ON BURN OUT, STRESS AND DEPRESSION

by:
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With such great responsibility they carry in building a greater nation, it is a sad truth that educators are often the victims of burn out, depression and experience great amount of stress. A research published in The Journal of Clinical Psychology stated that there is a significant overlap between burnout and depression. Moreover, teachers experiencing burnout simultaneously exhibit depressive symptoms which may include loss of passion in teaching, loss of interest or pleasure in activities, mood swings, and fatigue.

The feeling of job stress and burn out can be in many forms. In one sense, it is implied that within the teaching profession when teachers begin to feel that the daily tasks of their job are ever growing. As an example, sometimes teachers are required to satisfy an almost social-worker type role additionally to their regular teaching duties.

Burnout and stress occur because the youngsters within the classrooms lately have numerous adult-sized problems. Teachers find themselves handling the consequences of addictions, poverty, divorce, violence and even more social ills. Why is it happening that teachers are being affected within the classroom by these challenges? The answer is that teachers’ roles are being expanded to satisfy these challenges because children’s lives are being touched by these problems. Such dilemma fosters teacher’s job stress.

In fact, there are even more samples of teacher job stress than this. To mention are teachers routinely have assessments, parent conferences and meetings with the principal and other supervisors. Also, loads of paperwork such as lesson plans and grades to finish
on target time. These are routines and expectable parts of the teaching job, but nevertheless they add up as duties and may increase the demand of a teacher’s daily job.

The problem of teacher’s job stress is one of social importance because it can lead to depression thus, it should be viewed through a wider lens as a measure of social challenges as well. It is likely that the more stress out and anxious teachers are, the more challenges the children and society overall are facing.

How can we help alleviate teacher’s stress and burnout? One easy and quick solution is to easily reduce class size. Although it's expensive, this always makes it easier for teachers to try to their jobs. Another very proactive move would be to provide a free of charges stress alleviation program for teachers. The stress management training could include instruction from such discipline as meditation, yoga, aromatherapy and guided imagery. It would also be helpful if we change our perceptions and expectations, break our jobs into manageable parts, set reasonable/realistic goals, avoid procrastination, set boundaries and most of all, schedule a “me” time. This way, with teachers practicing these wise disciplines, they might raise their tolerance for stressful conditions and debar job stress before it begins.

References:

http://psychlearningcurve.org/the-truth-about-teacher-burnout/

Schonfeld, I., 2016. Burnout and Depression: Two Entities or One. CUNY Academic Works,