

## WORK LIFE BALANCE

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## GRATITUDE

- Gratitude is derived from the Latin word *gratia* (grace, graciousness, or gratefulness)
- Gratitude encompasses all of these meanings
- Thankful appreciation for what an individual receives, whether tangible or intangible
- With gratitude, people acknowledge the goodness in their lives
- People usually recognize that the source of that goodness lies at least partially outside themselves
- Being grateful also helps people connect to something larger than themselves as individuals – whether to other people, nature, or a higher power.

## GRATITUDE

- Gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness
- Benefits of gratitude
  - More positive emotions
  - Relish good experiences
  - Improve health
  - Deal with adversity
  - Build strong relationships

## WAYS TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE

### 1. Write a thank-you note, letter or email

- ★ Make yourself happier and nurture your relationship with another person
- ★ Write a note to express your enjoyment and appreciation of that person's impact on your life
- ★ Send it, or better yet, deliver and read it in person if possible
- ★ Make a habit of sending at least one gratitude letter a month
- ★ Once in a while, write one to yourself

## WAYS TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE

### 2. Thank someone mentally

- ★ No time to write?
- ★ Think about someone who has done something nice for you
- ★ Mentally thank that person

## WAYS TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE

### 3. Keep a gratitude journal

- ★ Make it a habit to write down or share about the gifts you've received each day

WAYS TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE

4. Count your blessings

- ★ Make it a habit to write down or share about the gifts you've received each day
- ★ Pick a time every week to sit down and write about your blessings – reflecting on what went right or what you are grateful for
- ★ Pick a number – such as three to five things – that you will identify each week
- ★ Be specific and think about the sensations you felt when something good happened to you

WAYS TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE

5. Pray

- ★ People who are religious can use prayer to cultivate gratitude

WAYS TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE

6. Meditate

- ★ Mindfulness meditation involves focusing on the present moment without judgment.
- ★ Focus on a word or phrase (ex. peace)
- ★ Or focus on what you're grateful for (warmth of the sun, etc)

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- What are you grateful for?
- How can you increase your gratitude practice?


REMEMBERING TO PUT YOUR "I" IN EYE CARE

KNOWING YOUR LIMITS




PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

KNOW WHO'S ON YOUR TEAM




PROTECT YOURSELF



PHYSICIAN BURNOUT

- Exhaustion
  - Energy, emotion, or spirit
- Cynicism
  - Loss of empathy
- Doubt
  - "Does any of this matter?"



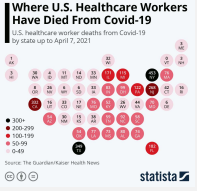
**BEYOND BURNOUT: RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CHALLENGES TO SELF-CARE**

- Prior to the pandemic, up to 50% of US physicians were experiencing professional burnout<sup>1-3</sup>
- Burnout is described as a "long-term stress reaction marked by emotional exhaustion, de-personalization, and lack of a sense of personal accomplishment"<sup>4</sup>
- Recently, the WHO included burnout in the ICD-11<sup>5</sup>
- Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit
- "Healthcare professionals at all levels rose above burnout to provide an extraordinary medical response, stepping forward to save lives at great cost to their own health and wellbeing."

1. Shan H, Powell CB, Hirsch AL, et al. Occupational stress, illness, and error in primary care: the MIND study. In: Harrison R, Berlin JL, Marks EJ, et al, editors. Advances in patient safety: from research to implementation. Orlando: Research Feedback; Kluwer Academic; Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; 2012. 2. Shan H, Powell CB, Hirsch AL, et al. Occupational stress, illness, and error in primary care: the MIND study. In: Harrison R, Berlin JL, Marks EJ, et al, editors. Advances in patient safety: from research to implementation. Orlando: Research Feedback; Kluwer Academic; Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; 2012. 3. Shan H, Powell CB, Hirsch AL, et al. Occupational stress, illness, and error in primary care: the MIND study. In: Harrison R, Berlin JL, Marks EJ, et al, editors. Advances in patient safety: from research to implementation. Orlando: Research Feedback; Kluwer Academic; Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; 2012. 4. Maslach C, Jackson SC, Leiter MP, et al. Burnout in health care: a cross-national study. In: Maslach C, Jackson SC, Leiter MP, et al, editors. Burnout in health care: a cross-national study. New York: Springer; 2001. 5. World Health Organization. ICD-11. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2018.

**THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON FAMILY**

- Healthcare workers constantly struggle with work-life balance
- The issue of dual loyalty in caring for their families and patients has materialized in an unprecedented way during this pandemic
- Enormous stress has been placed on healthcare workers' families<sup>1</sup>
- Some healthcare workers have chosen to protect their families by living apart from them, despite the emotional toll of this separation
- Household members of healthcare workers who cared for COVID-19 patients were nearly twice as likely to be admitted to hospital with COVID-19 than other working age adults<sup>2</sup>



1. The American Medical Association. COVID-19 and the impact on healthcare workers. Washington, DC: American Medical Association; 2020. 2. The American Medical Association. COVID-19 and the impact on healthcare workers. Washington, DC: American Medical Association; 2020.

### MORAL INJURY

Dean and Talbot have redefined burnout as moral injury <sup>1,2</sup>

Burnout is a symptom of a broken healthcare system

In contrast, the concept of moral injury, taken from military experience, means an injury caused by being involved in actions that transgress our deeply held moral beliefs



<sup>1</sup>Talbot SL, Dean W. Physicians aren't 'burning out.' They're sad. Being here moral injury <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/07/health>

<sup>2</sup>Dean W, Talbot S, Dean A. *Wellness for Doctors: How to Stay Healthy and Happy in a High-Stakes World*. New York: HarperCollins; 2019. 344 pp.

### MORAL INJURY - TWO DEFINITIONS

- From clinical psychologist Brett Litz
- Defines moral injury as a transgression of deeply held moral beliefs – witnessing something, being unable to stop something, or participating in something that goes against your core values, your moral core
- From clinical psychiatrist Jonathan Shay
- Describes moral injury as a betrayal by a legitimate authority in a high-stakes situation
- Both apply in the health care context

### RACIAL TRAUMA

- Challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic have been exacerbated by racial trauma<sup>1</sup>
- Inequities and health disparities among communities of color
- Disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, Latino, and Indigenous American populations
- Without national systemic efforts to address the social determinants of health, healthcare workers are left without the tools to effectively care for their minority patients and vulnerable populations
- An example is having to discharge a patient with instructions to quarantine when the patient lives in an overcrowded situation without the ability to isolate

<sup>1</sup>Wells R, Kessler D. *When did racism's chief condition emerge health care staff*. *Lancet*. *Communities*. 2020. This paper explores the racial inequities inherent in the COVID-19 pandemic, and the racial trauma suffered by health care staff of color.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

The physical and mental exhaustion associated with these challenges cannot be meaningfully captured by the term "burnout"

With the entire medical profession experiencing collective trauma, medicine is at a self-care turning point

Healthcare systems need to move beyond burnout through sustainable change targeting the root causes of pandemic distress<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Among International Health workers, globally we observed, we found and studied*. 2020



CENTERS AND PROGRAMS  
PHYSICIAN WELL-BEING PROGRAM



### MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR PRACTITIONERS



### CHANGING THE CONVERSATION FROM BURNOUT TO WELLNESS

- Existing literature either does not address physician wellness or defines it as a lack of burnout
- Provides ideas for how to fill the gap in the literature
- Toolbox of practical steps to create a culture that emphasizes wellness

Robbins-Helm J, Mei-Dahl, A, Liu, D, et al. *Changing the Conversation From Burnout to Wellness: Physician Well-being in Residency Training Programs*. *J Grad Med Educ* 2009 Dec; 1(2): 223-230

**Box 1: Wellness Toolbox**

1. Designate a faculty who owns wellness and has time to champion it, and then enlist the help of the chief resident(s). These individuals can develop a plan, based on the program's needs or needs assessment, for the next steps.
2. Define wellness.
3. Administer a burnout tool (eg, Maslach Burnout Inventory) twice a year to faculty and residents. Provide individual and group feedback.
4. Provide lectures on wellness, burnout, writing a mission statement, positive psychology, and cognitive-behavioral counseling techniques.
5. Schedule "difficult patient" panels twice a year to discuss, as a group, how to manage difficult situations and interactions.
6. Schedule class meetings every other month with faculty mentors who model the human side of medicine.
7. Develop a list of psychological and primary care providers tailored for residents. Put it on a shared server.
8. Schedule 1-day faculty retreats for renewal.
9. Assign "wellness partners" for faculty and residents with emotional, physical, spiritual, and social goals. Meet quarterly on-site.
10. Develop a professionalism contract for faculty and residents with annual review.
11. Make wellness an agenda item on monthly faculty and resident meetings.
12. Develop a physician support group (see the work of Rachel Naess Rames, MD<sup>13</sup>).
13. Ask residents to set quarterly wellness goals during advisor meetings.
14. Assign gregarious office staff to schedule "fun" social events for the entire office (eg, sporting events).
15. Involve residents in faculty meetings, committees, etc, to increase sense of control.
16. Schedule a yearly retreat with team-building and self-awareness exercises.
17. Empower faculty and residents to confront concerns as they see them, both in residents and faculty.
18. Encourage faculty to provide positive feedback.
19. Take time to publicly celebrate accomplishments, even transitions from postgraduate year 1 to 2 to 3. Hand out appreciation lists.
20. Change the culture over time. Create an environment that does not focus on pathology.

**Box 2: Definition of Wellness**

"The William Beaumont Family Medicine Residency Program" values a holistic philosophy of care for self and patients. Central to this care is a focus on the development and maintenance of a wellness orientation.

**Wellness is defined as a dynamic and ongoing process involving self-awareness and healthy choices resulting in a successful, balanced lifestyle.**

**Wellness:**

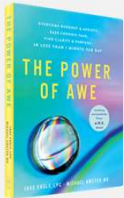
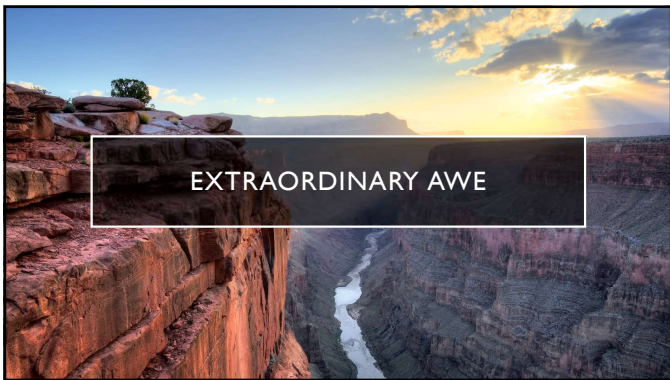
- Incorporates balance between the physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual realms;
- Results in a sense of accomplishment, satisfaction, and belonging;
- Provides protection from the unique demands of medical training and beyond.

**Key components to developing and maintaining wellness:**

- Feeling engaged and empowered with good boundaries;
- Maintaining physical health with adequate rest, healthy diet, and regular exercise whenever possible;
- Having confidence in self, the faculty, and the program;
- Communicating effectively within and outside of the residency program;
- Taking time away from work and leaving work behind (eg, evenings, weekends, vacations);
- Being present in the moment;
- Being able to recognize signs of burnout or the need to renew before burnout occurs;
- Compassionately recognizing and accepting humanity in oneself and in others.


**THE POWER OF AWE**

- Microdoses of Mindfulness: The Power of Awe
- Michael Amster MD
- [www.thepowerofawe.com](http://www.thepowerofawe.com)

**ORDINARY AWE**

- A pulsating feeling in my body as I chopped a cabbage I had grown. My thoughts were of the diversity, colours, rhythms and patterns and uniqueness in all of nature and mankind. I felt connected to a much bigger picture.



**Our Definition of Awe**

- "An emotional experience in which we sense being in the presence of something that transcends our normal perception of the world."


**How Science Defines Awe as an Emotion**

- Perceptual Vastness
- Cognitive Accommodation

### Characteristics of Awe

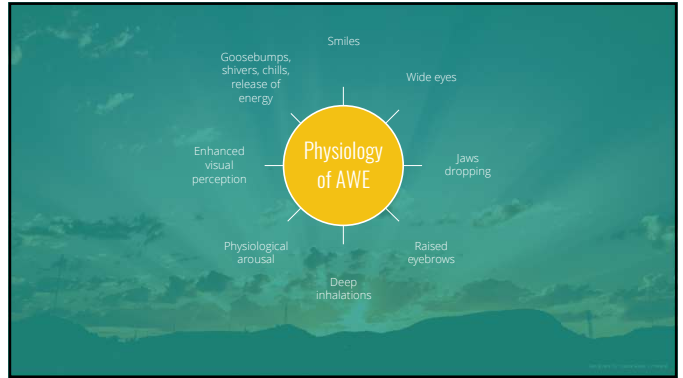
*"Awe-inducing events may be one of the fastest and most powerful methods of personal change and growth."*  
\*

- Sense of time expands...
- Greater Patience
- Increased desire to help others
- Feelings of connectedness
- Improved wellbeing and healthier relationships
- Greater joy, contentment, and life satisfaction



- Valuing experiences over material goods
- Savoring feelings and sensations
- Higher level cognitive processing: more open minded and deeper insights
- Improved immune function and decreased inflammation.

\* Keltner, D., & Lewis, L. (2017)



### How to Access Moments of A.W.E. in the Ordinary

**A**ttention: full and undivided attention on things you appreciate, value, or find amazing.

**W**ait: slow down, pause.

**E**xhale + **E**xpand: amplify whatever sensations you are experiencing.

You can use the physiology of awe to promote awe:  
*Smiles \* Wide eyes \* Jaws dropping \* Raised eyebrows \* Deep inhalations*

### MENTAL HEALTH TOOLS

- Mindfulness
- MBSR courses (mindfulness-based stress reduction)
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Spending time outdoors
- Sleep
- Healthy diet
- Exercise
- Journaling
- Volunteering
- Limit substances
- Stick to a routine
- Spirituality







**Harvard Business Review**

## WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- Achieving better balance between professional and personal priorities boils down to a combination of reflexivity (questioning assumptions to increase self-awareness) and intentional role redefinition
- Not a one-time fix
- A cycle that we must engage in continuously as our circumstances and priorities evolve
- Cycle is made up of five distinct steps

**Work-Life Balance Is a Cycle, Not an Achievement**

## WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- **1. Pause and denormalize**
- Take a step back and ask yourself:
  - What is currently causing me stress, unbalance, or dissatisfaction? How are these circumstances affecting how I perform and engage with my job? How are they impacting my personal life? What am I prioritizing? What am I sacrificing? What is getting lost?
- Only after you take a mental pause and acknowledge these factors can you begin to tackle them.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- **2. Pay attention to your emotions.**
- Once you've increased your awareness of your current situation, examine how that situation makes you feel.
  - Ask yourself, do I feel energized, fulfilled, satisfied? Or do I feel angry, resentful, sad?

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- **3. Reprioritize.**
- Increasing your cognitive and emotional awareness gives you the tools you need to put things into perspective and determine how your priorities need to be adjusted.
  - Ask yourself: What am I willing to sacrifice, and for how long? If I have been prioritizing work over family, for example, why do I feel that it is important to prioritize my life in this way? Is it really necessary? Is it really inevitable? What regrets do I already have, and what will I regret if I continue along my current path?
  - Our priorities often shift faster than our day-to-day time allocation habits.
  - Those who had a more positive work-life balance intentionally reprioritized how they spent their time in a way that lined up with their true priorities.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- **4. Consider your alternatives.**
- Before jumping into solutions, first reflect on the aspects of your work and life that could be different in order to better align with your priorities.
- Are there components of your job that you would like to see changed? How much time would you like to spend with your family, or on hobbies?

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- **5. Implement changes.**
- Once you've recognized your priorities and carefully considered the options that could help you improve, it's time to take action.
  - "Public" change – something that explicitly shifts your colleagues' expectations
    - Ex. taking on a new role that's designed to be less time-demanding or allows for a compressed-week model
  - "Private" change – informally change your work patterns, without necessarily attempting to change your colleagues' expectations.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- **5. Implement changes continued**
- Both public and private changes can be effective strategies
- As long as they're implemented in a sustainable manner
- Private change example
  - Self-imposing boundaries (choosing not to work on evenings, weekends or during holidays – and sticking to that decision)
- Public change example
  - Rather than simply requesting more time off or more flexible hours, securing support from key mentors, partners, and coworkers – or even better, formally applying for a new internal position or a flexible working scheme – is likely to result in more lasting change

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- What does work/life balance mean to you?
- What are some signs that your life is in (or out) of balance?
- What are your personal and professional goals for the future?
- What is the impact on your work/life balance needs?