

Why did you get into academia in the first place?

Breakout Discussion (3 min.)

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News Ne

75% of Workers Are Burnt Out Due to Coronavirus – Learn How Employers Can Help

By bobnellis

Nearly half of resident physicians report burnout

September 18, 2018



MILLENNIAL **BURNOUT**

Does burnout affect your everyday life?

YES - 96%

NO - 4%

Inc.

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HR/BENEFITS

In a New Study, 90 Percent of Employees Admit to Feeling Burned Out. Here Are 3 Ways to Successfully Manage It

The New York Times

‘A Decade of Fruitless Searching’: The Toll of Dating App Burnout

Burnout defined:

The experience of being **stretched** across the **gap** between your **ideals** for work and the **reality** of your job.



MADRID.

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MOSCOU.

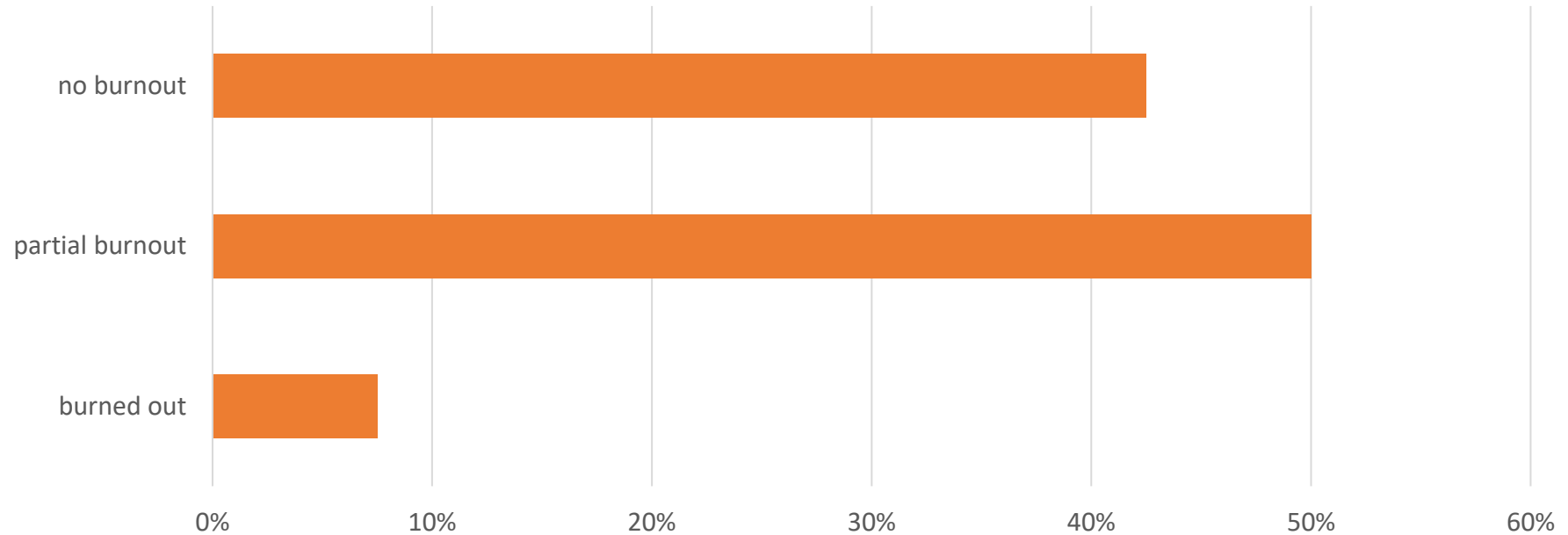
Du Haut en Bas... ou les Causes et les Effets.

Three dimensions of burnout:

- Exhaustion
- Cynicism / depersonalization
- Sense of ineffectiveness

Source: Maslach & Leiter, *The Truth About Burnout* (1997)

Burnout prevalence:



Sources: Leiter & Maslach (2016); Schuldt et al. (2018); Yanchus et al. (2015)

How frequently do the following statements apply to you?

- Never
- A few times a year or less
- Once a month or less
- A few times a month
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Every day



“Being in direct contact with people at work is too stressful.”

- Never
- A few times a year or less
- Once a month or less
- A few times a month
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Every day



“I feel students blame me for some of their problems.”

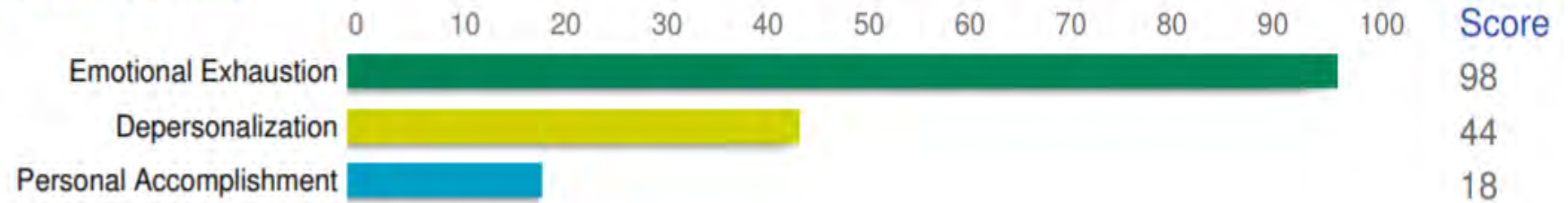
- Never
- A few times a year or less
- Once a month or less
- A few times a month
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Every day

“I feel that I influence other people positively through my work.”

- Never
- A few times a year or less
- Once a month or less
- A few times a month
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Every day

Maslach Burnout Inventory

Your MBI-ES Percentile Scores



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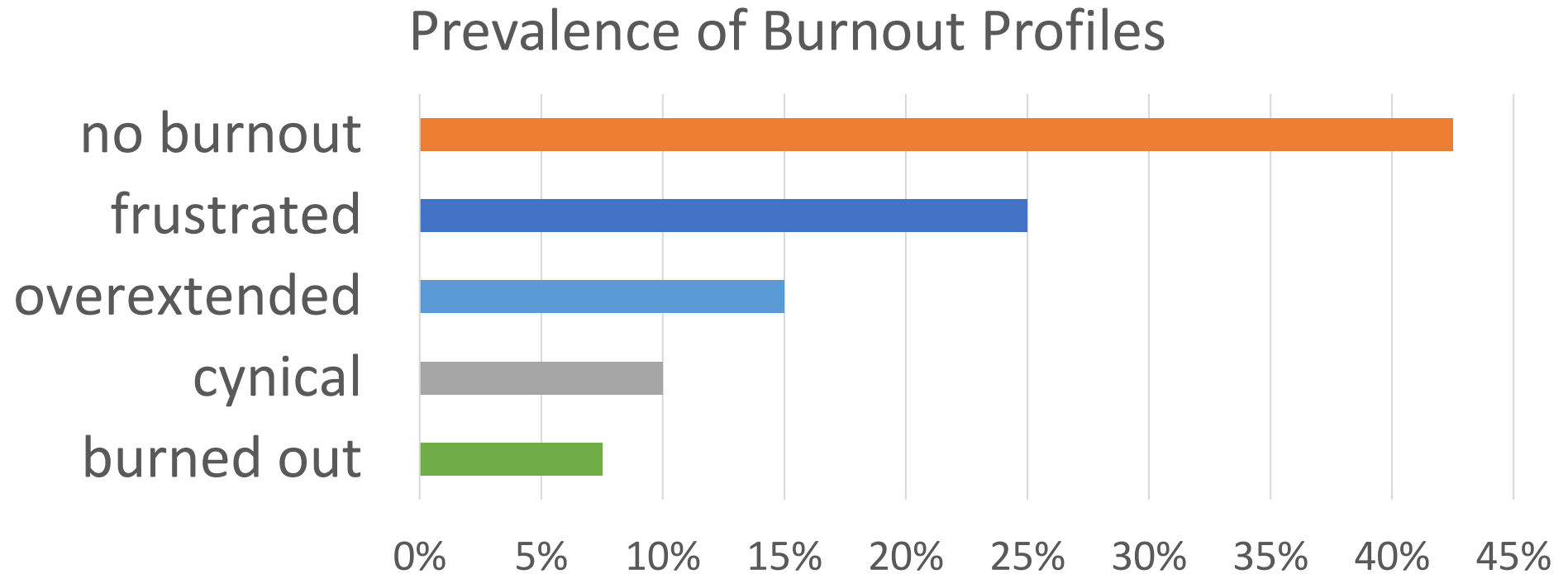
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Key “mismatches” in workplaces

- Excessive workload
- Lack of autonomy
- Insufficient reward
- Breakdown of community
- Absence of fairness
- Mismatch of values

Source: Maslach & Leiter, *The Truth About Burnout* (1997)

The Burnout Spectrum



Sources: Leiter & Maslach (2016); Schuldt et al. (2018); Yanchus et al. (2015)

“However we explain all these complaints [about students], I certainly felt them deeply. **By the time I received tenure in 2002, I was not sure I could go on.** My disappointment was profound, constant, and personal. How could I possibly make myself plan courses enthusiastically, only to have students evaluate them on **the basis of how little work they’d been able to get away with?** Sure, there were good students, those who cared, worked hard, actually read everything. But I was focused on the numerous others. **And it felt bad.**”

– Susan Blum, *I Love Learning; I Hate School* (2016)

“If I were to do my career over, I would take better care of my instructional health. I beat my head too long against walls that didn’t give. Disheartened, I became disillusioned and cynical. I never lost my love of teaching, but I struggled to stay alive in the classroom. At the first possible opportunity I retired – before I was ready to quit working but well after being seriously infected with institutional burnout.”

– Maryellen Weimer, *Inspired College Teaching* (2010)

Academic burnout emerges
from the gap between
your academic vocation and
your academic job.

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“Every one in his particular mode of life will, without repining, suffer its inconveniences, cares, uneasiness, and anxiety, persuaded that God has laid on the **burden....** In following your proper calling, no work will be so mean and sordid as not to have a splendor and **value in the eye of God.**”

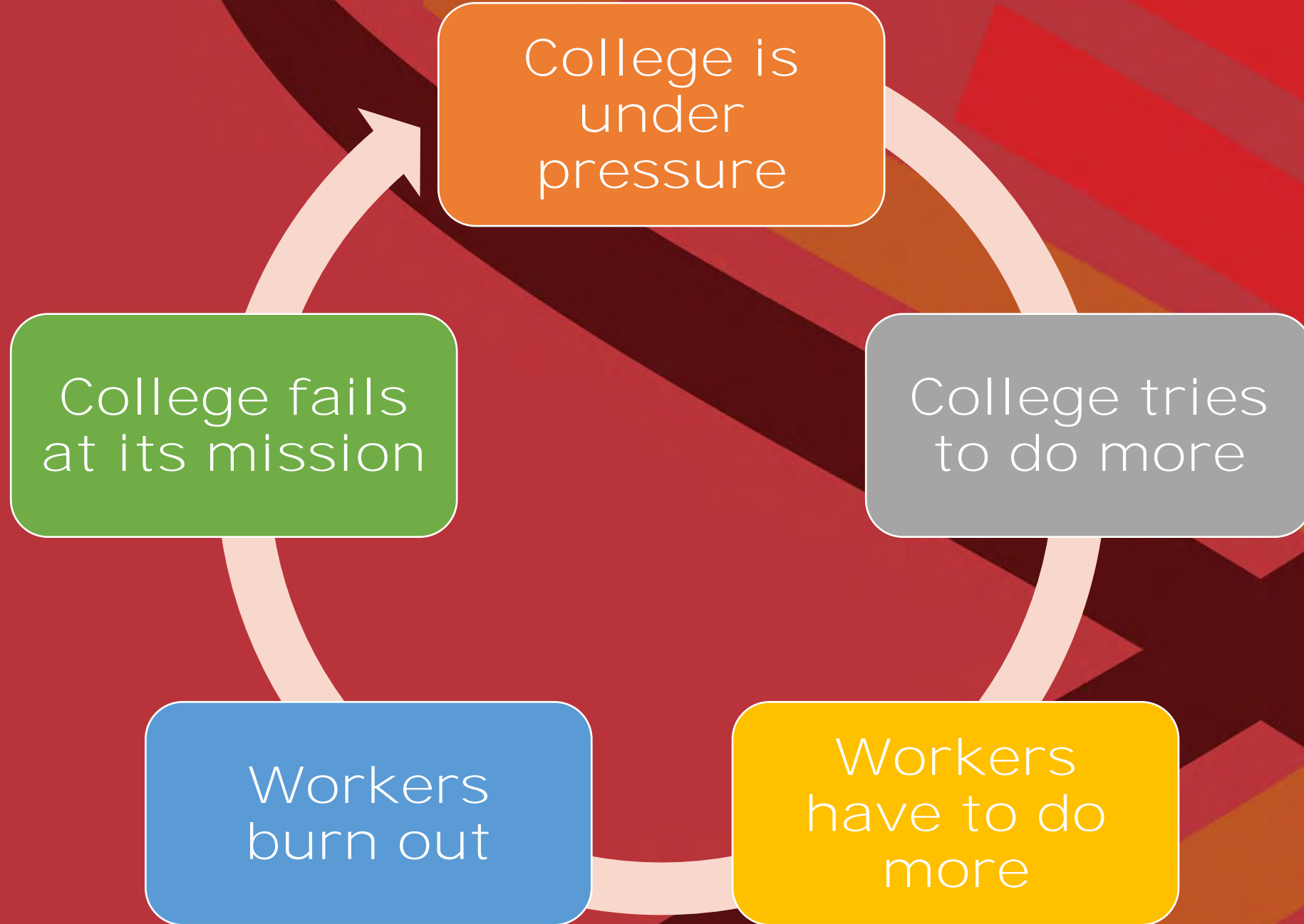
– John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*

“When young students come to me to seek advice about qualifying as a lecturer, [I ask them:] Do you believe that you can bear to see one mediocrity after another being promoted over your head year after year, without your becoming embittered and warped? Needless to say, you always receive **the same answer: of course, I live only for my ‘vocation’—but I, at least, have found only a handful of people who have survived this process without injury to their personality.**”

– Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation” (1917)

“Language like *family* and *vocation* are used to impose vicious expectations of self-sacrifice. This type of language is often used to intentionally obfuscate **workers’ rights and administrators’ responsibilities.**”

– Brandy Daniels and David Turnbloom, “**The Virtuous Professor?**”
(2023)



“Projectitis”

“That pursuit of ‘whatever’ is self-defeating, if not suicidal, for the institution. **When you seek to be ‘all things to all persons,’ you likely mean nothing that matters to anyone.”**

– Wendy Fischman and Howard Gardner, *The Real World of College* (2022)

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Rethinking the academic vocation

"[The Lord] knows the boiling restlessness of the human mind, the fickleness with which it is borne hither and thither, its eagerness to hold opposites at one time in its grasp, its ambition... And that no one may presume to overstep his proper limits, he has distinguished the different modes of life by the name of callings."

– John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536)

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Closing the Gap

1. Understand the faculty
2. Take (less) action
3. Clarify and live your values

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1. Understand the faculty

- Patterns of satisfaction / dissatisfaction / burnout
- Their motivations and vocations: Why they got into academia
- **What they feel they've been promised**

Key “mismatches” in workplaces

- Excessive workload
- Lack of autonomy
- Insufficient reward
- Breakdown of community
- Absence of fairness
- Mismatch of values

Source: Maslach & Leiter, *The Truth About Burnout* (1997)

2. Take (less) action

- Do one less thing this year...and next year...and the year after...
- Ask faculty to do one less thing and stick to it
- Talk about mission and vocation as **limits**

3. Clarify and live your values

- Recognize good work
- Favor values clarification over strategic planning
- Hold honest conversations about ideals and conditions
- Show compassion for all



“A college...is less a collection of programs than a gathering of people.”

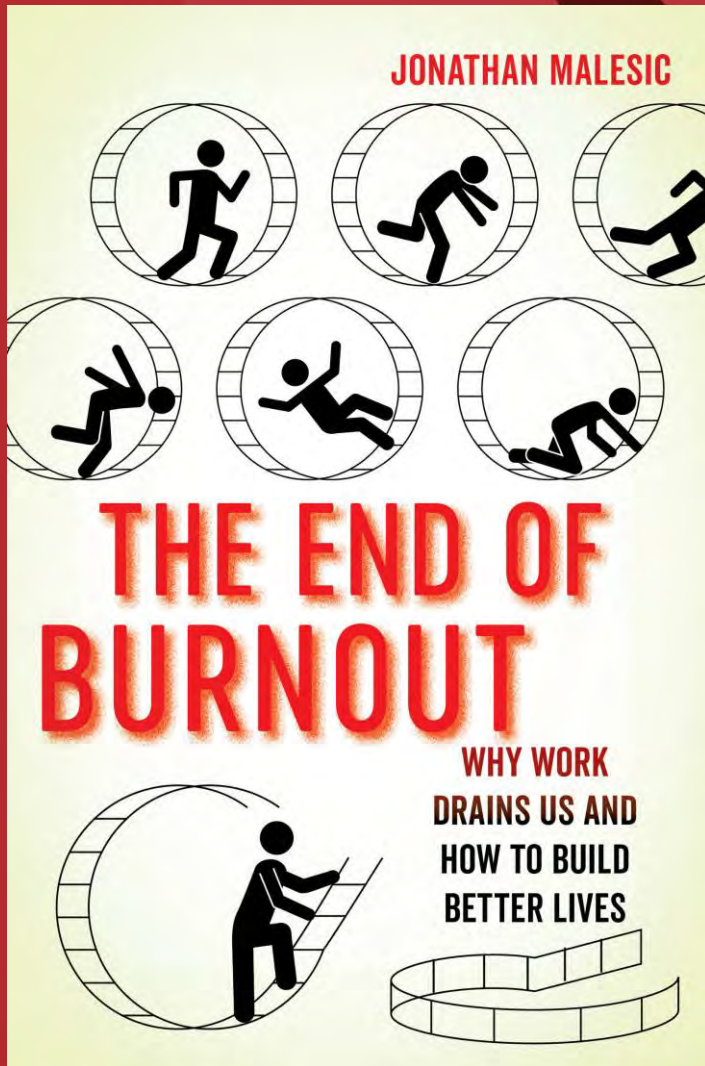
– Daniel Chambliss & Christopher Takacs, *How College Works*
(2014)

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