The Biology of Burnout

Adrenal Fatigue, Hypothyroidism, and Rebuilding Hormone Balance for Stress Resilience

Dr. Kimberly Higney

What Is Burnout – Really?

• Lack of Biological Resilience From Prolonged Stress Response
• Chain of Events Progressing from Dysregulation to Depletion, Such That R&R Isn’t Enough
• Physical, Emotional, Mental

Who is most vulnerable?

How Resilient Are We?

• How Do We Handle Bodily Stress?
  • Reliance on Stimulants, Sugar, Over-Exercise, Transient “Feel-Good” Activities
  • We’re Not Outpacing The Stressors
  • We Are Aging Faster And Developing Chronic Conditions Earlier

How Do We Get So Off Track?
Burnout Begins In the Brain

- HPA Axis → Costly FFF
- Begins As Dysregulation
- 5 Triggers:
  1. Sleep Debt
  2. Sunlight Deficit
  3. Sugar
  4. Stimulants
  5. Sensory Overload

Adrenal Glands, Cortisol And Insufficiency
Adrenal-Thyroid Chain Reaction
1. Energy Production
2. Metabolism
3. Thermoregulation
4. Signs, Symptoms

TSH: necessary, insufficient

Melanie’s Story

Adrenal-Reproductive Chain Reaction
- Ovaries and Testes
- Estrogen, Progesterone, Testosterone
- Periods/PMS, Bone Density, Peri-Menopause, Fertility, Libido, Skin Elasticity, Moisture, Calm, Focus

Karen’s Experience

Adrenal-Reproductive Chain Reaction
- "Shift" To Cortisol
- Pregnenolone Steal
- Low Progesterone
- Estrogen Dominance

Karen's Experience
Dysregulation → Depletion
Elevated Cortisol Disrupts Other Hormone Levels:

- Melatonin (sleep)
- Insulin (blood sugar)
- Leptin (satisfaction)
- Ghrelin (appetite)
- Adiponectin (fat burning)
- Thyroid
- Progesterone, Estrogen, Testosterone

3 Stages of Dysregulation: Where Are You?

What’s Needed?

1. Reset
   - Put Out Fires FIRST
   - Suspend FFF, Relax HPA
   - Reset Baseline

2. Rebuild
   - Replenish Depletions
   - Pre-Hormone Reserves
   - Rebuild Healthy Tissue

Reset

HPA/Adrenal Dysregulation:
1. Put Out the Fires – How?
2. Brain-Body Mode from FFF to Normal Baseline – How?
3. Replenish Brain and Adrenals: Lipids and Minerals

Timeframe:
Reset 1: Sleep Debt
• Cortisol-Melatonin-Blood Sugar Connection
• Shift Work
• Stimulants, Depressants
• Creating a Healthy Sleep Environment:

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Reset 2: Sunlight Deficiency
• Cortisol-Melatonin Connection
• Vitamin D Synthesis
• NO and Blood Flow
• Endorphins
• UVB Protective Against Melanoma

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Reset 3: Sugar
Which Carbohydrates?
• Quick-Burning Fuel, Rapid Insulin Response → Crash
• Stimulant
• Fat Storage
• Mineral Depletion
• Inflammation and Acidity
• Immune Paralysis

Guidelines: Which, When, and How Much?

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Reset 4: Stimulants

- Fires We Keep Lighting: Chemicals Trigger CNS and FFF
- Energy and Focus → Anxiety
- Rapid Cortisol and Adrenaline
- 4 Most Common

Healthier Options?

Reset 5: Sensory Overload

- Deplete GABA and Serotonin
- Constant Background Noise
- Simultaneous Sources of EMR
- Fast-Moving, Suspenseful, Violent Media
- Social Media Addiction
- Visual Electronics and Fluorescent Lights: “Flicker Speed” Faster Than Brain

How To Unplug?

Rebuild

1. Stores of Micro Minerals, Vitamins, Pre-hormones
2. Rebuild Cells and Tissues
3. Individual Needs and a Structured Plan
   - “Testing and Tracking”
4. Some Things Most People Need
Your Body Resiliency Plan

1. How Is Your Adaptability? Tier 1, 2, 3?
2. Know YOUR Underlying Drive For Change
3. Prioritize
4. Commitment To Yourself
5. Accountability

Marcy and Tam

Share Your Successes

- Accountability Partner
- Monthly Resources/Reminders
- Testing or Individual Support?

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Thank You!