


# Resiliency & Wellness

*Supporting Ourselves & Each Other*

Matt Bennett, MA, MBA



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Before our journey

- Acknowledging our recent traumas
- I'm a realist – trying to be a role model
- Recovery & Wellness Plan
- Format



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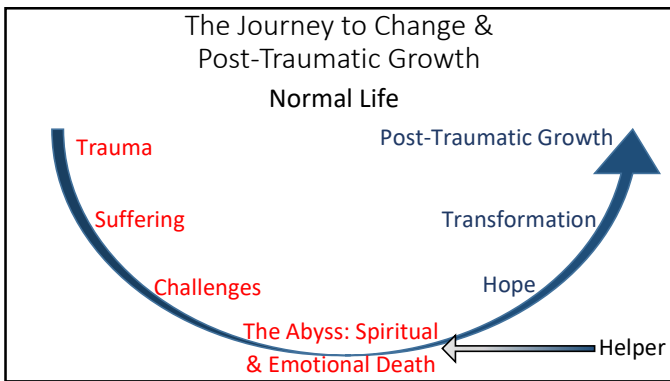
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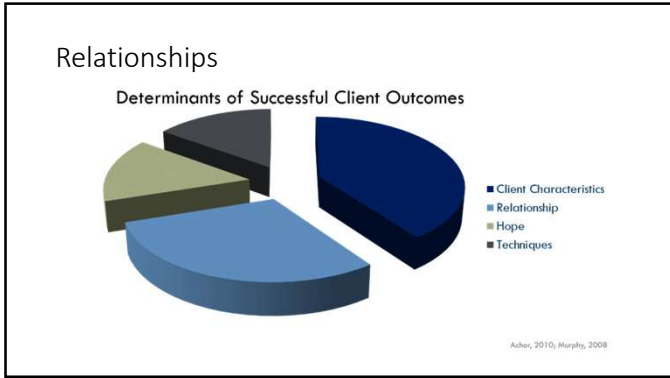
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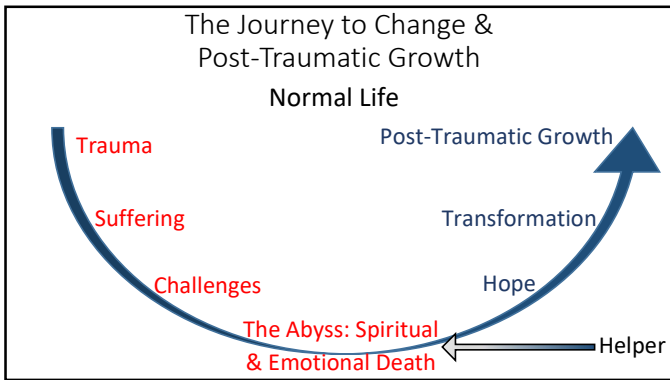
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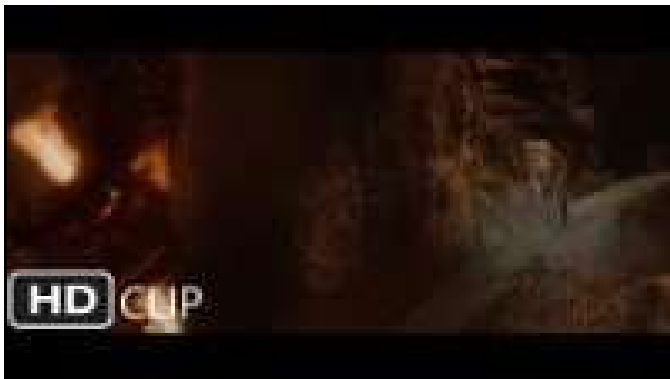
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**Job Demands**

Physical, social, emotional, or organizational aspects of a job that require sustained effort and are associated with certain physiological and psychological costs

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**Yerkes-Dodson Curve**

Nickerson, 2023; Yerkes & Dodson, 1908

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**Stress, Trauma, & the Autonomic Nervous System**

**Stress Ladder**

- Ventral vagal – strong connection to prefrontal cortex and executive functioning
- Sympathetic – strong connection to amygdala and flight/fight response

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**Stress, Trauma, & the Autonomic Nervous System**

**Stress Ladder**

- Ventral vagal – strong connection to prefrontal cortex and executive functioning
- Sympathetic – strong connection to amygdala and flight/fight response
- Dorsal vagal – shut down and freeze response

**Quantifying Resiliency**

- Respiratory Sinus Arrhythmia
- Heart Rate Variability

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**The Dangers of Stress - Inflammation**

- Cytokines: Friends and Foes
- Inflammation
  - Gut
    - Leaky Gut Syndrome
    - Immune functioning
  - Brain
    - Mental health
    - Cognitive functioning
  - General health issues

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### How big is your cup?

Traits of Wellness

Nerd Definitions of Resiliency

- Prefrontal cortex and amygdala
- Ventral vagal and sympathetic/dorsal vagal

Water in your cup: Allostatic load




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### How full is your cup?

Stress

- Personal life
- Empathetic intensity
- Moral distress
- All other work stress

Stress Intensifiers

- Duration
- Uncertainty
- Importance

Trauma Response:

- Cup overflows
- High levels of stress for extended periods of time



Siegel, 2010; Ogden, Minton, & Pain, 2006; Wilson and Lindy, 1994

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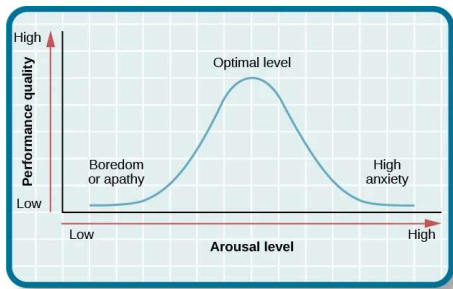
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### Yerkes-Dodson Curve



Nickerson, 2023; Yerkes & Dodson, 1908

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Discuss some things about your job that might challenge people's wellness and health

Small Group Conversation

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### Complexity of Helping Fatigue

Distress	Trauma Response
Workload	
Lack of resources	Burnout - No longer able to handle the amount of distress inherent to the job
Team/organization dysfunction	
	Compassion fatigue - Exhausted by trauma exposure
Empathetic intensity - Transfer of pain and suffering from one person to another	Vicarious trauma - Trauma resulting from exposure to another's traumatic pain and suffering
	Secondary trauma - Exposure to trauma or work situation that is retraumatizing
Moral distress - Asked to act or watch others violate safety, values, morals, and ethics	Moral injury - Mental health crisis resulting from moral distress

www.proqol.org, 2018; Bloom & Fraaiher, 2011; Wilson and Lind, 1994; Hesse-Biber, Hurler, & Taber, 2019; Jameton, 1984

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### Our Systems and Society is Failing Us

- While surveys vary, these professions seem to always make the top 5 for most burned out:
  - Health care
  - Social Services
  - Education
  - Government
- How we work is not working (Gallup, 2023)
  - 59% of workers are burnt out
  - Workplace stress was at a historic all-time high in 2023
  - 55% of workers are unable to establish a work-life balance

Gallup, 2023; Yerkes & Dodson, 1908

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### The Death Nail of Self-care

- It is unfair (not backed by research) to burnout and traumatize people at work and expect them to take personal time to recover
- The failures of the "employee" depends on their self-care and ignores organizational factors
- We sit with the dilemma
  - Personal behavior improves resiliency and performance
  - Organizational factors can either destroy or support resiliency and performance



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### Stages of Helping Fatigue



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**IDENTIFY YOUR PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL,  
AND SOCIAL WARNING SIGNS**

**ON YOUR RESILIENCY PLAN**

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## Wired & Tired



Gradual increase in anxiety and decrease in energy

Warning signs

- Physical
  - Sympathetic activation and trigger points
  - Headaches
- Psychological
  - Trouble sleeping
  - Rumination
  - Increase in the use of drugs and alcohol
- Social
  - Decrease in patience and empathy
  - Withdraw

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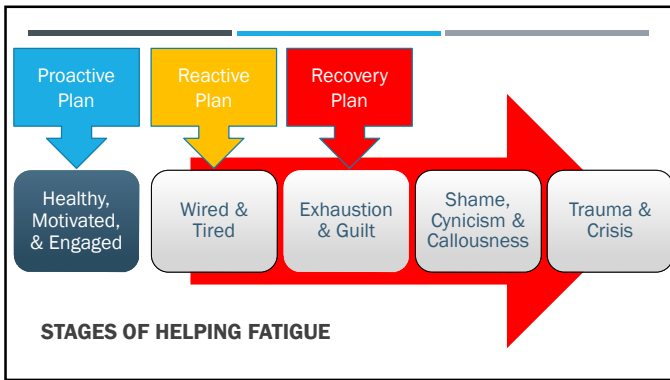
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## Exhaustion & Guilt



Exhaustion – No longer able to access the energy needed to be your best at work and in your personal life

Guilt - Sense that you can never do enough (time, resources, and compassion)

Warning signs increase in severity

Hypervigilance

- Working longer – Increasing guilt associated with personal life
- Never disconnecting
- Quality crash!

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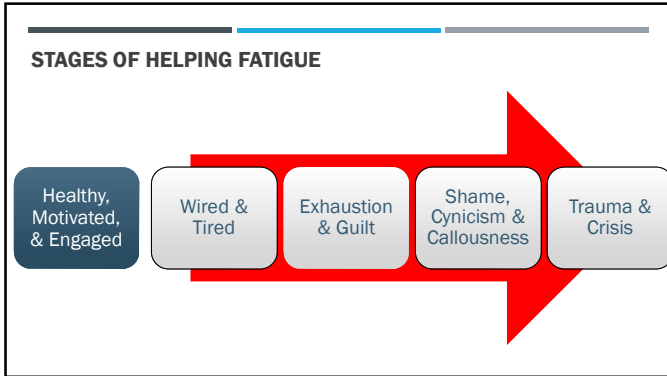
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### Shame, Cynicism, & Callousness

**Shame**

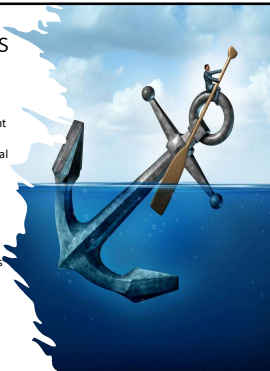
- Constant sense of deficiency, defeat, inferiority, unworthiness, or self-loathing
- Internally sense that you can no longer access the person you want to be
- No pleasure or enjoyment from work and, eventually, life in general

**Cynicism**

- Increased passive-aggressive behavior towards co-workers and those we serve
- Constant sense of anger and frustration
- Inflated sense of self-importance - everyone must see our burdens

**Callousness**

- Heart becomes a concrete monument to who you once were
- Lack of confidence expressed as persecution
- Empathetic withdrawal and deliberate avoidance



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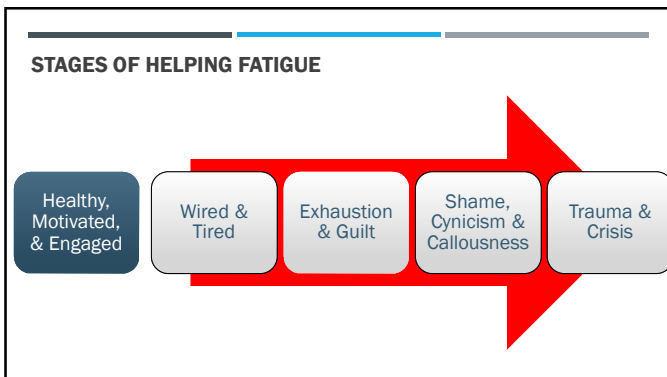
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CRISIS AND TRAUMA		
Physical Health	Social/Work Health	Mental Health
Cardiovascular Disease	Social Isolation	PTSD
Stroke	Relationship Issues	Memory Loss & Cognitive Decline
Type II Diabetes	Poor Performance	Sleep Problems
Musculoskeletal Disorder	Absenteeism	Headaches
Cancer	Tardiness	Mental Fatigue
Immune Issues	Theft	Anxiety & Irritability
Physical Fatigue	Dehumanization of People	Depression
Sexual Issues	Turnover (at least 40% is stress related)	Aggression
Gastrointestinal Problems	Filed Grievances	Defensiveness
Headaches	Litigation	Negative World View & Hopelessness
Physical Illness	Low Job Satisfaction	Negative attitude
Back Problems		

Fernandez, 2006; Anchor, 2010; Siebert, 2005; Hoopes & Kelly, 2004; Mastach & Leiter 1997

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Best Practices for Stress Management and Performance

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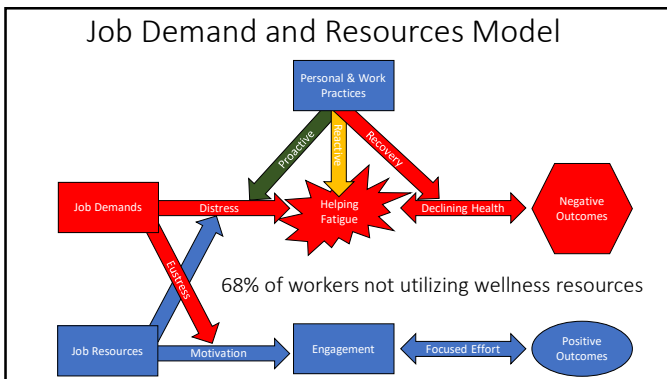
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**MAXIMIZING WELLNESS & QUALITY**

<b>Personal Wellness &amp; Resiliency</b>	<b>Professional Performance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Foundations of wellness<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sleep</li><li>Nutrition</li><li>Exercise</li></ul></li><li>Passion</li><li>Mindfulness</li><li>Therapy</li><li>Social network</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recovery time</li><li>Hyper-efficiency</li><li>Deliberate Practice</li><li>Organizational/Team culture</li></ul>

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**YOUR RESILIENCY WORKSHEET**

- Reactive and Proactive strategies
- Goal: List three things are you going to do when you recognize warning signs:
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- Do you need to do anything now, if so, what?

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What are some personal wellness strategies you've used to maintain your health when work or life gets difficult?

Small Group Conversation

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**SLEEP**

Lack of Sleep vs. Drunkenness

Lowers creativity and increases the number of mistakes

Lack of sleep = 549 additional calories/Type 2 Diabetes/Early Death

Setting the stage for sleep



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**NUTRITION**

Food becomes energy for your brain!

Intermittent fasting

Allergy tests

Key ingredients to brain health



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**CONTROLLING INFLAMMATION THROUGH FOOD**

<p><b>Inflammatory Foods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly processed foods</li> <li>• Sugar, sugar substitutes, and artificial sweeteners</li> <li>• Refined carbohydrates such as bread and pasta</li> <li>• Alcohol</li> <li>• Bad oils and fats such as seed oils and margarine</li> <li>• Soda and sugar-sweetened beverages</li> <li>• Grain-fed red meat</li> <li>• Monosodium glutamate or MSG</li> </ul>	<p><b>Anti-Inflammatory Food</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green leafy vegetables</li> <li>• Probiotic foods</li> <li>• Bone broth</li> <li>• Sweet potatoes, yams, beets, broccoli, tomatoes, and peppers</li> <li>• Blueberries, raspberries, strawberries</li> <li>• Wild-caught fatty fish</li> <li>• Chia and flax seeds</li> <li>• Extra Virgin Olive Oil</li> <li>• Turmeric, ginger, and cinnamon</li> <li>• Walnuts and Almonds</li> <li>• Garlic and onion</li> <li>• Green Tea</li> <li>• Dark Chocolate and Cocoa</li> </ul>
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Moore & Elliot, 2020

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**MOVEMENT & EXERCISE**

Resistance training and walking (in nature if possible)


Cognitive Benefits

- Boosts the brain's neurogenesis
- Improves learning and memory
- Protects the brain from aging and injury
- Larger pre-frontal cortex

Emotional Benefits

- Increased energy and overall mental health
- Endorphin release
- Works for lowering depression and anxiety as drugs do

Rock, 2019



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**MINDFULNESS**


10 to 20 minutes a day of deliberate practices

Pick a practice (some researched backed practices)

- Meta or Loving Kindness Meditation
- Walking meditations
- Movement (yoga, tai chi)
- Self-compassion

Basics:

- Breath in and extend the stomach/contract stomach on inhale
- Breath in for a count of 4 and breath out for a count of 6
- Breath in through the nose and out through the nose or pursed lips



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**MINDFULNESS: RESEARCH**

Helper-Specific Benefits

- Promotes empathy
- Increased compassion
- More attentive and attuned with people
- Decreased stress and anxiety
- Increased social and emotional intelligence
- Increased self-confidence

General Benefits

- Higher levels of physical health, immune functioning, and healing
- Improved cognitive functioning
- Increased relationship satisfaction



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**THERAPY**

This work is a minefield of re-traumatization and hardship

Use therapy to gain resiliency, wisdom, and improved outcomes

When to go:

- Now!
- When struggling to keep home and work stress separated
- When hard personal memories start invading work
- When you find yourself in any stage beyond exhaustion or if you have been there for a while



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**PASSION**

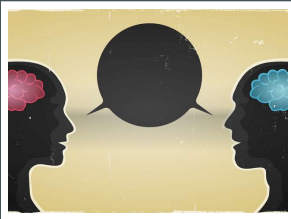
What is your why?

Moral Strength

- Moral courage – strength to speak up despite the fear of repercussions
- Moral resiliency – internal capacity to restore and sustain personal integrity in the face of moral distress

Grit = Passion + Perseverance

Live happier and longer



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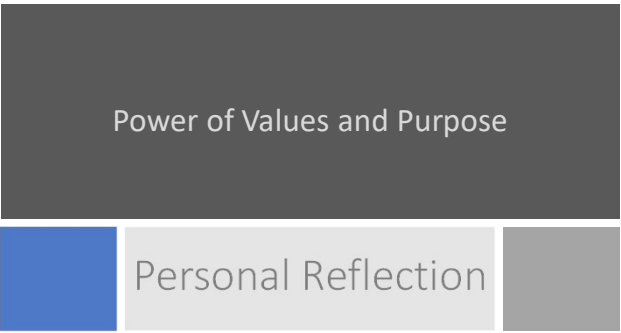
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Power of Values and Purpose

Personal Reflection



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### PERSONAL SOCIAL NETWORKS

"You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with." - Jim Rohn

The diagram on the left shows a central grey circle labeled 'Helper'. Surrounding it are eight smaller circles, four blue and four red. The blue circles are labeled 'Health & Happiness' and the red circles are labeled 'Stress'. The diagram on the right is a target with four concentric rings. The center is labeled 'You'. The rings are labeled: '15% - Immediate Relations', '10% - Once Removed', and '7% - Twice Removed'.

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### SPEED IT UP A LITTLE!

A black and white photograph showing three nurses in white uniforms and caps standing behind a counter in a hospital setting. They appear to be engaged in a task or conversation.

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### RECOVERY

Importance of disconnecting - Evenings, Weekends, and Vacations

Power of vacations

A colorful illustration of a person relaxing in a hot tub. The background is a yellow and orange halftone pattern. The hot tub is blue and has a person's head and shoulders visible inside.

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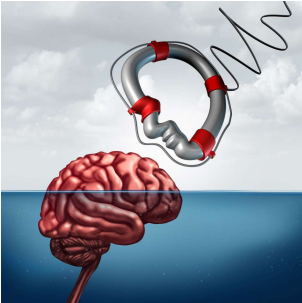
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**ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS & STOP MULTITASKING!**

- People are distracted
- Every 11 minutes
- It takes 25 minutes to return to the task
- Eat up hours 2.1 a day and 10 IQ points
- 90% productivity loss
- Every time the brain jumps to a new task, the transition drains energy

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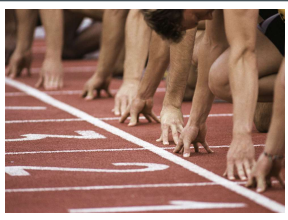
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**HYPER-EFFICIENCY SPRINTS**



- 90-to-120-minutes
- Organize like tasks
- Eliminate as many people and technology distractions as possible
- Take a short break from work and technology
  - Connect with co-workers
  - A quick walk
  - Stretching
  - Favorite song
  - Mindfulness
- Longer lunch breaks

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**GROWTH MINDSET**

“This growth mindset is based on the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts. Although people may differ in every which way...they believe that a person’s true potential is unknown (and unknowable); that it’s impossible to foresee what can be accomplished with years of passion, toil, and training.”

-Carol Dweck



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**Regaining Growth!**

<p><b>Fixed Mindset</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on being judged</li> <li>• Trauma/situation bigger than self</li> <li>• Increased depression/anxiety in face of hardship</li> <li>• Belief that they are inferior</li> <li>• Missed opportunities for growth and development</li> </ul>	<p><b>Growth Mindset</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on improvement</li> <li>• Increased motivation in face of hardship</li> <li>• Understand they have power in their outcomes</li> <li>• Start taking on larger challenges</li> </ul>
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**DELIBERATE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Grit = Passion + Perseverance

What is your 20-mile March?

- A clearly defined goal
- What can you do every day (or workday)?
- Repetition with reflection and refinement



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### THE POWER OF SOCIAL NETWORKS AT WORK

Helping Fatigue vs. Organization & Team Culture

Parallel Processes

- Aspects of one part of a system or group are mirrored in connected parts...with both positive and negative consequences
- Helper's relationship with person is often a mirrored relationship to their dynamics with their supervisor/co-workers

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### Team/Organizational Culture

The way staff work together and the set of beliefs and values that guide behavior and decision making

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### The Journey to Change & Post-Traumatic Growth

Normal Life

Trauma

Suffering

Challenges

The Abyss: Spiritual & Emotional Death

Post-Traumatic Growth

Transformation

Hope

Helper

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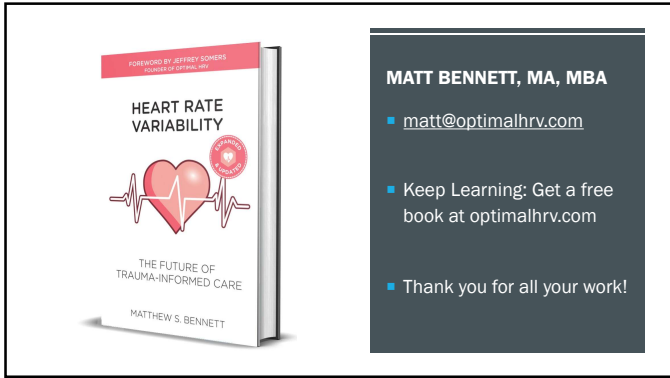
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