WELLNESS STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

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What are we talking about when we talk about Burnout?

What is it?

- Emotional and physical exhaustion
- Depersonalization
- Feelings of low achievement and decreased effectiveness

What does that mean?

- We are tired
- We find less joy in the work that we do
- We see our patients or the people that we serve as a means to an end
- We feel little motivation to change the situation and so there isn't any reason to try
- We feel like nobody else is going through the same thing

Except we know that isn't true

- Over half of physicians have at least one of the three cardinal signs of burnout

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- In some surveys broken down by specialty, that number is as high as 70% in Emergency Medicine

Why is this?

- **Electronic Health Record**
- Expansion in health care and technology
- Changes in the overall health care market
- Erosion of the physician-patient relationship
- Emphasis/overemphasis on patient satisfaction
- Medical training and preparation
- Generational desire for work/life balance

Why it matters?

- Poor health and well being

- Increased substance use and abuse

- Poor relationships

- Increase in traffic violations/accidents

- Increase rate of suicide

Why it matters?

- Decreased patient safety
- Decreased patient satisfaction
- Increase in medical errors
- Low engagement
- Increased turnover

The pushback

- We're asking the wrong questions

- We can't truly measure this

- We are missing mental health

- The entire system needs to be rehauled

- We don't know what will work

- We don't want to spend money on things that might not work

If you don't like your job, does it mean that you're burned out?

- No

- And then again... maybe

- Does is really matter?

We need to reframe our thinking

- Burnout is not a terminal condition
- We don't have to wait for crisis
- Small changes can reap big results
- Create environments where we can thrive
- Ask for help
- Ask someone if they need some help

What are we going to talk about?

Where to focus your attention

- Factors that contribute to **Personal Resilience**
- Ways that organizations contribute to **Individual Burnout**

Things to think about

- Solutions generally aren't one size fits all

- Solutions don't need to be large overhauls

- Try some things and see what sticks

- Focus on early adopters, follow up with late adopters

- Leader is anyone who is responsible for their world

Strategies

- What can I put in place that everyone is going to interface with?

- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?

- How can I create an environment that supports wellness?

- What will create, support, and reinforce group identity?

- What is possible?

Strategies

- **What can I put in place that everyone is going to interface with?**
    - These are structural things like programs, pathways, interventions
    - Designed to catch people whether they need it or not
    - Sets a tone for what can be expected from a wellness perspective
    - Greatest example of this is a version of a wellness committee
    - Might be more broad like how to build wellness practices into each department meeting

Strategies

- **What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?**

    ○   "There's an app for that"

    ○   If one person needed it, chances are someone else does too

    ○   Could include "how to" videos for the top twenty EHR efficiency practices

    ○   Might be a list of quick wellness reads on desktop computers

    ○   Should include a step by step list of what to do when you're in trouble

Strategies

- **How can I create an environment that supports wellness**

    - These are the daily things that happen in real time to improve well-being

    - Wellness is aspirational, inspirational, and contagious

    - Supporting and joining others when they make decisions for their own wellness

    - Noticing when it works and acknowledging it

    - Includes all of the ways we choose to act while we are at work

Strategies

- **What will create, reinforce, and support group identity**
  - Making a decision that well-being is part of your culture.
  - Who are we?
  - Who do we want to be?
  - How will others know who we are?
  - What can other count on from us as a group?
  - How can we hold each other accountable?

Strategies

- **What is possible?**
  - Everything is impossible until it's not
  - Stop thinking that your ideal working environment is somewhere in your future
  - Don't limit yourself to what is probable
  - "Everybody likes their job"

Personal Resilience

Personal Resilience

- Foundation from which we can bounce back in times of stress

- All of the things that we put in place that we can easily access

- Strategies that we employ in the moment to get us back on track.

- Our work environment can be a positive force in this.

- Resilience is NOT a four letter word

Personal Resilience

- Habits
- Values
- Optimism
- Gratitude
- Boundaries
- Connection

HABITS

You know how to beat stress every time it comes up. You know exactly what to do when you are sad, frustrated, or feel like giving up

Habits

- Physical health
- Mental health
- Relationship health
- Financial health
- Spiritual health

Habits

- When we have clear habits and routines, it frees our brains up to think about other things.
- When the going gets tough, the tough fall back on habits (good and bad)
- Take regular inventory of the various aspects of your health

How to create your own Habits strategy

- **What can I put in place that can positively impact overall health?**
  - Wellness Committee
- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?
- How can I create an environment that supports good habits?
- What will create, support, and reinforce group identity?
- What is possible?

VALUES

You know yourself, and you stay congruent with who you are when everyone is pressuring you to be someone else

VALUES

"Talking about, writing about, even just thinking about our values makes us feel more powerful, in control, proud, and strong. It has been shown to increase pain tolerance, enhance self-control, and reduce rumination about a stressful experience. It makes people more loving, connected, and empathetic to all."
-Kelly McGonigal, The Upside of Stress

VALUES

- Help you better understand why you love some parts of your job and dislike others
- Help you better understand why you like some patient encounters and dislike others
- Help you create situations that will honor your values
- Help you avoid situations that don't honor your values
- Help you proactively mitigate the inevitability of discord

How to create your own Values strategy

- **What can I put in place that keeps values in the forefront?**
  - mission
- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?
- How can I create an environment that supports living our values?
- **What will create, support, and reinforce group identity**
  - Value based organization vs productivity based
- What is possible?

OPTIMISM

You can stay present and focused and even positive when life's chaos is causing most people to be fearful and distracted

OPTIMISM

- Increased stress hardiness
- Increased relationship satisfaction
- More social connection
- Live longer
- Tend to believe that more things are under their control

Optimistic people are more able to stay in high stress professions

OPTIMISM

- Evolutionary purpose - when under threat, scan for danger

- Doctors are trained to look for problems to fix

- Your focus determines your reality

  - Burned out people focused on negative images in eye-gazing studies

- Your perceptions are influenced by how you feel

  - Burned out people choose negative interpretations when confronted with ambiguity

How to create your own optimism strategy

- **What can I put in place that will promote optimism?**
  - Focusing on how far we've come more than how far we have to go
- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?
- **How can I create an environment that discourages negativity?**
  - How do we communicate with each other?
- What will create, support, and reinforce group identity
- What is possible?

GRATITUDE

You are mindful that all around you there are good and wonderful things and you have a part in it.

GRATITUDE

- Quality of being thankful

- Two things needed in order to activate gratitude

  - Acknowledge that there are good things in the world

  - Acknowledge that those things can come to you from outside of yourself

- Unlike other positive emotions, it is very difficulty to experience both gratitude and anger

GRATITUDE - make a list

- Significant improvement in overall wellbeing

- Decreased depression

- Better sleep and more sleep

- Increased marital satisfaction

GRATITUDE - write a letter

- Increased happiness

- Decreased depression

- Symptoms lasted 4 - 6 weeks

- Repeatable

How to create your own gratitude strategy

- **What can I put in place that will promote gratitude?**
  - Letter writing campaign
- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?
- **How can I create an environment that encourages gratitude?**
  - Constant contagious thankfulness
- What will create, support, and reinforce group identity
- What is possible?

BOUNDARIES

You are able to live your life on your terms while still meeting your obligations, taking care of others, and collaborating to get more done faster

BOUNDARIES

- Social norms surrounding personal space and time have eroded
- Workforce changes coupled with our dedication to patient care result in longer work hours
- We are masters at delayed gratification

BOUNDARIES

- Work is not all of the things that keep you from your life

- Work is the portion of your life that you choose to spend at work

BOUNDARIES

- Don't rob people of their problems
- Boundaries are actually a source of liberation
- Find your deal breakers
- Train people how to treat you
- Lean into others with similar boundaries

BOUNDARIES

- Be clear about what is essential to you

- Be a good kind of selfish

- Learn how to say no without actually saying no

How to create your own boundaries strategy

- What can I put in place that will promote healthy boundaries?

- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?

- How can I create an environment that supports work/life balance?

- **What will create, support, and reinforce group identity?**

  - Adopt a culture that prioritizes work/life balance as each individual sees it

- What is possible?

CONNECTION

Your relationships are vibrant, trusting, respectful, and deeply fulfilling

CONNECTION

- "Nobody else understands what I'm going through."
- "Nobody can help me with my particular situation."
- "Everybody has enough to worry about without worrying about me."
- "If I tell someone about my situation, they will think I'm weak."
- "If I tell someone about my situation, they will tell someone else."
- "I don't want to be around people who are happy."

CONNECTION

- We are social beings who need human connection

- We are caring people who crave helping others

- Spending time sharing with each other has been shown to improve work related burnout compared to having extra time to complete work

- We need to look out for each other

How to create your own connection strategy

- **What can I put in place that will increase connection?**
    - Regular social outings, group activities,
- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?
- **How can I create an environment that supports collegiality?**
- **What will create, support, and reinforce group identity?**
- What is possible?

Organizational Contribution to Individual Burnout

Six Factors

1. Work Overload
2. Lack of Control
3. Insufficient Reward
4. Breakdown of Community
5. Conflicting Values
6. Absence of Fairness

Deep Dives

- Often requires more time and attention to address these

- Tend to point to larger processes and systemic issues

- Generally require larger/broader interventions

- Requires significant commitment to change

- Can use tenets of personal resilience to augment these strategies

- Are we really as serious about wellness as we say we are?

Hey, here's that strategy slide again

- What can I put in place that people will definitely interface with?
- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?
- How can I create an environment that supports wellness?
- What will create, support, and reinforce group identity
- **What is possible?**

Work Overload

- Workload includes what you do and how much you do
- Organization: Workload means productivity
- Individual: Workload means time and energy
- Ideally, we want to work smarter, not necessarily harder

Work Overload

- We carry a sense of duty and obligation to our patients

- We carry a sense of duty and obligation to our coworkers

- We have financial incentives or requirements to work more

- We are afraid that we will be replaced

Lack of Control

- Having the capacity to set priorities for day to day work

- Having the ability to make decisions about the use of resources

- Most interesting work involves dealing with the unpredictable

Lack of Control

- Micromanagement limits the range of approaches individuals can use to address a problem
- Micromanagement is generally interpreted as a lack of trust
- Micromanagement is often simply a way to contain costs or show short term results

Lack of Control

- Look for ways to encourage creative problem solving

- Look for ways to encourage active cooperation among staff

- Look for opportunities to focus on shared values

- Lean into purpose underneath protocol

Insufficient Reward

- People want to be rewarded for doing enjoyable work

- Without engaging work, reward is less meaningful

- Extrinsic reward: salary and benefits, job security, career advancement

- Intrinsic reward: joy of work.

Insufficient Reward

- Organizations have a problem when dedicated professionals see themselves as doing good work in spite of the organization rather than with its assistance

Insufficient Reward

- Be clear on mission
- Allow people who are good at what they do to do good work
- Allow people to work at the top of their game

Breakdown of Community

- As organizations weaken their commitment to their people, individuals have less of a basis for making commitments to each other
- Less of a commitment to grow and develop individuals
- Turnover
- Unresolved conflict
- Physical and Psychological isolation
- Sense of belonging disappears when people work separately

Breakdown of Community

- Discovering and nurturing a point of greatest contribution

- Team based care/huddles

- Team identity - who are we?

- Creating opportunities for people to connect

Conflicting Values

- "Do what I say, not what I do"
- Organizations should not emphasize a dedication to one thing then take action to damage that work
- Individuals find it difficult to work for an organization that does not share their personal values
- Often found during times of cost saving

Conflicting Values

- Encourage individuals to understand their personal values

- Be clear about organizational values

- Transparency regarding deviations

- Create environments where individuals can safely point out discrepancies.

Absence of Fairness

- People need to have trust that an organization cares for them
- People need to know that they are respected beyond what they can do for the organization
- People need to trust that decisions are being made in service of the mission rather than self interest
- People need an organization to be open and honest (transparency)
- Distrust of transparency breeds more cynicism

Absence of Fairness

- Create opportunities for open dialogue

- Take responsibility for mistakes

- Take time to look at how decisions will adversely affect certain groups

- Create policies that ensure fair treatment

Consider the EHR

- Work Overload: click counts and metrics

- Conflict in Values: patient care vs documentation

- Insufficient reward: decrease in meaningful work

- Loss of control: care driven by protocols

- Breakdown in Community: isolated in workstations

Potential EHR strategies

- What can I put in place that everyone is going to interface with?
    - Scribes, protected time to attend EHR optimization courses
- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?
    - Creation of "how to" videos, dot phrase sharing
- How can I create an environment that supports wellness?
    - Encourage team huddles, shift change conversation
- What is possible?
    - Every single person doesn't mind the EHR

Consider patient satisfaction

- Conflict in Values: evidenced based medicine vs care geared toward making people happy
- Insufficient reward: salary based on satisfaction metric
- Loss of control: ordering tests you don't think patients need
- Breakdown in Community: variable opioid prescribing patterns
- Absence of Fairness: don't get me started

Potential patient satisfaction strategies

- What can I put in place that everyone is going to interface with?
  - Scribes, appropriate staffing, care plans for difficult patients
- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?
  - Tips for improving patient satisfaction, support for people in lowest 50%
- How can I create an environment that supports wellness?
  - Stop reporting out patient satisfaction results, kindness isn't a metric
- What is possible?
  - Every physician practices based on evidenced based care

Consider RN turnover and cuts

- Work Overload: creates extra checks and double checks

- Conflict in Values: value patient care but don't provide resources

- Insufficient reward: metrics suffer without adequate staffing

- Loss of control: we don't have a say in the resources that we need

- Breakdown in Community: poor morale, can't build relationships

Potential RN shortage strategies

- What can I put in place that everyone is going to interface with?
  - Workflow patterns
- What resources/tools can I have for people to easily access?
  -
- How can I create an environment that supports wellness?
  - Encourage team huddles, regular statements of gratitude
- What is possible?
  - We are supporting each other as a team every day

Get out there and create your own strategies.

Where to focus your attention

- Factors that contribute to **Personal Resilience**
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Things to think about

- Solutions generally aren't one size fits all

- Solutions don't need to be large overhauls

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- **What is possible?**

Thanks!

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