Healing Through Culture

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Dr. Gengoux is Director of the Autism Intervention Clinic, and the Associate Chair for Faculty Engagement and Well-being within Stanford University’s Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. Along with colleagues at Stanford, Dr. Gengoux has written a book focused on professional well-being and practical strategies to promote resilience for providers of mental health care. Dr. Gengoux is also a licensed clinical psychologist and serves as Associate Editor for the Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions. She received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of California Santa Barbara and completed her clinical internship and postdoctoral fellowship at the Yale Child Study Center.
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Learning Objectives

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

- Apply the Ask, Listen, Empower framework to address wellness challenges at work
- Identify leadership practices for employee burnout prevention
- Reflect on how shared values can be harnessed for healing in the context of caring for Native Youth
Combating Burnout

- When you tackle hard problems, **you will get discouraged**
- Change agents will encounter **resistance**
- When we care deeply, we can experience **moral injury**
- Keep your **body, mind, and heart prepared** to be resilient
- **Know yourself** and experiment with what works for you
Burnout is not the fault of an individual

System-level solutions are needed

Everyone can help

Physicians show higher resilience than general US working population (mean=6.25, diff: 0.24; p<.001)

(JAMA Network Open. 2020;3(7):e209385)
To improve professional fulfillment and reduce burnout…
Wellness Means Different Things to Each of Us

What does wellness mean to you and your team?

Ask

Listen

Empower
Remembering our purpose and our values:
Academic medicine is entrusted with human health

- Our department is inspired.
- Our department takes on the hardest problems.
- Our department is a hothouse of creativity.
- Our department is community in which we value all people.
- Our department is dedicated to advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-discrimination, and belonging.
- Our department makes connections and works collaboratively.
- Our department is dedicated to a welcoming culture of fairness, wellness, and wellbeing.
- Our department understands that the health of people and our planet are interdependent.
- Our department understands that mental health is fundamental to human health.
Key Themes Derived from Active Listening

- Recognition & Appreciation
- Opportunity for Connection
- Metrics Aligned with Values
- Professional Growth
Changing Meeting Culture

Challenge:
Monthly staff meetings are focused mostly on productivity data and administrative announcements.

- Recognition & Appreciation
  - Awards and Connection Opportunities
Recognition & Appreciation

Awards and Connection

• Tree Award
• Above and Beyond Award
• Connect with Colleagues breakouts
Shared Meal and Discussion

Challenge:
Large organization
Colleagues have few opportunities for interaction outside formal meetings
Culture of high achievement with few opportunities for vulnerability

Opportunity for Connection

➢ Camaraderie groups
The Camaraderie Project: What is it?

Structure:
Groups of 6-8 colleagues who agree to:
  • Meet for 1 hour once a month for 6 months
  • Spend 15-20 minutes discussing a preselected topic pertinent to physicians
  • Spend the rest of the hour enjoying each other’s company

Purpose:
  • Build camaraderie
  • Eating together and enjoying each other’s company

Rational:
Evidence in randomized trials that it increases professional fulfillment in physicians \(^1,^2\)

Department Support:
  • Reimburses the cost of the meal
  • Up to $25 per attendee/month

Challenge:
Uncertainty and anxiety
Leadership trying to understand wide variety of needs quickly

- Listening Form
Listening Form

- Brief survey open to all Department members
  "Please tell us about your issue or concern"
- Anonymous submissions allowed
- Small team monitored responses
- Domain-specific task forces could act on identified issues
- Daily summary sent to Department Chair
Legitimating Regular Peer Consultation

Challenge:
Specialty Mental Health Clinics serving high-need populations
Remote and hybrid work limits impromptu consultations
Clinicians have an annual target for patient care volume
Participation in team meetings and consultation groups does not “count” toward target
Clinic leadership wants to encourage regular in-depth discussion of cases and holistic support

Metrics Aligned with Values

- Peer consultation groups
Peer Consultation Groups

- **Goal:** in-depth consultation and general support
- Aiming for warm, supportive environment where clinicians can feel safe being vulnerable
- Weekly or every 2 weeks
- Within and across specialty clinics
- Check-in on work and personal stress
- Some start with brief grounding (mindfulness, breathing or gratitude practice)
Filling a Gap

Challenge: Career Success in Academic Medicine requires a wide range of leadership skills, not taught in training programs
Many employees do not have an established mentor
Clinicians and researchers advance in their careers with limited training for the leadership roles they assume

Professional Growth

➤ Leadership Academy
Leadership Academy

- Open applications
- 10 faculty selected
- Monthly meetings for 6-9 months
- Guest speaker presents on leadership topic and facilitates breakout and Q&A
- Participants attend one outside leadership training and share learnings with group
Leadership Matters for Well-being

- Supervisor leadership behaviors lower burnout and higher job satisfaction
- Shared purpose and values alignment team well-being
- Leader fulfillment and self-care leadership effectiveness
Leadership Strategies

What else is important in your workplace culture?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Express Interest</th>
<th>Express interest in the opinions of your team members and encourage them to suggest ideas for improvement.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Show Respect</td>
<td>Treat others with respect and dignity; keep team members informed about changes taking place in the organization.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empower &amp; Coach</td>
<td>Empowering others to do their jobs and providing helpful feedback and coaching on performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognize &amp; Inspire</td>
<td>Recognize others for a job well done and inspire team members to do their best.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop</td>
<td>Hold career development conversations and encourage others to develop their talents and skills.</td>
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Shanafelt et al., 2015 Mayo Clin Proc 90(4)
Think about the colleagues or supervisors you have had who made a difference

What behaviors helped you the most?
How can you harness shared cultural values to make healing changes in your organization?
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Shanafelt et al., (2021). Assessment of the association of leadership behaviors of supervising physicians with personal-organizational values alignment among staff physicians. JAMA Netw Open, 4(2)
Sinsky, Biddison, Mallick et al. (2020). Organizational evidence-based and promising practices for improving clinician well-being. NAM Perspectives
Swensen & Shanafelt (2020). Mayo Clinic Strategies to Reduce Burnout, Oxford University Press

Resources
Pause A Moment https://pam.stanford.edu/
Stanford WellMD/WellPhD Center https://wellmd.stanford.edu
National Academy of Medicine Clinician Knowledge Hub https://nam.edu/clinicianwellbeing/
US Surgeon General Advisory ”Addressing Health Worker Burnout” https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/health-worker-burnout
UC Berkeley Greater Good Science Center https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/