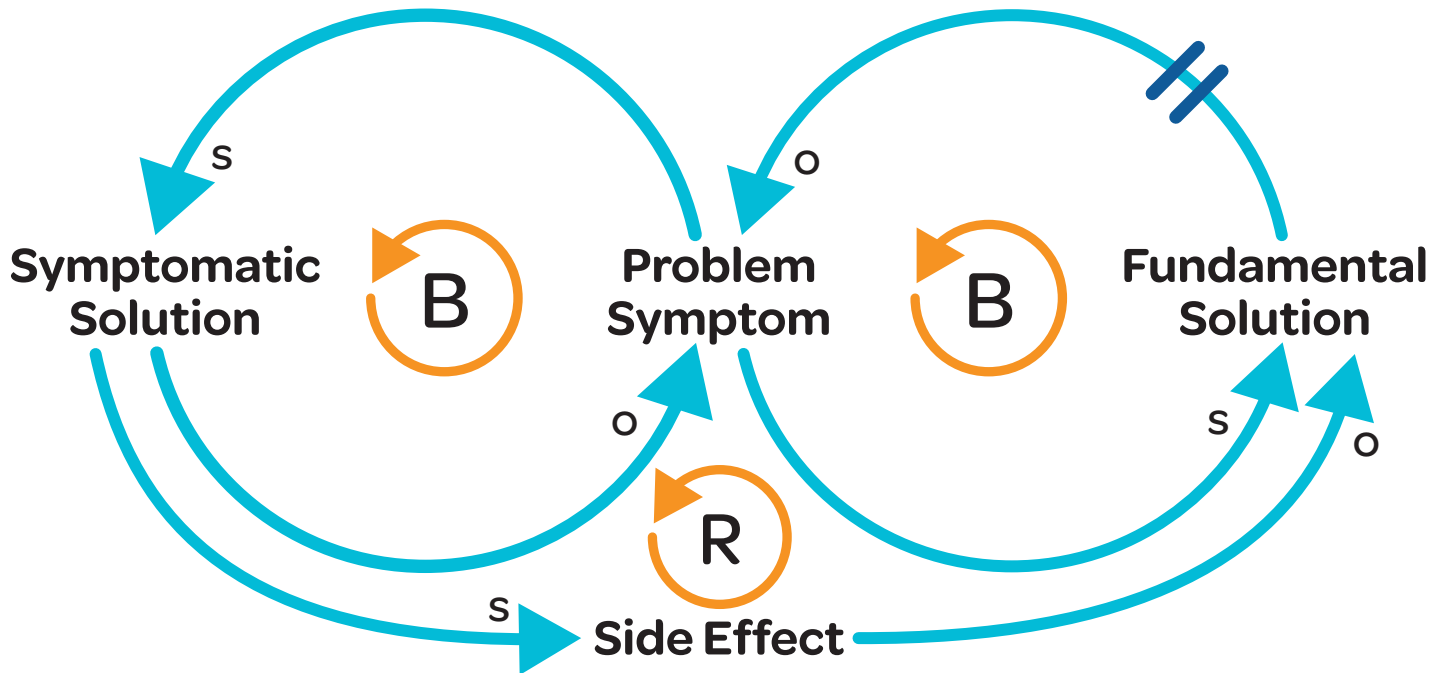


Shifting the Burden

When you choose a short-term solution and its side effect undermines your ability to implement a long-term, more fundamental solution



Description

In a shifting the burden scenario, a problem symptom is solved with a symptomatic "quick fix." The fix then alleviates the problem, resulting in a balancing dynamic that addresses the problem in the short-term. However, a side effect emerges that diverts attention away from more fundamental solutions. Side effects are often related to addictions or dependencies. The system can become more and more dependent on the symptomatic solution and less and less able to achieve a long-term solution.

Examples

- Dependency on an expert
- Caffeine as a solution to fatigue

Ways out

Breaking this cycle usually requires an acknowledgment that the fix was shortsighted. Efforts should focus on a fundamental solution and minimize the results of side effects. Beware of symptom-relieving practices that don't really address the underlying problem or delay attention to fundamental solutions.

As a tool for prevention

The shifting the burden archetype is a valuable tool to use when deciding on solutions to problems. Whether a solution is symptomatic or fundamental often depends on one's perspective. Explore possible solutions from various perspectives. An informed decision that avoids the potential for addictive or dependent side effects is preferable.

Questions to ask

- Is action taken to address the problem making it difficult to implement a more fundamental, sustainable solution?
- Is there an additional consequence that systematically erodes the capability to implement a fundamental solution?

