

COVID-19: Lean Into the Hide Side — Navigating the Pandemic Rapids Towards Wellbeing and Resilience

Presenter: Seena L. Haines, Pharm.D., BCACP, CHWC, FNAP, FAPhA, FASHP, FCCP, Professor and Department Chair for Pharmacy Practice

Question: Suggestions for those of us who work remotely to help boost team morale?

Answer: This is similar to question 6, but I would add the important element of creativity. Can you brainstorm ideas or activities that can be more organic in nature for folks to be able to convene as a group remotely with no set agenda? To have a sharing opportunity. One exercise that might be helpful is asking folks attending to share one rose, one thorn and one rose bud (a positive experience/bright spot, one bad experience/challenge, and one promising experience that are looking forward to experiencing. Can you reimagine the traditional holiday gatherings and celebrations virtually?

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Question: What great book do you recommend about wellbeing and resilience during residency?

Answer: The GPS for Personal Resilience is one that I use for the Well-Being and Resilience Longitudinal Experience that I coordinate- Your Resiliency GPS: A Guide for Growing through Life and Work by Eilíeen McDargh

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Question: Thank you so much for your presentation. Do you happen to have any course or bootcamp recommendation to learn about well-being?

Answer: The Greater Good Science Center can be a rich resource and offers courses. The Healthy Mind Center is another great resource and the offer seated and walking meditation practices and teachings. Of course, the Authentic Happiness website by Dr. Seligman. The National Academies of Medicine has several toolkits and resources in collaboration with ASHP. And the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) has Finding Joy in the Workplace. These are a few of my go to resources in addition to the books mentioned during the session.

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Question: Could you please include all the suggestion on the last questions in the handout thanks

Answer: NA

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Question: how can you minimize stress from constant email and instant messaging at work

Answer: I would establish boundaries of when you will check your email or it can be a time consuming energy drainer. Once in the AM and perhaps Mid-day if absolutely needed, followed by once in the late afternoon. You may also consider setting up notifications to respond to people automatically that reflect your start and end of your workdays so they do not expect a response.

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Question: Do you have suggestions for making social connections during the pandemic? How important is it for interpersonal connections to be in person vs virtual?

Answer: Indeed, social connections is one of the three essential human needs (connectedness or relatedness, mastery, and autonomy). This is why we see creative connections occurring despite the pandemic. Drive by celebrations (birthdays and graduations), virtual gaming, digital device APPs like Facebook portal or Amazon. Zoom happy hours with colleagues can create gatherings and connections despite the remote environment. Think about a resilience rounds virtual meeting that is voluntary for folks to engage in discussions and share resources that impact personal and professional resilience.

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Question: What are strategies to promote letting go of things for which we have no control when these things may have a significant impact on your responsibilities for the day?

Answer: (unanswered)The amount of worrying we do is impacted by how much control we have, or think we have, in any given situation. Stephen Covey's 'Circles of Control' can help put things in perspective. Think of a target, with three circles, a large outer one, a smaller middle circle and then the small circle in the center. In the outer circle are things we can't control. Examples of worries we have no control over. An example of this is whether the vaccine for COVID-19 virus will be effective, ending world hunger, or wanting someone to fall in love with us. In the middle circle are the things we can influence, but not necessarily control. Examples of worries we can influence include, how likely it is that we get - or spread - the COVID-19 virus. It could also include making suggestions for a work problem in a team meeting or encouraging people to watch a movie that you like (we aren't talking manipulating others here, just about areas that we might be able to influence in some way). Finally, the inner circle is

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the circle of control. Examples of worries we have control over include how often we go outside, how much water we drink, that we wash our hands. So, ask yourself three key questions: 1. As you think about your worry, ask "What triggered this worry?" 2. Then follow this up with, "Is this worry within my circle of control?" 3. Finally, ask yourself "What is the benefit of holding onto this worry?" This last question may seem strange, but sometimes when we don't want to let go of something it's because it serves us somehow. Maybe by having the worry, means you're too afraid to take a risk and put yourself out there. So, the benefit of holding onto this worry is that you get to stay safe.

In addition to Covey Locus of Control, I recommend the book Resilient by Dr. Rick Hanson.

In his book, he talks about a garden analogy when we have a hard time releasing what we cannot control. Think about this garden of our mind. Being with our thoughts (which are not facts) and our emotions/feelings. We can be a witness to our thoughts and feelings. Let Be

We can prune and pull weeds that do not serve us, and we cannot control, to Let Go. And we can plant flower, to Let It In. Bring in the positive emotions and thoughts.

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Question: As a resident, I am still assessing my well-being. Is procrastination an implication of poor well-being?

Answer: Procrastination may be a result of anxiety or stress if not a typical pattern experienced before. Note however, that residency training is very rigorous and can equate to three years of practice experience. You are learning to balance multiple commitments and setting your attention management. How you set daily priorities and manage your time is critical. Aim for no more than 2 -3 priorities for the day and set those the evening before. This should direct your path of productivity!

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Question: So many of us in healthcare do not take breaks or take care of our physical and mental health during our work days. How do we balance taking care of patients and taking care of our own well being during times of short staffing and/or increased demands of

Answer: Consider taking an inventory of you workday and where you spend your time. Can you find possible short breaks within the day? Aim for 10 minutes in the morning and 10 minutes in the afternoon. Use this time to break from work as a time to regain mental clarity, to reset and reboot. This might involve a brief walk outside to breath fresh air. Perhaps listen to music, read a short story or poem, stretching your body. A body scan, meditative practice, or a mindful eating practice. Examine how meetings are conducted. Do you have to meet for a full hour or more? Can the agenda be covered in 50 minutes, giving you the 10-minute buffer to experiment with a strategy mentioned.

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Question: Great talk! For those of us who are working from home while also helping our children with virtual learning, what words can you offer in finding the time for breaks?

Answer: Working from home has definitely impacted the transition space between the end of the workday and your personal time at home with family. Some strategies to consider that may aid you in the much-needed separation include: 1. Committing in your calendar to when the workday starts and ends, which should include the same transition time you would have had by driving to work- commit to that time for you and your self-care. 2. Let the children and spouse know that when your workday ends, you will need 15-20 minutes of alone time to reset and close out the workday, so you can be more present in your home life. 3. Consider using the space between the close of the workday and your personal time at home with a personal oasis. This personal oasis may involve a brief walk, stretching, mind dump activity like coloring or doodling. These strategies can help reduce the priming and triggers that can lead us to react badly or in a manner we may regret with our loved ones.
