Creating your Own Mindfulness Practice and Resiliency Plan

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Objectives for workshop

• Describe how resiliency and mindfulness are interconnected.
• Describe self-reflective exercises that deepen our resiliency and mindfulness for self care.
• Develop your own resiliency plan and mindfulness practice plan.
Disclosures:
None for either speaker
Opening introductions
Opening exercise

Resiliency Practice: Engaging our Parasympathetic Nervous System
Breathing Consciously – the Pause

- Basic practice of many contemplative traditions
- Deep relaxed belly breathing
- Well-being, relaxation, and presence.
- Starts with long exhalation (not just taking a big breath)
## Autonomic nervous system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sympathetic (SNS)</th>
<th>Parasympathetic (PNS)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepares the body for intense physical activity</td>
<td><strong>Relaxes the body</strong>, inhibits or slows many high energy functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stress, fight, flight or freeze response</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rest and digest</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepares the organism to <strong>act upon its environment</strong></td>
<td>Prepares the organism to <strong>act upon itself</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speeds up the heartbeat, increases blood pressure, <strong>suppresses immune system</strong></td>
<td>Slows down heartbeat, lowers blood pressure, <strong>activates immune system</strong></td>
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**Focus is narrow** - survival oriented. **Focus is larger and intuitive.**
Our Innate Qualities

Compassion
Resiliency
Hope
The Quality of our Work

Work as calling – service
Work as a career
Work as a job

Does our work renew us?
What is our calling?
Our meaning and purpose

• Why do I do this work? What brings me meaning in this work?

• At what age did I feel the first stirrings of our calling?

• When was I called to make a difference in the world with your life and work?

(Dr Rachel Remen- RISHI- The Healer’s Art)
Compassion

**Empathy**: emotional and cognitive process of being able to take the perspective of another

**Shared Presence**: willingness and skill to enter the intimacy of relationship with another – a state of being with another

**Compassion**: desire and actions to relieve suffering of another

**Practices to nurture compassion**

The Shape of Compassion

1. **Awareness** and recognition of suffering
2. **Feeling** of concern for, and connection to, the one who is suffering
3. **Desire** to relieve that suffering
4. **Belief/Hope** you can make a difference
5. **Willingness** to respond or take action
6. Warm glow/sense of **Satisfaction**

Kelly McGonigal, CCARE, Stanford Medicine
To Hope
a verb (dynamic) and hope as a way of being and process oriented

• Moving forward
• Allowing for uncertainty
• Seeing options and possibility
• Being empowered and feeling a sense of control/ self efficacy
Hope

“Hope does not lie in a way out, but in a way through.”

Robert Frost
Questions to Explore Hope and Patient Story, Values, Preferences

- What is your understanding about your situation?
- What is important and meaningful to you right now?
- What are you hoping for?
- What worries or concerns you right now and in the future?

By listening intently to the answers, we explore possibility, optimism, and connectedness, hope, and what is getting in the way of hope.

Resiliency

The moving forward despite great uncertainty and challenge. (not just bouncing back from adversity)

Resiliency

“the capacity to prepare for, recover from and adapt in the face of stress, challenge or adversity”

-HeartMath Institute
Core Values Exercise

Creating a resiliency plan based on your core values

Resiliency Practice: Reconnect with purpose and mission
Core Values Exercise

• What did you come up with for your resiliency action plan?

• Resiliency action plan comes from your soul, your calling, your meaning and purpose in your work and life. It comes from what is most important to you.

• These core values can act as your guide in preventing burnout, compassion fatigue, hopelessness, and to live on purpose.

• It can help you be your most effective advocate in navigating systems challenges to your wellbeing.
The heart is needed to balance the mind.

Heart and mind working together, open, in presence, is Mindfulness.
What does the mind like?

- Safety and certainty
- Problems to solve
- Solutions to problems
- Fixing

What happens when that is not possible?

- Panic!!!
- Exit!!!!
- Hopeless!!
- Fear!!!
Challenging Situations Bring Up Emotions!

Emotions are information! What is the story behind our emotion? Debriefing can help us..... Contemplative practices can help us.... Writing and storytelling can help us...

Mindfulness
Resilience
Plan
Grief Practice
Self-Compassion
Your Barriers and Practices
The Breath
Compassion
Hope
Presence
Core Values
Road Map
Stages of professional growth in working with dying patients – emotional self regulation

- Intellectualization (*emotions are dangerous*)
- Emotional survival (*feeling emotions*)
- Depression (*grief and loss*)
- Emotional arrival (*emotions are helpful and normal*)
- Deep compassion (*emotional self regulation through mindfulness and contemplative practices*)

Lu’s interpretations in italics.

Experiencing Grief and Loss and Being in Shared Presence

• Working through grief and loss is **self care and helps us be resilient**.
• Understanding our “hot buttons”.
• Being kind, curious and loving/compassionate to ourselves and others.
• Being able to be **present and actively listen** without needing to fix or advise.
“We burn out not because we don’t care but because we don’t grieve.”

Rachel Naomi Remen, M, *Kitchen Table Wisdom*
Unrecognized Grief
(disenfranchised, unsanctioned, disconnected)

- Social stigma
- Absence of time for rituals
- Delayed or misplaced feelings of grief/loss
Time to remember...
Mindfulness activity:

• Take a moment to remember
• What about them remains with you
• What are you thankful for?

Haiku = 5 syllables, 6 syllables, 5 syllables
6 word story
On the Job Grief Practices

What are you already doing?

- Create remembrance ritual:
- Light a virtual candle (gratefulness.org)
- Make an appointment with yourself to deal with it at a future time.
- Create a journal/log
- Write a bereavement card.
- Creative reflection: Haiku, 6 word story
Grief Practices continued...

- Debrief/Remember with another team member
- Attend a memorial
- Take a moment.
- Journal, sit, breathe, remember for 5 minutes
- Take a short walk.
- Explore traditional practices
What do we do when we are close to the cliff?
Use with permission: source: Lucille Marchand, MD
lrn19@uw.edu
The Breath

Mindfulness Resilience Plan

Self-Compassion Practices

Grief Practices

Barriers and Practices

Compassion Hope Presence

Core Values Road Map
Self-Compassion in Medicine

“Why Are We Doing This?: Clinician Helplessness in the Face of Suffering,” Back et al, Journal of Palliative Medicine, Vol 18:1, 2015

• Helplessness as a barometer for actions.
• Hyper or hypo response
• Self Nurture
• Return to patient with “presence”
RENEW

- Recognize helplessness (mindfulness)
- Embrace your first reaction
- Nourish yourself
- Embody constructive engagement
- Weave a new response
Contemplative Practices for Self and Others to RENEW

- Prayer/meditation/spiritual practices
- Meditative movement
- Art
- Retreat
- Reflective writing/storytelling
- Self compassion practices
Self Compassion as a Resiliency Practice
Benefits of Self-Compassion

- Decrease burnout and exhaustion
- Decrease anxiousness and depression
- Increase expression of compassion to others
- Increase in the ability to forgive
- Mediate symptom severity of PTSD*

*Hirakoa et al, Self-Compassion as a Prospective Predictor of PTSD Symptom Severity Among Trauma-Exposed U.S. Iraq and Afghanistan War Veterans, J Trauma Stress. 2015 April; 28(2): 127–133

All other references are from published articles of Kristin Neff, PhD, self-compassion.org
Self Compassion Assessment

*take a look*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mindfulness</th>
<th>Over-Identification</th>
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<td><strong>Common Humanity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Isolation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Kindness</strong></td>
<td><strong>Self-Judgment</strong></td>
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Self Compassion Break

Think of a difficult situation you were in recently. Something that troubled you or in which you experienced stress/distress.

Dear My Awesome Self...

Mindfulness: Recall feelings that surfaced. (i.e. anger, confusion, sorrow, fear, tightness in the throat, shallow breath)

Common Humanity: “I am not alone” Acknowledge others who have experienced similar emotions or situations.

Self-Kindness: Be a friend to yourself.

Signed, Hang in there,
Me
## Self Compassion Practices

### Self Compassion Break (Chris Germer, Kristen Neff)

### Loving Kindness Meditation
May you/I/we: be safe, be peaceful, be whole, live with ease.

### Invoke voice of a loved one as your voice (Jamal Rachman)
- Dear One, Nick name,
- Oh... there you go, This is difficult

### Compassionate Listening (Chris Germer, Kristen Neff)
- Inbreath/Outbreath: “One for me, One for you”

### Quick Coherence (heartmath.org) Method to generate a positive, warm feeling or memory of calm, joy, compassion, love to produce self-compassion
The heart is needed to balance the mind. Connection. Compassion.

Heart and mind working together, open, in presence, is Mindfulness.
Mindfulness

Bringing intention, presence, awareness, curiosity, being and doing, reflection to your life and work. Inner self inquiry.

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Programs (MBSRP) available widely.

Mindfulness programs

- Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) (Jon Kabat Zen)
- Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) (CCARE Stanford)
- Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) (Neff)
- Cloud Mountain (cloudmountain.org)

Researched interventions
- Loving Kindness Meditation (LKM)
- 3 good things
Mindfulness
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Your Barriers and Practices
Self-Compassion
The Breath
“We are always practicing something.”

–Victoria Castle, Trance of Scarcity

What are you practicing?
Making a Plan

• What are your current practices
• What are your current barriers
Making a Plan

What are we practicing?

Ongoing Practice

In the Moment Practice

Transition Practice
Ongoing Practices

• Meditation/Breathing/Spiritual Practices
• Eating, Exercise, Sleep, Vacation habits
• Engaging Creativity
• Social Engagement: Community/Family/Friend
• Community Service/Social Activism
• What brings you joy and laughter?
• Personal growth and learning
• Consider all domains of life Emotional, Spiritual, Mental, Professional, Civic, Physical etc.
In the Moment Practices

• **Grounding, Centering**
  - Breathing
  - Breathing + Emotional Shift/Recharge
    - Remember/Imagine Event of Love, Compassion, Inner-peace, Joy
  - Self-compassion breathing, “One for me, One for you”
  - Recalling Mentors/Support
  - Feeling feet on the ground, flicking fingers
  - Preparatory – Set intention before seeing patient
  - Symbolic fortitude (lab coat, necklace examples)
Transitioning Practices

- Intentional Action
- Touch/Aural
- Visual
- Taste
- Moral Elevation
  - 3 good things
- Spiritual
  - Gratefulness practice
My Mindfulness practice...

What Mindfulness practice do you want to strengthen in your resiliency plan?

• One ongoing practice....
• One in the moment practice...
• One transition practice...
Mindfulness
Resilience
Plan
Core Values
Road Map
Grief Practices
Self-Compassion Practices
Your Barriers and Practices
The Breath
Compassion
Hope Presence
Take aways.... commitments
A moment of self-compassion can change your entire day.

A string of such moments can change the course of your life

Chris Germer
Closing
Noticing...Reflecting...Healing: writing as contemplative practice

- **Noticing:** Awareness, mindfulness and presence. Allowing the hidden to become visible.

- **Reflecting:** Writing and sharing the story. Connect thinking with the heart and soul.

- **Healing:** As we touch the vulnerable places in others, we have the opportunity to heal the vulnerable places within ourselves.

Journaling
(Rachel Remen, MD)

• For one month, every day, reflect back on your day, and describe something that day about each question:
  • What surprised me today?
  • What moved or touched me today?
  • What inspired me today?

• Rachel guarantees that this practice will bring meaning to your work and life, joy, and hope

http://www.ishiprograms.org/
Haiku

5 syllables, 7 syllables, 5 syllables

• I sit in quiet [5]
• You emerge in safety  [7]
• I will meet you there [5]

Lu Marchand
The 55 Word Story

Late editor of the San Luis Obispo New Times. Originator of the method

• Anne Scheetz, MD, Mary Fry MD. The stories. JAMA 2000;283:1934. Adapted this form for use in medical narratives.

“To tell—in 55 words exactly—a story that helps us to understand, or to appreciate, something about a patient or about an experience of health care.”
Writing the 55 Word Story

- Take 15 minutes to write a 55 word story on your calling. How does your life and work reflect this story from your soul now?

- Write as many words as you can for 10 minutes without editing. Then, take 5 minutes to remove any unnecessary words until you get to 55 words. Title not included.
Story-telling and Story-listening

• Allowing ourselves to hear the story of another without interruption or advise giving (fixing and problem-solving), but with generous listening, presence, witnessing, mindfulness and compassion.

• Telling our stories to others- finding our voice.
She tried bubblegum painted hair, knowing she was on the edge...of life. Her sense of fun undaunted by what was to come soon. A beautiful day at the beach, eating ice cream cones, loving being together with her sweet children and her dear, dear man. How much love and kindness can a heart hold?
In summary....

EMOTIONS ARE VALUABLE INFORMATION - welcome them all. Grief and loss are a path to healing and well-being. Self compassion is key!

SPIRITUAL/ SELF-REFLECTIVE PRACTICES ALLOW US TO DEEPEN COMPASSION, HOPE, and RESILIENCY in ourselves and for others. What is your resiliency plan?

DEVELOP PRACTICAL WAYS TO develop mindfulness practices into your life and work.
Thank you!
Helpful Apps & Gadgets

**Insight Timer**: Meditation timer bell. Wide Variety of crowd sourced guided meditations. Android/iPhone and online access [insighttimer.com](http://insighttimer.com/) Free

**Lotus Bud Mindfulness Bell**: Sends gentle bell reminders randomly throughout the day. Take the opportunity to breath, reset or activate any practice.

**10% Happier-Meditation for Fidgety Skeptics** (Podcast, App and website)
Dan Harris and Joseph Goldstein
[10percenthappier.com](http://10percenthappier.com)
Books and related Websites

Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others
Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky with Connie Burk (2009) [www.traumastewardship.com](http://www.traumastewardship.com)

Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself
Kristen Neff (2011) [www.self-compassion.org](http://www.self-compassion.org)
Articles of note

• “Self-care of Physicians Caring for patients at the End of Life: Being Connected... A Key to My Survival.” Kearney et al. JAMA, March 18, 2009—Vol 301, No. 11 Themes include: compassion fatigue, exquisite empathy, self care. Proves that Meditative Mindfulness (awareness) and Reflective Writing are two effective interventions for CF.

• “Why Are We Doing This?: Clinician Helplessness in the Face of Suffering,” Back et al, Journal of Palliative Medicine, Vol 18:1, 2015 Uses helplessness as a barometer for actions. Reflects on two common responses of hyper and hypo responses when feeling helpless with patients. Transforms classic grief steps into the RENEW acronym for a method of recovery (self-care) and return to constructive compassionate patient engagement after identifying ones’ vulnerability and feelings of helpless. Practical article for the whole team.
References:


2. **Secondary Traumatic Stress/Compassion Fatigue**  *Trauma Stewardship* by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky with Connie Burk (2009), [www_traumastewardship.com](http://www.traumastewardship.com)

3. “**Self-care of Physicians Caring for patients at the End of Life:** Being Connected... A Key to My Survival.”  Kearney et al. JAMA, March 18, 2009—Vol 301, No. 11 Themes include: compassion fatigue, exquisite empathy, self care

4. **Parasympathetic Nervous System- HeartMath** ([www.heartmath.org](http://www.heartmath.org)) has evidenced based research, the tested QUICK COHERENCE practice and a biofeedback hardware and apps that measure Heart Rate Value (HRV) and train people to access their PNS.

5. **Accelerated Recovery Program for Compassion Fatigue** - Baranowsky, Gentry & Dunning

6. **Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction** (MBSR) John Kabat-Zinn, *Full Catastrophe Living* and many other volumes on mindfulness. Look for courses in your area.

7. “**Why Are We Doing This?: Clinician Helplessness in the Face of Suffering,**” Back et al, Journal of Palliative Medicine, Vol 18:1, 2015
