

Physician Wellness: *It is Personal*



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I do not intend to discuss an unapproved/investigative use of a commercial product/device in the presentation.

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Goals



1. Convey my sense of urgency.
2. Acknowledge complexity of the problem.
3. Emphasize connections, common mission.
4. Highlight opportunities to grow.
5. Provide tools & resources for immediate use.

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Myths



- I'm too busy.
- I'm too important- my team can't go on without me.
- This is my own weakness, better to fix it alone.
- I'll get to this next week.

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Facts



Acknowledgement is key.
Lifting the stigma is a critical first step.
You are not alone.
This is not in your head.

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Personal Wellbeing, the Opposite of...



Burnout: the feeling of being overextended and depleted of one's emotional and physical resources.

- Emotional Exhaustion
- Depersonalization
- Loss of a Feeling of Personal Accomplishment

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Early predictors of job burnout and engagement. Maslach C, Leiter MP. J Appl Psychol. 2008 May;93(3):498-512.]

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Emotional Resilience



Resilience: The ability to **generate positive emotion** and to **recover from negative emotion** is a modifiable factor closely linked to burnout.

The ability to 'bounce back' after being psychologically challenged

Resilience is:



- Teachable
- Learnable
- Measurable (Smith Brief Resilience Scale)

Common Traits of Resilient People

- Strong social connections
- Emotional awareness
- Strong sense of purpose
- Openness to challenges
- Flexibility, openness to change
- An internal locus of control
- Identifying as a survivor, not a victim
- Refined problem-solving skills

- Able to set and reach *reasonable* goals
- Able to ask for help
- Takes good care of themselves
- Sense of optimism



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Stress in America: Paying with Our Health. American Psychological Association, 2015

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Stress in America: Paying with Our Health. American Psychological Association, 2015

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Resilience: Associations



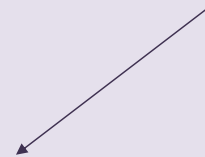
- Sense of humor
- Higher levels of intelligence
- Attention to consistent exercise, healthy nutrition, rest, play, relationships, and coping skills
- Spirituality/organized faith community
- Most powerful predictor for physicians:
maintaining caring connection with others

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Resilience: Associations



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How Will You Know Where to Start?



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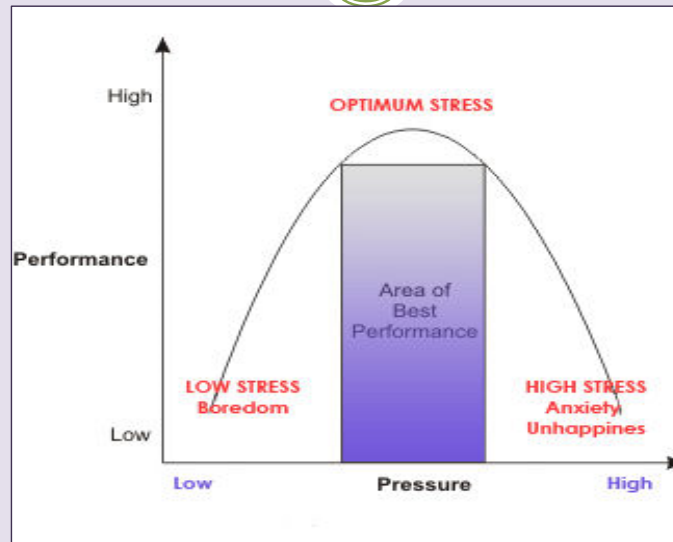
First Figure Out Where You Are



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Yerkes-Dodson Curve (1908)



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Yerkes RM, Dodson JD (1908) The relation of strength of stimulus to rapidity of habit formation. J Comparative Neurology and Psychology 18:459-482

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Burnout and Resilience

How do we identify those at risk?

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Positive Traits or Risk Factors?

Positive Trait	In Exaggerated Form
Altruism	Loss of sense of self, martyr
Compassion	Compassion fatigue, loss of empathy, depression
Perfectionism	Compulsiveness, self doubt, imposter syndrome
Competitiveness	Isolation, alienation of peers
Resiliency	Sense of invincibility, unsustainable pace, exhaustion
High Achievers	Workaholic, burnout

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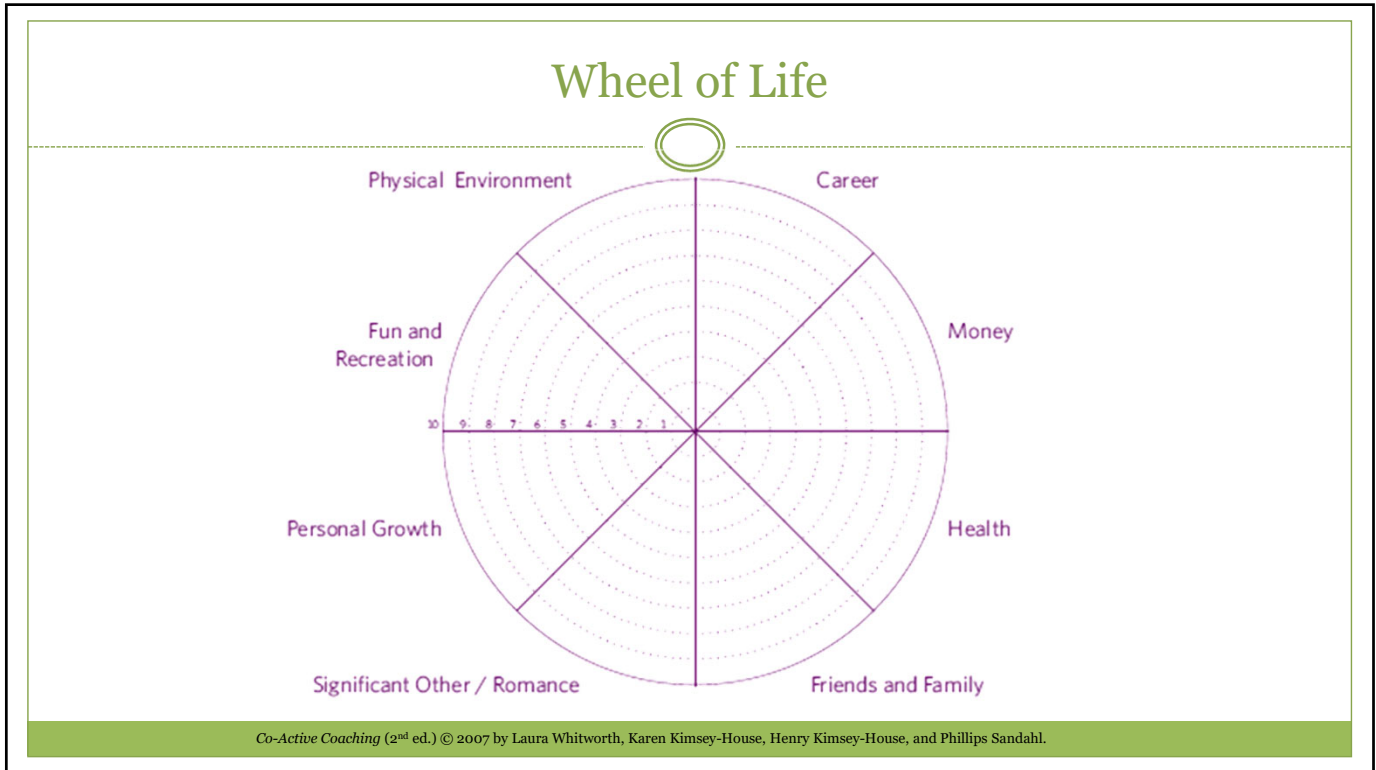
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Taking Stock: a Snapshot

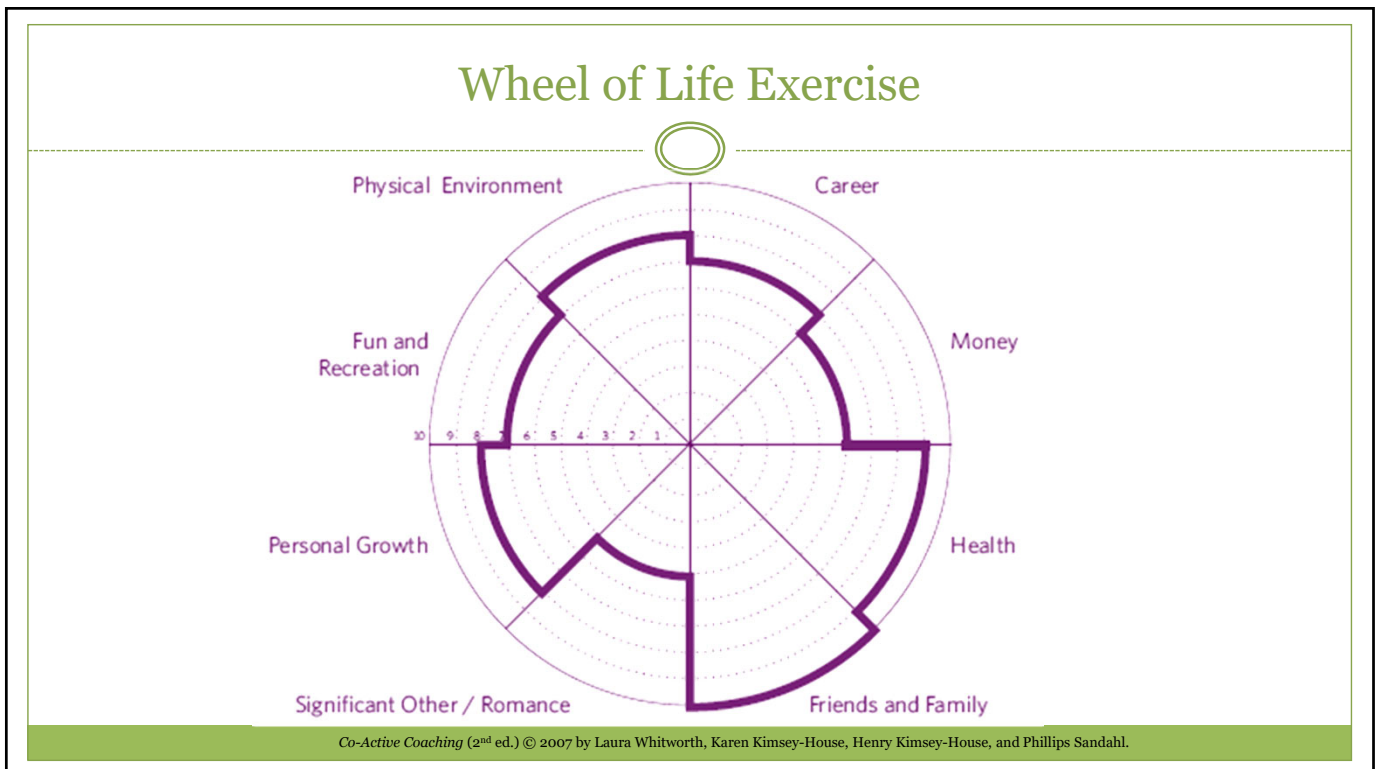
Wheel of Life Exercise

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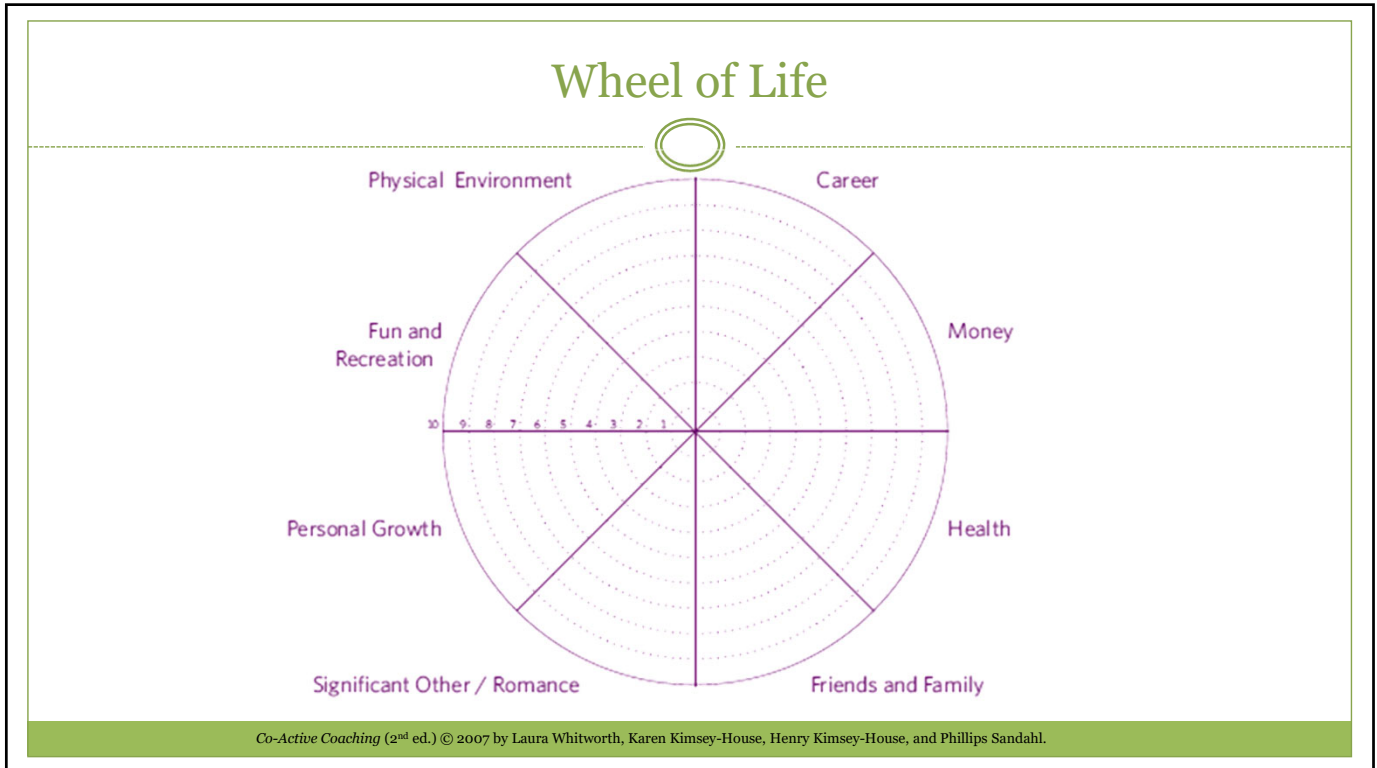
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Where Are You?

- Introduce yourself to someone at your table.
- Ask them to share one strength, what area is going well?
- How do they cultivate this strength?

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Feeling a Desire to Change?



- Obstacles are common

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Barriers to Seeking Help



- Denial → 'I'm fine'
- Distortion → 'I'm the only one struggling'
- Defense → 'I'm worried about practice and license implications'
- Deference → Subordinate in a culture that frowns on weakness

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Mayo Clin Proc. 2015 Apr;90(4):432-40. Shanafelt, et al.

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What if You Feel Overwhelmed?



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Regain Your Internal Locus of Control



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Go Back to the Basics: SENS



- **Sleep**
- **Exercise**
- **Nutrition**
- **Stress Management**

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SENS



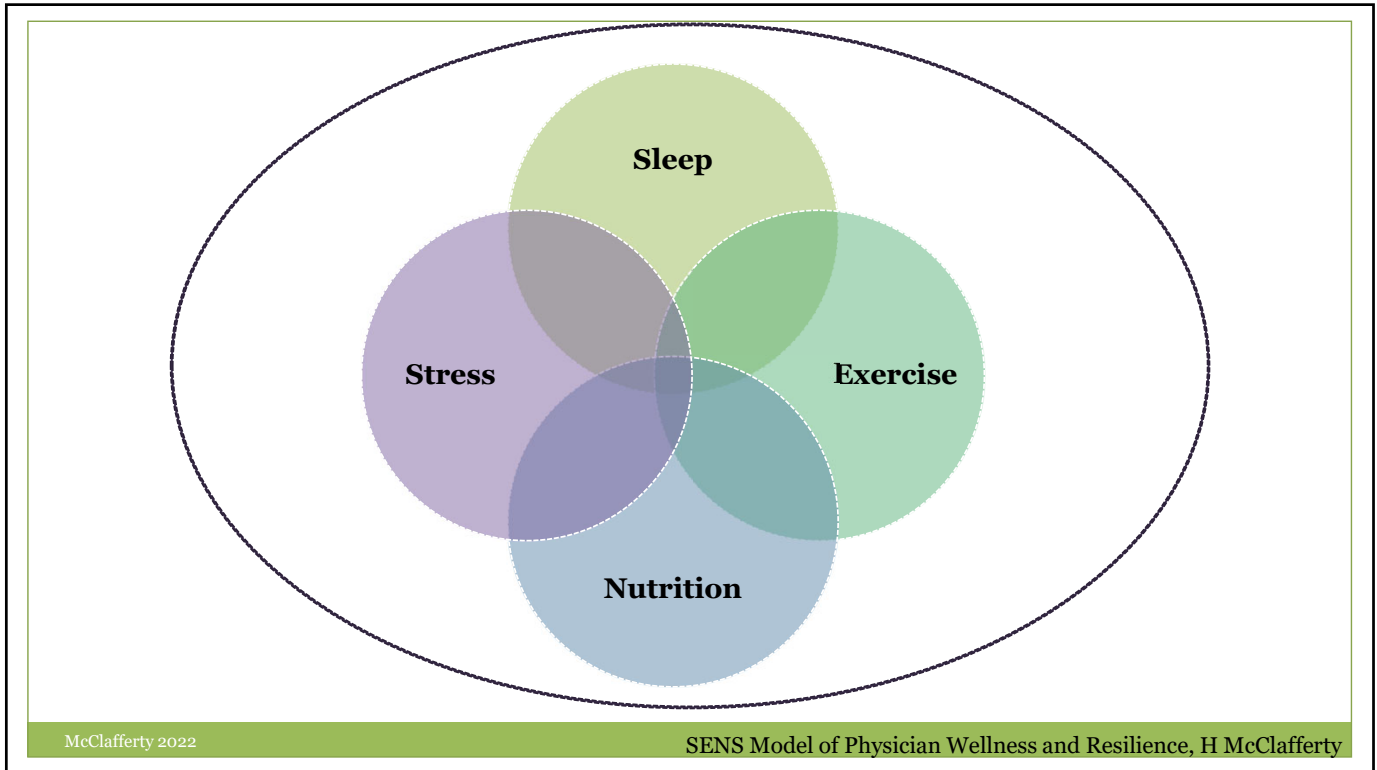
(Noun) Word Origin: from Latin *sēnsus*, from *sentīre* to feel

- To understand, common *sense* (*le sens commun*)
- Perception or awareness: *a sense of happiness*
- Discernment; understanding: *a sense of right and wrong*
- Sound practical judgment or intelligence, make sense, to be reasonable, understandable

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Miriam –Webster


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Sleep

- Brief research update



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Exercise and Play



- Brief research update

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Nutrition



- Brief research update

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Stress Recognition and Management

- Brief research update

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Compassion Versus Empathy

Why is this distinction important?

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Annu Rev Neurosci.2012,35:1-23. Bernhardt, Singer

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What is Compassion?



From the Latin: com + pati- to bear, suffer

- Sympathetic consciousness of other's distress *together with a desire to alleviate it.*
- Understanding of another's pain *coupled with desire to somehow mitigate it.*

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Merriam -Webster

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Compassion Versus Empathy



From the Greek: em + pathos- in, feeling

- Empathy is the ability to relate to another's pain vicariously, as if one has experienced the pain themselves.
- The ability to share the feelings of others.

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Annu Rev Neurosci.2012,35:1-23. Bernhardt, Singer

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Empathy



Literally 'in feeling' with the other.

Empathy Benefits:

- Can help one predict and understand the social and affective behavior.

Empathy Cost:

- At an extreme, the 'cost of caring' can exceed caregivers' ability to respond in stressful situations → compassion fatigue.

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Annu Rev Neurosci.2012,35:1-23. Bernhardt, Singer

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Empathy: Neural Correlates



- fMRI studies have now measured empathic brain responses for pain, fear, anxiety, anger, sadness, and social exclusion, among others.

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Empathy: Neural Correlates



- Best studied in pain, an **empathic response recruits brain areas in the observer that mirror neural activity in the subject who is experiencing pain.**

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Annu Rev Neurosci.2012,35:1-23. Bernhardt, Singer

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Compassion Versus Empathy



Empathy for a person who is sad may result in feeling sad ourselves. Repeated exposure can lead to withdrawal or avoidance to self-protect.

Compassion towards the sad person results in a feeling of loving or caring for that person coupled with a motivation to relieve their suffering.

➤ Promotes prosocial behavior.

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Annu Rev Neurosci.2012,35:1-23. Bernhardt, Singer

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Compassion Training



Emory University

Emory-Tibet Partnership

Emory- Tibet Science Initiative

Training in **Cognitively Based Compassion Training (CBCT)**

<https://tibet.emory.edu>



Stanford University

The Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education, **Stanford CCare**

<http://ccare.stanford.edu/>



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SENS: Choose one area to begin



- Focus on an easy and reachable goal in one area
- Write it down
- Use your favorite calendar device
- Daily check ins with your
- How will you reward yourself?

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Re-equilibrate



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Positive Progress: Cultivate Resilience



Elements associated with lower rates of burnout include:

- Sense of personal control
- Absence of role conflict
- Feeling of being fairly treated
- Social support
- Appropriate reward (financial, institutional, social)
- An alignment of values between individual and workplace
- [Good leadership]

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J Appl Psychol. 2008 May;93(3):498-512 Maslach, Leiter
Acad Med. 2015 Sep;90(9):1246-50. Jennings, et al.

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Then Plan Where You're Going



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Chart Your Path

Ready to
Release

Mastery
Achieved

In Your
Joy

Mars
Landing?!

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Ready to Release



- Jobs
- Activities
- People
- Skills
- Habits
- Thoughts
- Time and energy spent in this space is no longer serving you
- You may need to give yourself permission to let something go
- Is it really a valuable use of your time?

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Mastery Achieved



- Jobs
- Activities
- Specific interpersonal interactions
- How much more repetition is needed?
- Is continuing still beneficial to your growth?
- Are you ready to stop repeating and instead begin building on this skill set?

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In Your Joy



- These activities are sources of deep joy and engagement
- You are growing
- You enjoying spending time in this space
- Are you spending enough time in this space?

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Mars Landing?!



- What if I could.....
- I've always wanted to.....
- I've wondered if I could ever.....
- At the edge of your stretch goal
- Confidence without judgment
- Imagination without restriction

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Chart Your Path: What Do You Need?



- Skills to acquire?
- People to connect with?
- Resources
- Tools
- What is needed for your next step?

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Opportunity 1: Relaxation Response



- Identify
- Isolate
- And reliably trigger *your* physiologic relaxation response.

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The Relaxation Response



Buffet of options:

Breath

Autogenics

Progressive muscle relaxation

Mindfulness, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Guided imagery

Others.....

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Mindfulness



Ancient practice, modern application



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Elements of Mindfulness



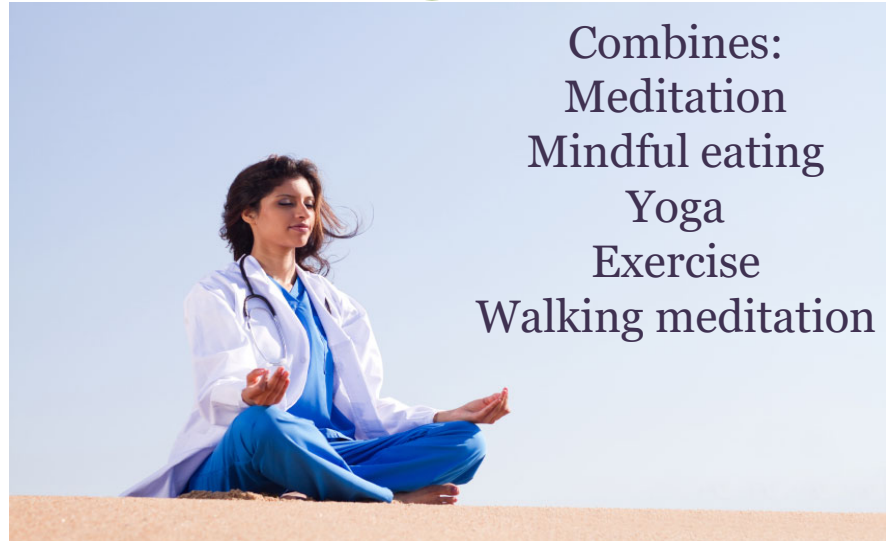
- Attention
- Empathy
- Compassion and self compassion
- Cognitive flexibility
- Emotional regulation

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J. Kabat-Zinn

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Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction



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J. Kabat-Zinn

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Mindfulness in Pain, Trauma

- Indirect effect of negating acute response to trauma and stress

Recognize
Accept
Release

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Benefits of Mindfulness Training



- Decrease in personal isolation
- Improved listening and attentiveness
- Better at addressing patient's concerns
- Increased adaptive reserve
- Increased self-awareness
- More thoughtful decision making
- Stress reduction
- Enhanced performance
- Improved patient outcomes

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JAMA Intern Med. 2014 Apr;174(4):527-33. West CP1, Dyrbye LN2, et al.

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NIH Human Connectome Project
 Harvard/Mass General [USC Stevens Neuroimaging and Informatics Institute](#)

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“A Shift in Perspective Can Be Highly Protective”

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Mindfulness Short Exercise



One minute of mindfulness

Follow your breath

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Mindfulness Short Exercise



Two minutes of mindfulness

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Mindfulness



Share with a partner:

Easy? Hard?

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In Summary:



- Recognition of distress in oneself?
- Recognize and tap into existing strengths.
- Attitudes are changing, help dispel culture of silence.
- Identify obstacles: personal, professional.
- Resources and new skills: remain open-minded and identify what is useful for you.

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Experiential: Metta Meditation

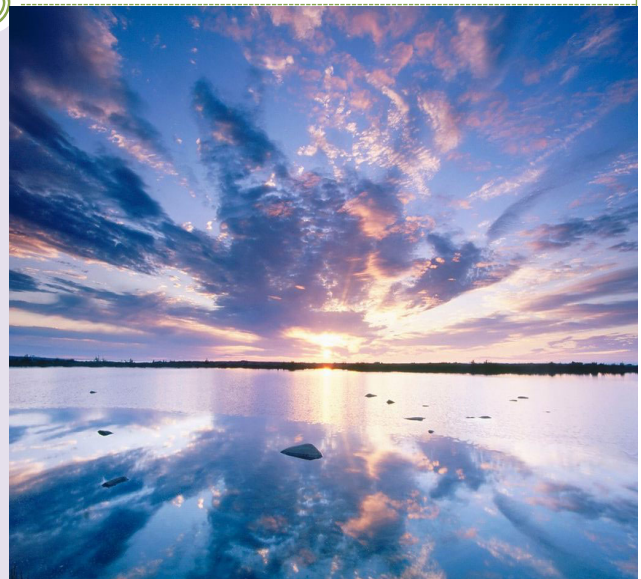


May you be happy.

May you be well.

May you be safe.

May you be peaceful and at ease.



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Thank you
Hilary McClafferty, MD, FAAP

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