

Thriving While Surviving:

Resilience and Wellness during and after the Pandemic

DPBN Rounds

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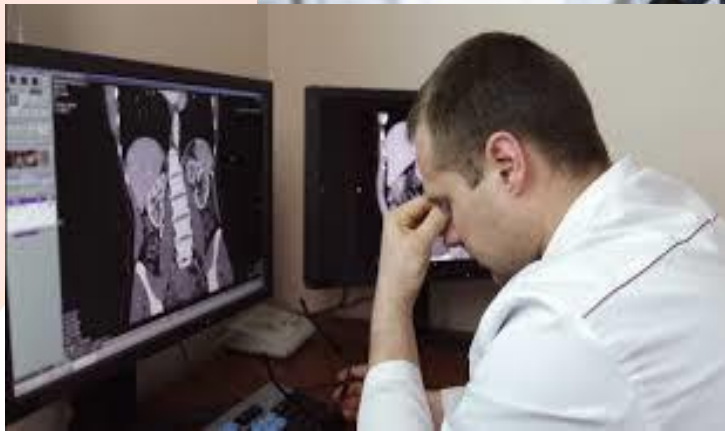
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- **Faculty:** **Dr. Mamta Gautam**
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 - Honorarium: Amgen, Merck
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 - The content of this discussion is not related to the services of commercial interest.
 - No therapeutic recommendations for medications will be made.

“Working in healthcare today is harder than ever.”



Learning Objectives

By the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the impact of COVID on healthcare workers— psychological, physiological
2. Define Stress and Burnout
3. Develop strategies to harness the power of personal and professional resilience

We live in a VUCA World

- Rapid unmatched change in healthcare
- VUCA: Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity.
- Working in healthcare is rewarding, but is also physically difficult and psychologically demanding
- Increased stress, challenges, fatigue, worry and anxiety can occur
- Impacts all of us

1. Readiness

- #1 concern = PPE
- Anticipatory anxiety, PreTSD
- Uncertainty, change, unknowns
- Also: testing, inconsistent guidelines, redeployment, training, risk of exposure and disease, support by organization
- Two groups:
 - Front lines: exhausted, guilty
 - Side lines: underemployed, guilty, inadequate

2. Response

- Busier as deal with cases
- Sense of trauma as hits close to home
- Loss – grieving normalcy, certainty, control, bad outcomes
- Work from home, virtual care, new technology
- Working parents
- Single and physically isolated

3. Reassurance/Relief

- Sense of relief because it was not as bad as we had expected
- Lower intensity and adrenaline
- Higher anxiety, depression, trauma, PTSD, moral injury
- Letdown, exhaustion, inadequacy as unable to sustain
- Finances

4. Recovery/Reentry

- Curve flattened, more settled
- Focus on reentry, reintegrating back to the workplace
- Medical vs Psychological safety
- More tension, frustration, anger
- Fear of resurgence, second wave

Now

- Second wave
- Increased stress and uncertainty again
 - Pandemic continues, indefinitely
 - Kids back in school – for how long?
 - Virtual care
 - Openings, closures, reopenings
- New Variants
- Vaccines

Stress is normal

- Stress is a normal and natural physiological and psychological response
- Does not mean you cannot do your job, or that you are weak
- Stress can be useful – can help you keep going or maintain a sense of purpose
- What's important is how you manage stress

Burnout

Emotional exhaustion, chronic overstress. (Maslach)

- Distinct work-related syndrome – demands exceed individual resources
- Most likely to occur in jobs that require extensive care of others; thus, common among practicing physicians
- Not a psychiatric diagnosis, but can lead to serious consequences
- Three stages:
 1. Emotional Exhaustion
 2. Depersonalization
 3. Reduced Personal Accomplishment

Grief

- Sense of loss as the world has changed
 - Loss of normalcy, safety, touch, connection, economic, choice and control...
- Stages: Denial-Anger-Bargaining-Acceptance-Integration (Kubler-Ross)
- Sixth stage: Meaning (David Kessler)
- Allow and acknowledge it.

The Heroes are Hurting

- Pre-COVID: High rates of burnout, depression, suicide in HCW
- As intensity and adrenaline subsides, left with the emotions and trauma of what we dealt with: inadequacy, anxiety, depression, letdown, PTSD, cannot keep caring like that
- May 13 - WHO report on pandemic's impact on mental health of HCW in China, Canada and Italy who treated Covid-19 patients: Soaring rates of anxiety, depression and insomnia.

Mounting Frustration

- Multiple losses, fatigue, burnout
 - We are all tired:
 - of the pandemic,
 - the public health measures we must follow,
 - the distance from loved ones,
 - frustration with those who adhere less closely,
 - leaders who aren't always clear,
 - tired of being afraid — for our elderly, our patients, our families, our hospital system, and ourselves.
 - Hope dashed – new virus variants, problems with vaccine supply and rollout
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Even the healthiest and strongest of us can become unhealthy in an unhealthy environment.

Requests to HealthCare Leaders

1. Hear Me – listen to act and address our concerns
 2. Protect Me – reduce risk of acquiring and/or passing on infection
 3. Prepare Me – provide me with knowledge, training and support
 4. Support Me – acknowledge human limitations re. hours, uncertainty, stress
 5. Care for Me – holistic support for me and my family if needed
 6. Honor Me – overarching need for expression of gratitude and compassion
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Psychological PPE

“Heroes will not seek help.
We need to normalize it and make it
easily available.” -IHI

We need to make it a simple, automatic ritual -
like donning and doffing PPE.

Your Psychological PPE

to Promote Mental Health and Well-Being



These recommendations are based on a review of published literature and the experience of health systems. For more information visit [ihim.org](https://www.ihim.org)

Individual

-  Take a day off and create space between work and home life
-  Avoid publicity and media coverage about COVID-19
-  Receive mental health support during and after the crisis
-  Facilitate opportunities to show gratitude
-  Reframe negative experiences as positive and reclaim agency

Team Leader

-  Limit staff time on site/shift
-  Design clear roles and leadership
-  Train managers to be aware of key risk factors and monitor for any signs of distress
-  Make peer support services available to staff
-  Pair workers together to serve as peer support in a "buddy system"

RESILIENCE

1. Being prepared for the event
2. Coping with the situation – skills and strategies
3. Bouncing back and growing further



THE FIVE C's of RESILIENCE



1. Control and Confidence

Consider and identify what you:

1. Cannot control:

eg. Knowledge of disease, Resource allocation, coordination, what your neighbor is doing

2. Can control:

eg. What you can do to promote your health and that of your coworkers; how much you read/social media about this, and from which sources

2. Commitment

- Remember the Why – Why did I choose this profession?
- What initially drew me to this work?
- Values clarification exercise
- Reflection and Journaling – How is my work meaningful to me?
- Appreciative Inquiry

The Meaning of our Work

- Our work is a privilege – to have people share stories with us and allow us to help
- Can bring meaning, spiritual satisfaction
- Humbling to be able to make a difference

- In the midst of the stress and crises, we can feel hope and joy.
- You cannot give what you do not have.
- Connect to your purpose.

3. Caring Connections

- Holding Environment – how can you create and maintain this?
- Social distancing is not social isolation
- Hard when used to travel, group activities
- Stay connected to others

Relationships in the workplace

How can we take care of each other?

- Create a sense of community – personal touch
- Use peers and colleagues as a network for support
- Regular check-ins: Buddy System, Check You Check Two
- Share your stories, permit vulnerability

Personal Relationships

- Stay connected with family and friends
- Phone, text, emails, video
- You will miss them; you don't have to worry about them
- Laugh

4. Calmness

- Feeling upset and anxious is common
- When grieving, frustrated, feeling out of control, or under pressure, we can exhibit negative attitude and behaviors, blame and criticize others, be irritable and unpleasant.
- Recognize when you are not calm.
- Remain respectful and collegial.
- Learn skills to manage during that time.

Strategies for Calmness: The ABC's

Allow feelings: Vent Buddy

Journaling – acknowledge and let go

Four-letter technique – write at least 4 letters; do NOT send

Burn it off: Exercise – long run, hard workout, punching bag

Calm down: Deep Breathing
Gratitude, Forgiveness

Spirituality

Yoga

Relaxation Exercises – Visualization, active & passive

Mindfulness Meditation

5. Care for Self

- **Take care of yourself first**
- Make time for yourself – Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.
- Ensure basic care: Exercise, Nutrition, Sleep
- Take regular breaks to rest and relax: hobbies, reading, music, meditation
- Let go of the Guilt

Self Compassion

- Take regular note of how you are coping.
- Notice when your coping skills are diminished or depleted.
- You are not to blame; it will happen to all of us at some point
- Offer yourself compassion, and care.
- Reach out for help.
- Be kind.