



Fostering Well Being in the Workplace: Self Care as a Proactive Community Process

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Objectives



- ▶ Describe dimensions of self care in the workplace
- ▶ Identify factors that mitigate or exacerbate burnout risk
- ▶ Strategies for fostering wellbeing in the workplace
- ▶ Tips for recognizing and responding to staff burnout

Pair-Share



- ▶ What does self-care mean to you?
- ▶ What aspects of self care do you practice in the workplace?
- ▶ What do you leave at the door?
- ▶ How do you foster self-care for your team?
- ▶ What workplace practices foster self-care?

Definitions

- ▶ Self Care:

- ▶ Professional self care is healthy work boundaries
- ▶ Shapiro, Brown, and Biegel (2007) define self-care as positive activities that help to manage stress, include getting enough rest, eating a well-balanced diet, exercising, and utilizing a support system.
- ▶ Self-care involves the active and continual practice of promoting and maintaining one's health and well-being to be prepared for stressful socio-emotional challenges.

- ▶ Well-Being:

- ▶ There is no consensus around a single definition of well-being, but there is general agreement that at minimum, well-being includes the presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g., contentment, happiness), the absence of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfillment and positive functioning

Definitions

- ▶ Stress: do you need a definition?! Chronic vs acute stress
- ▶ Burnout: Burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, and is defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. (*Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001)*)
- ▶ The World Health Organization (WHO) includes burnout as an occupational risk factor in the International Classification of Diseases (11th revision) manual, and is developing evidence-informed guidelines about employee wellness in the workplace. (*WHO, 2019*)

Definitions

- ▶ Secondary trauma / vicarious trauma - The emotional residue of exposure to traumatic stories and experiences of others through work; witnessing fear, pain, and terror that others have experienced; a preoccupation with horrific stories told to the professional (American Counseling Association, 2016)
- ▶ PTSD is caused by exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury or sexual violence including fires, natural disasters, accidents, combat, robberies, and physical or sexual violence.
- ▶ Resilience - both a process and a construct - how individuals and communities respond before, during, and in the aftermath of tragedy.

Charney and colleagues have identified six psychosocial factors that promote resilience in individuals:

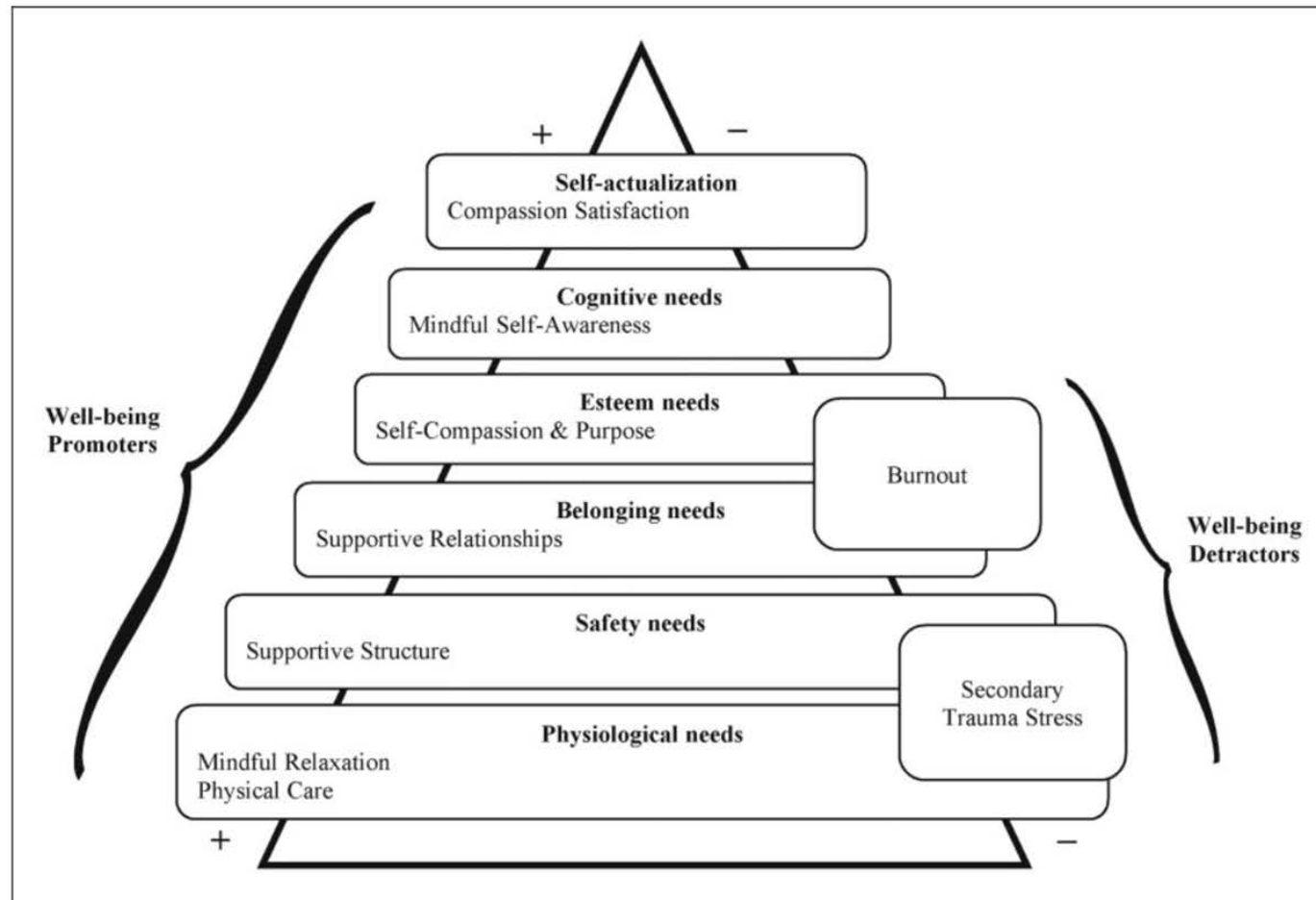
- 1) optimism, 2) cognitive flexibility, 3) active coping skills, 4) maintaining a supportive social network, 5) attending to one's physical well-being, and 6) embracing a personal moral compass.

Self Care Framework

- ▶ Dimensions: physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual
- ▶ Framework: behaviors, activities, decision making/practices
 - ▶ behaviors that may indicate stress or resilience
 - ▶ activities to increase care
 - ▶ practices that support compassionate care



One Model for Well Being Needs



Adaptation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Compassion satisfaction and mindful self-care are promoters of well-being. Compassion fatigue, including burnout and secondary traumatic stress, are detractors of well-being.

Hatchkiss & Leshner (2018)

Figure 1. Proposed conceptual model based on adaptation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Workplace Strategies

- ▶ Self-efficacy has been identified as a core antecedent of self-care. Prioritize opportunities for:
 - ▶ Feedback
 - ▶ Professional development
 - ▶ Attention to well being
 - ▶ Relational interaction
- ▶ Workplace factors can lead to secondary traumatic stress and/or burnout. Pay attention to:
 - ▶ Work hours
 - ▶ Case load
 - ▶ Engagement in decision making
 - ▶ Workplace conflict
 - ▶ Adverse interactions (target of anger, disrespect, threats)

Recognizing Signs of Burnout



- ▶ physical and emotional exhaustion are indicators of burnout
- ▶ be aware of any reliance on substances or other types of addiction
- ▶ look at how the organization's culture promotes or detracts from a professional's well-being

Strategies for Resilience

- ▶ Normalize self compassion, physical breaks and movement during the day, supportive relationships (within and outside the workplace)
- ▶ Normalize that shit happens—that's the nature of life and it beats the alternative
- ▶ Reminders that we can do everything right and folks may still be unhappy or dissatisfied - we work with difficult, traumatic, personal circumstances often beyond our control.
- ▶ Cultivating and fostering resiliency to overcome stress and reduce burnout occurs through self-awareness, supportive relationships, self-compassion, and personal and professional self-care.

Case Study

One of your investigators comes into the office obviously distraught and shares with you that during an interview, she was verbally attacked by a student due to her appearance and identity. She says she's a little shook-up but otherwise fine. Over the next week the workload is absolutely non-stop, and you notice that while she continues working she seems more withdrawn and does not respond to others in the office.

- ▶ What would you do?
- ▶ How might you initiate a conversation with her?
- ▶ What factors do you need to consider?
- ▶ What steps would you suggest?
- ▶ Who else might you include?
- ▶ What would success look like?
- ▶ How would you define your role in this situation?

Helping Others



- ▶ As a supervisor, make sure you put on your own air mask first
- ▶ Remember that your team member(s) may need to be referred to others; you may not be equipped to address all things
- ▶ Keep a resource list on hand for your staff and know how to refer
- ▶ Have a plan for when things do fall off the plate to avoid blaming behaviors or circling the wagons (accountability)
- ▶ Be aware in advance of your team's unique characteristics or dynamics
- ▶ Celebrate the wins!

References

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<https://workplacementalhealth.org/mental-health-topics/posttraumatic-stress-disorder>

https://www.wellics.com/blog/self-care-day-building-a-culture-of_-employee-well-being (not an endorsement, helpful information from this workplace well being platform)