

Resiliency in Research Development: Tools to Reduce Stress and Find Balance

A NORDP Presentation

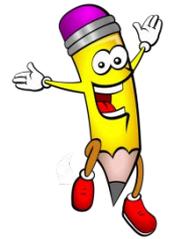
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by

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Learning Objectives

1. Understand stress and burnout and their contributors.
2. Explore a robust “tool-kit” for reducing stress, preventing burnout, and improving balance.
3. Begin developing your own specific plan of action – immediate, short-term, and long-term goals and steps.



"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

–Reinhold Niebuhr



Stress



- A state of strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances that results in a predictable set of biochemical, physiological and behavioral changes.
- Untreated chronic stress → serious physical and psychological difficulties
- “Stress is not a function of events; it’s a function of the view you take of events.”

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/understanding-chronic-stress.aspx>

Mindfulness in the Age of Complexity (an interview with Ellen Langer), Harvard Business Review, March 2014. <https://hbr.org/2014/03/mindfulness-in-the-age-of-complexity>

Burnout

- Physical or mental collapse caused by overwork or stress (APA).
- Work-related hopelessness and feelings of inefficacy (ProQOL.org).
- Burnout is to the extreme, a sense that there is no end and that any purported control is just an illusion; it is often past the “point of no return”.





Moving from Stress to Burnout



- **Personal characteristics & tendencies:**

- Are you a perfectionist?
- Do you set and stick to boundaries? Are you a natural helper?
- Do you effectively manage others' expectations? Your own?
- Do you respond to stressors appropriately?
- Do you prioritize effectively? Do you ever prioritize yourself?
- Do you seek and thrive on challenge?
- Are you a procrastinator?

- **Burnout risks:**

- Lack of control; Unclear job expectations
- Dysfunctional workplace dynamics; Mismatch in values; Poor job fit
- Extremes of activity
- Lack of social support (at work and/or home); Poor work-life balance



Where on the spectrum of stressed to burned-out are you?

- A validated measure:
 - The Professional Quality of Life Scale – Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue ProQOL Version 5 (2009) © B. Hudnall Stamm, 2009; see www.proqol.org for more information. (In 2017, ownership transferred to the Center for Victims of Torture, which will continue to make the tool free and available for use.)
 - Scores “Compassion Satisfaction” and “Burnout”.



Let's take a moment to breathe and rebuild....

Mindfulness: A Few Practices

- Moment-to-moment, non-judgmental awareness.
 - Balance our “planning” brain and creative brain, and improve our response to stressors.
 - Allows us to “reset” & recover each day or throughout the day.
- “Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction” (MBSR)
 - Awareness of Breath Practice
 - 20 Breaths Practice
 - Body Scan Practice
 - Walking Mindfulness
 - Mindful Communication
 - Loving-Kindness
- **Find** MBSR training.



Adapted in part from Benson, H. “The Relaxation Response”, 1975 ;
Kabat-Zinn, J. “Full Catastrophe Living”, 2013.

Exercise actually helps your brain rebuild

- Endurance aerobic exercise leads to greater neurogeneration in the hippocampus than either strength training or high intensity interval training (in rodents).
- Be (more) active.
 - 150 min/wk of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity
 - Even segments of 2 minutes add up! (humans)
- Get a sit-stand workstation.



Tools to control stressors

- Anticipate and plan for stressful periods.
 - Just because it’s “life” doesn’t mean it’s helpful.
 - Consider your entire self.
 - ***Take some time to recover.***
- Manage interruptions.
 - It takes double or triple the time to regain full concentration.
 - Check emails on a set schedule; checking later allows you to focus first on your priorities.
 - Schedule your calendar in a way that suits you; leave yourself breathing room.



Tools to control stressors (cont.)

- Leave work at work.
 - Consciously separate work time from personal time.
 - Do work at work – don't “spite” it.
- Set boundaries (in writing!) and stick to them.
 - Give yourself permission to say “no”, or to say “yes” under circumstances of your choosing.



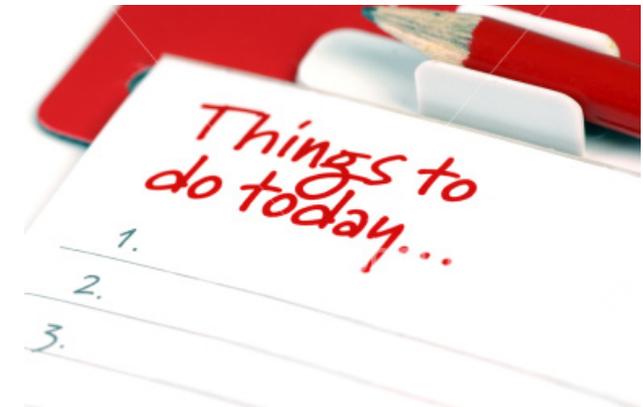
Tools to control stressors (cont.)

- Manage others' expectations, as well as your own.
 - Keep your expectations as realistic as possible.
 - Accept what you cannot change.
 - Give the rationale and consequence, and then accept their decision.
 - “It is what it is.”



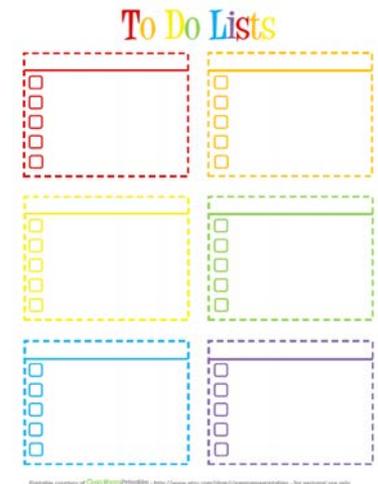
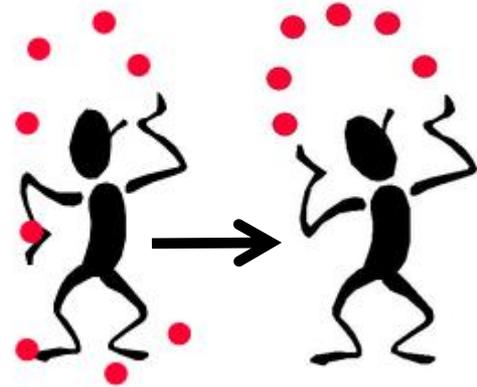
Tools to control stressors (cont.)

- Organize and plan.
 - Stick to your own priorities!
 - Rather than “big lists”, create effective project-specific “next step” to-do lists that gather ALL to-dos.
 - **PRIORITIZE AND USE THESE LISTS!**



Make a better to-do list

- David Allen's five-stage process:
 - 1) Collect ALL of the things that are in your brain and put each on its own piece of paper;
 - 2) Process what they mean and what to do about them (the ***exact next step*** for each);
 - 3) Organize the results; and
 - 4) Review them as options for what you choose to
 - 5) Do.
- A single location for a complete “to-do” list allows your brain to stop reminding you!
- ***Get*** David Allen's book or another of your choosing and ***implement*** it.



Tools to control stressors (cont.)

- Prioritize effectively.
 - Use the “Eisenhower Matrix” to “do, decide when to do, delegate, or delete”.
 - How much time are you really spending on various activities?
 - Evaluate not just single requests, but ongoing efforts. (Don’t confuse “busy” with “productive”!)
 - “Don’t waste 100% of your energy on a 5% issue.” <http://pas.duke.edu/stress.php>

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	DO NOW	DECIDE WHEN TO DO IT
NOT IMPORTANT	DELEGATE IT AWAY OR DECIDE WHEN TO DO IT	DELETE IT OR DELEGATE IT

**The “Dark Playground”
(waitbutwhy blog)**

Adapted in part from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/work-life-balance/art-20048134> and <http://waitbutwhy.com/2015/03/procrastination-matrix.html> & <https://waitbutwhy.com/2013/10/why-procrastinators-procrastinate.html>

Tools to control YOU



- Prioritize yourself.
 - Prioritize your own needs sometimes.
 - ***Take some time to recover.***
- Eat a healthy diet.
 - Fresh fruits, vegetables, lean protein, whole grains, and complex carbohydrates.
 - Caffeine, alcohol, and refined sugars in moderation.
 - Stay hydrated (dehydrated = irritable!)



Tools to control YOU (cont.)

- Get enough sleep.
 - Sleep interrupted by your brain running wild? Build that comprehensive to-do list; put a note pad and pen by your bed.
 - Trouble falling asleep? Put away your phone; breathe slowly & count backwards; identify tension and relax it.
 - Too cold or hot? Achy?
 - Adjust your sleeping environment (bed, curtains, orientation, etc.).
 - Exercise!





Tools to control YOU (cont.)

- Seek professional help.
 - Employer-provided counseling services? Career or Executive Coaching?
- Connect with other people.
 - More time with “nourishing” friends.
 - Vent your frustrations? Tread carefully!
- Re-discover a favorite pastime or uncover a new one.
 - Volunteering can boost sense of work-life balance.
 - Choose an activity that fills in what’s missing for you.
 - Caution: Your activity may need to be as demanding as work.
 - ***List five things you love to do and then do one of them!***





So what can you do?



- **Identify & evaluate** work and personal responsibilities.
- What is negotiable? What CAN you control?
 - Drop (decide not to do them) and/or re-prioritize them.
 - Seek reassignment of (punt!) draining responsibilities.
 - Ask for and deploy **additional resources** at work and/or at home. Who do you need to talk to? What should you say?
- Look for chances to add responsibilities that stimulate you. (Bolles, R.N., What Color Is Your Parachute?)
- Sign up for Mindfulness or other training



Conclusion

- Stressful events and stressors are only part of the equation – how you react to, deal with, process, or pursue those stressors is equally if not more important.
- What will YOU do? Identify immediate, short-term, and longer term goals for reducing your stress.
- Share your tips!



Questions? Tips?

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Resources – Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction

- <http://www.helpguide.org/harvard/benefits-of-mindfulness.htm>
- Jon Kabat-Zinn. *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*. New York: Bantam Books Trade Paperbacks, 2013. (ISBN-13: 978-0345536938)
- UCSD Center for Mindfulness website
<https://health.ucsd.edu/specialties/mindfulness/Pages/default.aspx>
- UCSD Center for Mindfulness online resources (including links to audio and video guidance)
<https://health.ucsd.edu/specialties/mindfulness/resources/Pages/default.aspx>
- Duke MBSR Program (10 weeks)
<https://www.dukeintegrativemedicine.org/programs-training/public/mindfulness-based-stress-reduction/>
- Duke Distance MBSR Program (8 weeks)
<https://www.dukeintegrativemedicine.org/programs-training/public/mindfulness-based-stressed-reduction-distance-learning/>
- Look at your own or nearby institutions for MBSR or mindfulness programs and offerings.

Online Resources – Stress and Burnout

- <http://waitbutwhy.com/2013/10/why-procrastinators-procrastinate.html>
- <http://waitbutwhy.com/2013/11/how-to-beat-procrastination.html>
- <http://waitbutwhy.com/2015/03/procrastination-matrix.html>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/high-octane-women/201104/overcoming-burnout>
- <http://misplacedbrit.com/depression/recovering-from-burnout-or-depression-an-a-z/>
- <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/preventing-burnout.htm>
- <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-symptoms-causes-and-effects.htm>
- <http://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/understanding-the-stress-response>
- <https://hbr.org/2016/06/steps-to-take-when-youre-starting-to-feel-burned-out>
- <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/art-20046642> (job burnout)
- <http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/18/health/no-worries-wisdom-project/index.html>
- <http://pas.duke.edu/stress.php>
- <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml>
- Professional Quality of Life Elements Theory and Measurement: Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue, Burnout, Secondary Traumatic Stress, Vicarious Traumatization and Vicarious Transformation
 - Website: http://www.proqol.org/Home_Page.php
 - Tool: http://www.proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_5_English_Self-Score_3-2012.pdf

Resources – Effects of stress on the brain

- Dias-Ferreira E, et al. Chronic stress causes frontostriatal reorganization and affects decision-making. *Science* 2009;325:621-625.
- Lucassen PJ, et al. Regulation of adult neurogenesis by stress, sleep disruption, exercise and inflammation: Implications for depression and antidepressant action. *European Neuropsychopharmacology* 2010; 20:1-17.
- Lucassen PJ, et al. Neuropathology of Stress. *Acta Neuropathol* 2014;127:109-135.
- McEwen BS, Gray JD, Nasca C. Recognizing resilience: learning from effects of stress on the brain. *Neurobiology of Stress* 2015;1:1-11.
- McEwen BS, McKittrick CR, Tamashiro K, Sakai, RR. The brain on stress: Insight from studies using the Visible Burrow System. *Physiology & Behavior* 2015;146:47-56.
- Sandi C, Pinelo-Neva MT. Stress and memory: behavioral effects and neurobiological mechanisms. *Neural Plasticity* 2007;2007: Article ID 78970.
- Schoenfeld TJ, Gould E. Stress, stress hormones, and adult neurogenesis. *Experimental Neurology* 2012;233:12-21.

Resources on mindfulness & work-life balance

- Alexandra Michel, Christine Bosch, Miriam Rexroth. Mindfulness as a cognitive-emotional segmentation strategy: An intervention promoting work-life balance. *J Occupational and Organizational Psychology*. Dec 2014; 87(4):733–754. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/joop.12072/full> (Univ. Heidelberg study)
- Kimberly Schaufenbuel. *Bringing Mindfulness to the Workplace* (a white paper). Executive Development, UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School, 2014. http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/~media/Files/documents/executive-development/unc-white-paper-bringing-mindfulness-to-the-workplace_final.pdf
- Sonnentag S, Fritz C. Recovery from job stress: The stressor-detachment model as an integrative framework. *J Organiz Behav* 2015;36:S72-S103.