The Professional Resilience Paradigm: Leveraging Professional Identity as a Core Competency

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“Protect your time, it is your life”

“What I know for sure is that how one spends their time defines who they are”

The Oprah Magazine, April 2004, Volume 4, Number 3, HARPO Productions
How Did This Get to Be an Issue?

I’m a little stressed right now. Just turn around, walk away slowly & nobody gets hurt!
Job Stress hits all professions!

- The American Institute of Stress defines burnout as "a disabling reaction to stress on the job."

- Job stress costs U.S. industry $300 billion annually

- Measured by:
  - absenteeism
  - decreased productivity
  - employee turnover
  - medical, legal, & insurance fees

http://www.stress.org/
The Impact

- 66% of employees suffer from stress-induced health issues, including but not limited to:
  - high blood pressure
  - headaches,
  - sleeplessness. and
  - more frequent periods of sickness

- 86% of working mothers & 74% of working fathers

- Nearly 50% of all American workers

www.mashable.com/2012/05/27/employee-overworked-infographic/

- Surveyed 10,000 social workers of licensure lists of 48 states
- Response rate: 49.4%
- “Increases in demands on workers accompanied by decreases in supports, frustrate practitioners & ultimately drive them away from the field”
- 12% report plans to leave the workforce in the next 2 years
Analysis of the ANA Staffing Survey (2002), “How nurses felt as they left their jobs each day”

The most frequent responses of 7300 surveyed were:

- Exhausted & discouraged (50%)
- Discouraged & saddened by what I couldn’t provide for my patients (44%)
- Powerless to affect change necessary for safe, quality patient care (40%)
- Frightened for patients (26%)
“the American health care delivery system is in need of fundamental change. The frustration levels of both patients & clinicians have probably never been higher. Yet the problems remain….Between the health care we have & the care we could have lies not just a gap, but a chasm…..”
The tides of change: the past 30 years

“1 out of 10 theory”

Then: 1:10 issues were complex
Now: 1:10 are not complex

With all 10, needing 10 things
all at the same time,
all 10 minutes ago

as well as attending to at least 10 of
their relatives!
The tides of change: the past 30 years

- Limits/obstacles to resource access

- Cultural Shift:
  - “Care of the client’s health & mental health” to “care of the business of health & mental health”

- Lack of Accountability by other professionals
The tides of change: the past 30 years

- Decreased resources:
  - Personnel & Community

- Regulatory challenges:
  - Licensure portability

- Ongoing justification of our value & worth

- Role Shift:
  - I’m not a manager but I’m expected to act as a leader!
The tides of change: the past 30 years

- The blessing & curse of mobile technology & innovation?
- Plus:
  - EHR’s
  - mHealth
  - Tele......

Smartphones stress users with 'phantom' text messages & vibrations
Boomerangs, Sandwiches & the times

Pew Study: The “Boomerang Generation” (n=2043)

- 29% of parents of adult children report a child has moved home due to the economy
- 61% of 25-34 year olds have friends or family who moved back with their parents

http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/03/15/the-boomerang-generation/?src=prc-headline

- More than 20M Americans cope with aging parents amid raising children

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/17134636/ns/nightly_news-trading_places/t/generation-caught-between-two-others/#.T1DYE1FTNG4
The ultimate balancing act!

- Besides professionals, we are:
  - parents
  - aunts, uncles
  - godparents
  - children
  - partners
  - pet owners
  - friends
  - volunteers
  - consumers
  - PLUS.........
The culture of our practice

Recall the 1st question asked in your 1st practice course?

**WHY ARE YOU HERE?**

Your Answer?

**TO HELP PEOPLE**

Helping has a price & sets us up for “burn out” vs.

Empower

Partner

Facilitate

Guide
What’s your #1 Frustration at work?

Turn to the person to your left
Introduce yourself
Share your #1 frustration at work
Raise your hands when done
What is your #1 Frustration at work?

- Others have their own agendas
- Someone calls me when I don’t want to talk, don’t have time to talk, or if I pick up the call I lose my window to go to the bathroom
- NOBODY listens
- There are fewer and fewer resources!
- Despite technology, it takes more time to get things done!
- It’s so tense in the workplace
- I have none
- Despite best efforts to schedule, something always comes up
- Knowing something will give soon, or else
What is your #1 Frustration outside of work?
What is your #1 frustration outside of work?

- Others have their own agendas
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- LOOK FAMILIAR?
Self & balance amid chaos

Health & Human Service Professionals are surrounded by events that make life chaotic!

Frustration is inevitable

We require unique strategies to maintain balance amid the chaos
What is “Resilience”?

Took off in the 1990’s: child abuse, family violence, substance abuse, then skyrockets after the Oklahoma City bombing & 9/11

Philosophies:
What is “Resilience”? 

2. Successful adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences. Resilient people overcome adversity, bounce back from setbacks & thrive under extreme, on-going pressure without acting in dysfunctional or harmful ways.

We are all born with the potential to develop the abilities needed to be resilient! (A. Siebert, The Resiliency Advantage, 2005)
Resilience for Patients is valuable
But for Professionals it is an Essential Competency!
The Professional Resilience Paradigm:

The Definition

“A health & human service professional’s commitment to achieve balance amid occupational stressors & life challenges, while fostering professional values & career sustainability.

This is accomplished though a defined set of building blocks & individualized strategies”

Permission from Professional Case Management: E. Fink-Samnick, The Professional Resilience Paradigm: The next dimension of professional self-care; 14(6), pp2-4, copyright Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins, 2009
The Building Blocks

- Promote physical & psychological self-care
- Maintain a foundation of inner strength
- Define personal & professional value
- Be motivated to identify then achieve personal & professional goals & aspirations
- Believe in the need for self-advocacy
- Know these concepts combined will enhance career satisfaction & longevity
The Strategies

1. Value vs. devalue your Professional Self:

You’re in a meeting & hear yourself say:

I know I’m just ....STOP!!!!!!!

Take opportunities to educate others of your value

“As ____________, I bring unique perspective to this process. Let me share how this impacts our situation”

A little self-advocacy goes a long way to promote expertise
The Strategies

2. Have positive contacts with colleagues & peers:
   - Who motivates vs. depletes you?
   - How often do you avoid interactions with those who suck the life out of you?
   - Use strategies to stay in control and be **Proactive vs. Reactive**:  
     - Emotional Intelligence
     - Critical Thinking
Emotional Intelligence
(Goleman, 2005)

The ability to identify, assess, & control emotions of oneself, others, groups

Five Competencies:

- **Self-awareness**: the ability to know one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, drives, values & goals + recognize their impact on others while using gut feelings to guide decisions.

- **Self-regulation**: involves controlling or redirecting one's disruptive emotions & impulses, then adapting to changing circumstances.

- **Social Skill**: Managing relationships to move people in the desired direction.

- **Empathy**: Considering other people's feelings in making decisions.

- **Motivation**: Being driven to achieve for the sake of achievement.

http://hbr.org/2004/01/what-makes-a-leader
Critical Thinking

- **Suspend Judgment**: Check bias at the door
- **Deconstruct**: Tear the situation apart
- **Reflect**: Process it, Review it, Consider:
  - Would a reasonable CM address it the same way?
- **Synthesize**: Wrap it back up

(Treiger & Fink-Samnick, 2013 adapted from Lietz, 2010)
The Strategies

3. Take that break: How often do you say “I can’t afford to take lunch or a break”? You can’t afford not to. The briefest break helps re-energize & regain objectivity!

4. Pace Yourself!: Working faster does not always yield increased output! “The hurrier I go the behinder I get”
The Strategies

5. Achieve validation:

- Identify then name your goals & aspirations.
- Engage in dialogues with those who empower you to achieve.
- Make it a priority to develop a relationship for this purpose...a mentor, partner or peer, but someone you respect.
The Strategies

6. Use the Power of Professional Networking:

- Engage with professional associations & networking sites to:
  - Keep up with new trends
  - Expand horizons & opportunities.
  - Promote lifelong learning
7. Present with a PRESENCE: If you think you’re burned out, you are!

- **Consider Daily:**
  - How do others see you?
  - What does your attire say to others?
  - How on edge do you feel?
  - How would you interpret your verbal & non-verbal behaviors?

- **You are a LEADER!**
The Strategies

8. Laugh at least once a day!
   - Reduces stress
   - Promotes camaraderie
   - Releases endorphins!

9. Stop to take that long deep breath: We use the same muscles to be tense as to calmly breathe.
The Strategies

10. Develop a Grounding List:
Keep a 3-5-item list of individualized actions to “ground” you:

- Favorite song
- Picture
- Aroma
- Call someone to provide unconditional support
11. Stop & Take 10!:

- **10 seconds**: process, breathe
- **10 minutes**: unsure what to say or do?
- **10 hours**: time for a day off?
- **10 days**: time for vacation?
- **10 months**: time for a new job?
The Strategies

12. Take control & shift activities: Focusing long & hard on a specific activity is draining. We become enmeshed & lose objectivity! Give yourself permission to walk away & shift gears.

13. Use Creative Visualization: In 30 seconds imagine yourself in a better place. Try it!
The Strategies

14. De-connect to Re-connect
   - Give yourself some distance
   - Re-connect with the rest of your life

All I can say about life is... enjoy it.

Disconnect
Reconnect
The Strategies

15. Release frustration with a silent meow:

• Ever watch a kitten meow? They tense their body, open their mouth & let loose! Calm emanates.
The Strategies

16. **Exercise:**
   - Release endorphins to boost your spirit!
The Strategies

17. TURN OFF YOUR ‘PROFESSIONAL SWITCH’

- Make it a ritual
- Have peers who are NOT in the biz
- Set limits for yourself plus others
- JUST SAY NO!!!
The Strategies

18. THINK of TEFLON!

- Stay attuned to boundaries
- Don’t let the tough stuff stick!
- Anticipate & LET THINGS ROLL OFF!
The Strategies

19. Revision honestly & regularly: The Revisioning Tool provides a template to:

- Reflect on life goals
- Develop an individualized schedule
- Identify obstacles to the schedule’s implementation, &
- Progress with a current plan
Revision Professional Resilience

Which activities in your life, do you love?
Which do you hate?
Which inspire you?
Which drain you?
Which do you never find time to get to?
Which no longer define you?
Revision Professional Resilience

- What would your “perfect” schedule look like?
- Who in your life supports you, unconditionally?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your challenges?
- How often in your day do you become “negative”:
  - How can you tell?, &
  - What do you do to address it?
- How often in your day do you laugh or smile?
- What aspirations do you have?
- How much do you “hear” & “listen” to your body?
- Can you proceed with the “revisioned” schedule?
- If you can’t proceed, what obstacles prevent you?
Revision Professional Resilience

PROCESS THE FOLLOWING:

- Which was the easiest question to complete & why?
- Which was the toughest question to complete & why?
- Were you able to complete a schedule?
  - If yes, what will it take to begin implementing it?
  - If no, what obstacle(s) interfered with completion?
- What one thing will you take away from this exercise?

Developing a Resilience Accountability Continuum: Self-Resilience, Part 1, Lippincott’s PCM, 13 (3), pg 175-78
20. Share Professional Resilience with health & human services professionals everywhere!

Set the tone for the next generation of professionals by prioritizing your own needs as readily as those of your clients.
PAY IT FORWARD

Turn to the person next to you & say:
You are the most valuable resource to everyone!
HAPPY CASE MANAGEMENT WEEK!

CASE MANAGEMENT

Building Steps to a Brighter Future

NATIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT WEEK 2014
References


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