Managing Stress during the COVID-19 Era: The Imperative of Self-care for IPCE Professionals

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Back before the COVID-19 Pandemic...
1 in every 2 physicians experiences burnout

And not just physicians…

All healthcare professionals exhibit high rates of burnout

“Burnout is a response to chronic stressors that wear on a person over time—not acute ones such as a big event or a big change.”

Christina Maslach, PhD
Job Related Symptoms of Burnout

- Fatigue, energy depletion
- Difficulty focusing, completing tasks
- Increasingly lack patience with co-workers, clients
- Physical symptoms (headache, stomach ache, nausea)
- Feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job
- Disinterest at work spreads to other aspects of life
- Dread going to work
Key Drivers of Burnout in Nurses

• Chronic nursing shortage
• Long shifts
• Putting others first
• Busy, high-stress environments
• Dealing with sickness and death

Key Drivers of Burnout in Physicians

- Excessive work load
- Inefficient work environment
- Problems with work-life integration/balance
- Loss of autonomy/flexibility/control
- Loss of meaning in work

West CP et al, J Intern Med 283:516-529, 2018
Burnout Among Health Care Professionals
A Call to Explore and Address This Underrecognized Threat to Safe, High-Quality Care

Lotte N. Dyrbye, MD, MHPE, Mayo Clinic; Tait D. Shanafelt, MD, Mayo Clinic; Christine A. Sinsky, MD, American Medical Association; Pamela F. Cipriano, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, American Nurses Association; Jay Bhatt, DO, MPH, MPA, American Hospital Association; Alexander Ommaya, DSc, Association of American Medical Colleges; Colin P. West, MD, PhD, Mayo Clinic; David Meyers, MD, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

July 5, 2017

The US health care system is rapidly changing in an effort to deliver better care, improve health, and lower costs while providing care for an aging population with high rates of chronic disease and co-morbidities. Among the chang-
Taking Action Against Clinician Burnout: A Systems Approach to Professional Well-Being

Report Release | October 23, 2019
And then the Pandemic hit...
COVID-19 Pandemic Created Enormous Stress on Faculty and Students
COVID-19 Pandemic Created Enormous Stress on Faculty and Students

Students
- Move to a virtual educational and clinical environment
- Uncertainty regarding gaining sufficient clinical training
- Safety concerns
- Isolation from family and peers

Faculty and Staff
- Safety issues for clinicians
- Challenges with teaching in a virtual environment
- Disrupted research programs
- Challenges working from home (especially those with children and elderly parents)
What Did We Do?
at Georgetown University Medical Center

• All-Staff Town Hall meetings: offered support and guidance

• Emphasized the importance of self-care (not a luxury, but a necessity to insure faculty and students were healthy)

• Shared a number of strategies to address current challenges in mental health and physical well-being and provided tips to boost resilience
Environmental Scan: How the Pandemic Is Affecting the Accredited Continuing Education Provider Community

August 24, 2020

During the past several months, the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME®) has focused on helping the continuing education (CE) community respond to the pandemic. To help plan for an uncertain future, we recently conducted a survey of our accredited providers as well as several interviews.
Environmental Scan: How the Pandemic is Affecting the Accredited CE Provider Community: Changes/Challenges

- Salaries being withheld or reduced, and hiring freezes, meaning they could not replace staff who left.

- Staff are taking on CE responsibilities without prior experience; training staff is especially difficult because of remote working environments.

- Respondents reported being overworked and worried about upcoming cost-saving measures, including CE department restructuring and layoffs.

- Cancel or repurpose live activities: challenges and benefits of the shift to virtual and hybrid formats.

- Expect significant budget shortfalls and staff downsizing; some worry their CE programs would be eliminated.

- Nearly 60% of providers expect decreases in revenue in 2021

- Educational staff may be more stressed
4 Strategies to Manage Stress
Strategies to Manage Stress

• Getting the right amount and quality of sleep
Why it’s important to get a good night’s sleep during the coronavirus outbreak

April 16, 2020
Written By Lisa Medalla, PsyD, DBSM

- Set a sleep schedule and follow a routine. “Having a daily, fixed wake up time is the most important part of the schedule,” says Dr. Guralnick.
- Wind down before bed without technology. In the hours leading up to bedtime, try to avoid viewing any technology with a backlight, “like a phone, a tablet or a computer. Your brain thinks that the light coming from those is daytime and it will suppress the release of a hormone called melatonin which helps you to sleep.”
- Consider keeping a “worry journal.” “If you suffer from stress or anxiety consider keeping a worry journal where you can write down your daily concerns,” and then set it aside before bedtime.
- Keep the bed only for sleep and intimacy. “The bed is not for eating or working or reading or pretty much anything else,” says Dr. Guralnick.
- If you can’t fall asleep within 20 minutes, get up. “Do something boring, like a Sudoku, or light reading with a low light. Go back to bed only when you are sleepy, not just bored.”
- Avoid napping. Napping “eats up your 24-hour sleep requirement. If you have to nap, do it early in the day and for no more than 20 minutes.”
- Exercise. “Try and stay physically active. It will help your body feel tired and help you fall asleep.”
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol. Both can make it difficult to fall asleep. “Even chocolate and orange soda have caffeine,” says Dr. Guralnick. “And alcohol can also ‘fragment’ sleep, so try to avoid drinking alcohol before bedtime.”
Strategies to Manage Stress

• Getting the right amount and quality of sleep
• More opportunities to eat nutritious and balanced meals
The impact of nutrition on COVID-19 susceptibility and long-term consequences

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Perspective


Farah Najafi, Rena Hamadeh

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COVID-19, a disease caused by a novel coronavirus, became a major global human threat that has turned into a pandemic. Coronavirus is one of the major pathogens that have affected the global population. In order to enhance the physical and mental health of individuals, a multi-level framework for action to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 pandemic is presented. This framework includes individual, community, and public health levels to ensure the well-being of the population.

COVID-19 and Nutrition: The Need for Initiatives to Promote Healthy Eating and Prevent Obesity in Childhood

Karla Danielly da S. Ribeiro, PhD,1,2 Lígia Rejane Siqueira García, PhD,3
Juliana Fernandes dos Santos Dametto, PhD,4
Débora Gabriela Fernandes Assunção,4 and Bruna Leal Lima Maciel, PhD1,2

The COVID-19 pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus has posed several individual and collective challenges to ensure the containment of its transmission. To achieve this, it is necessary to implement social distancing and lockdown measures. Although necessary, these measures have restricted the activities in commerce, restaurants, street markets, and even the closing of borders. Thus, for many individuals, usual shopping routines and eating habits have been entirely upended.

As recently discussed by the European Society for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism (ESPEN),10 the obesity condition is dangerous to the severity of COVID-19 and has emerged as one of the most prominent risk factors increasing the disease mortality.11,12 In this sense, nutritional status and diets might influence the individual risk for the progression of SARS-CoV-2, but information on the impact of nutrition on COVID-19 is still arsing.
Strategies to Manage Stress

- Getting the right amount and quality of sleep
- More opportunities to eat nutritious and balanced meals
- Exercise
Increasing steps from 4000/d to 8000/d decreased risk of all cause mortality by 50%.
Strategies to Manage Stress

• Getting the right amount and quality of sleep
• More opportunities to eat nutritious and balanced meals
• Exercise
• Adopting stress reduction techniques
Strategies to Manage Stress for IPCE Professionals

• Getting the right amount and quality of sleep
• Eating nutritious and balanced meals
• Reducing inactivity – increasing physical exercise
• Adopting stress reduction techniques
Resilience

“Resilience is the ability of an individual to respond to stress in a healthy, adaptive way such that personal goals are achieved at minimal psychological and physical cost; resilient individuals not only ‘bounce back’ rapidly after challenges but also grow stronger in the process.” Epstein and Krasner (Acad Med 2013)

“Resilience is not limited to an elite few… anyone can learn to become more resilient” Steven Southwick, MD
Ten Resilience Factors

1. Optimism  
2. Facing Fear  
3. Moral Compass  
4. Drawing on Faith/Spirituality  
5. Social Support  
6. Role Models  
7. Physical Fitness  
8. Brain Fitness  
9. Cognitive and Emotional Flexibility  
10. Meaning and Purpose
6 Tips for Boosting your Resilience in this Time of Crisis

- Manage your expectations
Tips for Boosting your Resilience in this Time of Crisis

• Manage your expectations
• Be optimistic, is a realistic way
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• Maintain connections and relationships
• Manage uncertainty by staying in the present
Try a 5 minute Mindfulness Meditation

Resources for Self Care

• Tips for Boosting Your Resilience in this Time of Crisis (pdf)
• 5-Minute Meditation Led by Adi Haramati, PhD (mp4)

https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/bn1iu1fv7xz44bvq3h79kkibgt5mdjp7

haramati@georgetown.edu
## Nurse Well-Being Suggested Interventions

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The most commonly studied interventions have involved mindfulness, stress management, and small group discussions, and the results suggest that these strategies can be effective approaches to reduce burnout domain scores.
New for Fall 2020 Incoming Students

Georgetown University School of Medicine

**Goal:** to help students transition to medical school by creating an environment for M1 students to connect with a small group of peers in a safe, authentic setting that allows them to speak freely about how they are adjusting to medical school in these virtual times and to share challenges, joys, and to be there for each other.

**Format:** Each group will be comprised of:
- 1 Faculty member (co-facilitator trained to lead mind-body groups)
- 1 M2 student (co-facilitator) (who experienced mind-body medicine last year)
- 10 M1 students per group
Take Home Messages

- Self-care is not a luxury, it is a necessity for IPCE Professionals
- Take care of your own staff
- Use your unique role to help professionals, staff, learners and the organization create a more optimal work environment
- Engage and inspire other organizations: academic societies and health care entities to improve well-being in their environments
- **Lead by example, especially in a time of crisis**