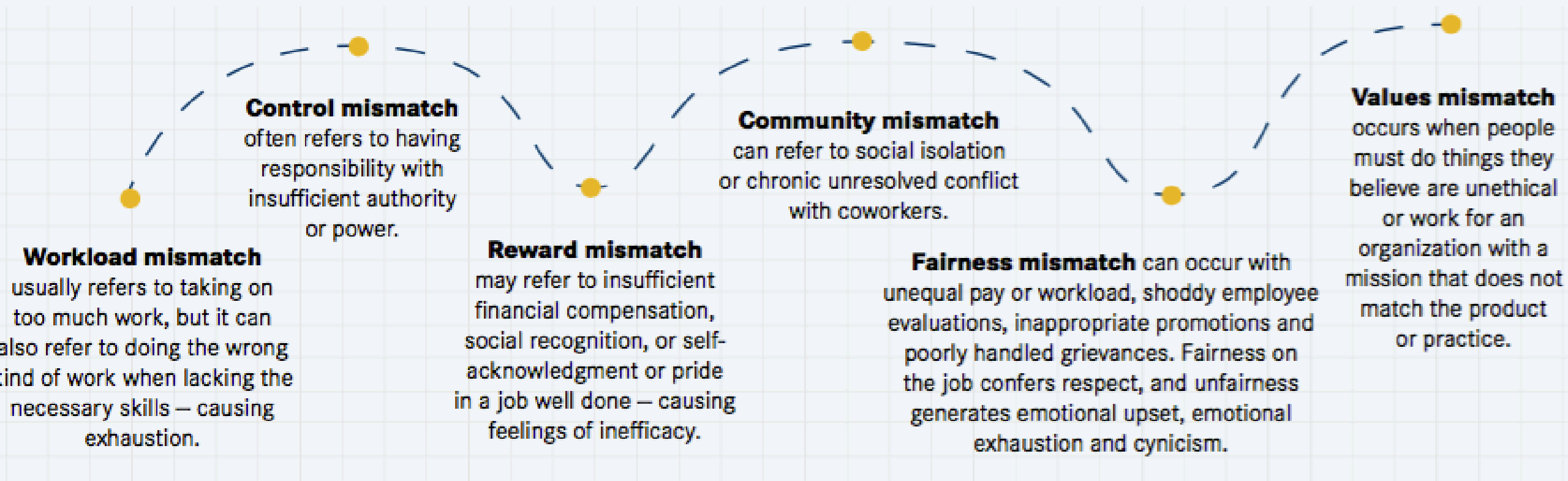
Lack of support

Lack of recognition

Monotonous or low-stimulation work



Figure 1. Burnout Mismatches According to Maslach⁷



BURNOUT MISMATCHES

5 STAGES OF BURNOUT

1. Honeymoon phase

2. Onset of stress

3. Chronic stress

4. Burnout

5. Habitual burnout

BURNOUT PREVENTION

1. Work with purpose
2. Perform a job analysis, and eliminate or delegate unnecessary work
3. Give to others
4. Take control, actively manage your time
5. Balanced lifestyle
6. Learn to manage stress
7. Seek help





WORK WITH PURPOSE

PERFORM A JOB ANALYSIS

- What is truly important in your role?
- Are there things you could delegate or eliminate that aren't essential?
- Do you know how to manage conflicting priorities and deal with unreasonable demands?



"GIVE" TO OTHERS

One quick and easy way to add meaning to your career is to give to others, or to help them in small ways.

What are some ways you do that now? Or could do it?



Do you feel in control of your time?



Do you know how to manage your time effectively?

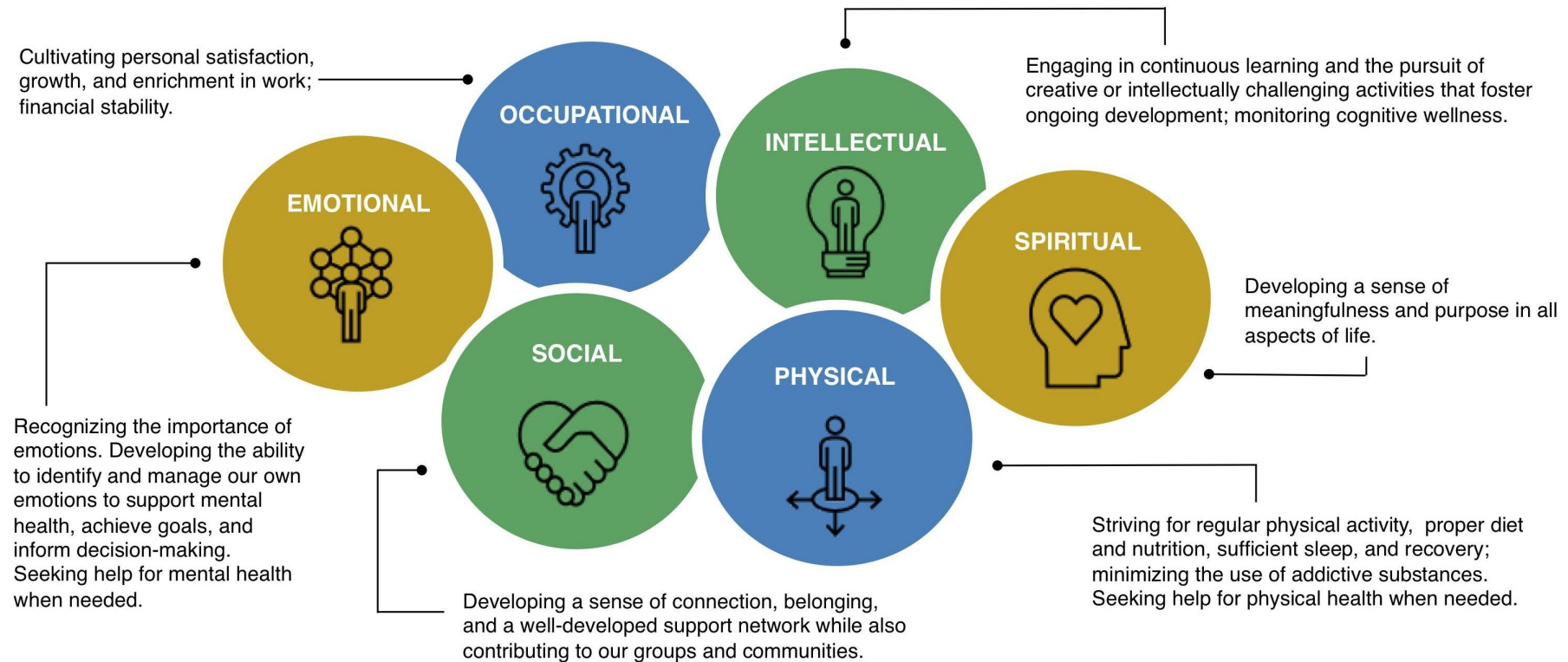


Do you have daily, weekly, monthly, yearly personal goals?

FOSTER A SENSE OF CONTROL

BALANCED LIFESTYLE

A continuous process in which lawyers strive for thriving in each dimension of their lives:





LEARN TO MANAGE STRESS

- ° Exercise
- ° Breathing
- ° Progressive muscle relaxation
- ° Positive social interaction
- ° Laughter
- ° Affection
- ° Crying
- ° Creative self-expression

GROUP DISCUSSION



ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE WELLBEING

- ❑ Expressing Gratitude
- ❑ Cultivating Optimism
- ❑ Avoiding Overthinking and Social Comparison
- ❑ Practicing Acts of Kindness
- ❑ Nurturing Social Relationships
- ❑ Developing Strategies for Coping
- ❑ Learning to Forgive
- ❑ Increasing “Flow” Experiences
- ❑ Savoring Life’s Joys
- ❑ Committing to your Goals
- ❑ Practicing Religion and Spirituality
- ❑ Taking Care of your Body (Meditation)

Adapted from T. Ben-Shahar

SUMMARY: RESEARCH BASED SUGGESTIONS

- Recognize the **risks** for yourself
- Find a way to **debrief** distressing material
- Work on **self awareness** every day
- Take an **inventory** of how balanced your life is -- be intentional about balancing it out
- Evaluate** your tension reducing behaviors
- Be **intentional** about **protecting** yourself

WHAT IS YOUR NEXT STEP?

What is your commitment to change?

- Daily Goal(s):
- Weekly Goal(s):
- Monthly Goal(s):

RESOURCES

D.C. Bar Lawyer Assistance Program

- ❑ Free and confidential assessment, referral and short-term counseling for D.C. Bar members or law students at D.C. law schools
- ❑ Call 202-347-3131 or email lap@dcbar.org

ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs

- ❑ www.americanbar.org/colap

Employee Assistance Program

Health Insurance

- ❑ Contact your health insurance to clarify mental health benefits and obtain in-network counseling resources

Primary Care Physician

- ❑ Contact general practitioner for referral options

BOOKS

- **Burnout**: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle
by Emily Nagoski PhD & Amelia Nagoski DMA
- **The Anxious Lawyer**: An 8-Week Guide to a Joyful and Satisfying Law Practice Through Mindfulness and Meditation
by Jeena Cho & Karen Gifford
- **The Gifts of Imperfection**: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are
by Brené Brown
- **Trauma Stewardship**: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others
by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky with Connie Burk

- **Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers**