The Resilient Practitioner

Keeping Hope Through a Career

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October 17, 2004
Resilience: Definition

The ability to rebound from a disturbance
Burnout: Definition

- Impaired enthusiasm and motivation to work resulting in a growing ability to mobilize interests and abilities
- Hemorrhaging of the self
- Stress is the fever of burnout
Individual Defenses Against Burnout

- Personal plan of action
- Practice what you preach
  - Good nutrition
  - Reduce drinking
  - Exercise
Individual Defenses Against Burnout

- Eliminate medical bias that says that you are not a good practitioner if you take care of yourself
- Know your stress signals
- Learn to pinpoint specific stress sources
- Manage time well
- Be assertive
Organizational Protection

- Minimal bureaucracy
- Teamwork and collegiality
- Training and educational opportunities
- Mentoring new hires
- Sustainable workload
- Recognition and reward
Core Elements of Resilience

- Emotional regulation
- Causal analysis
- Impulse control
- Optimism
- Empathy
- Self-efficacy
- Reaching out
Signs of Resilience

- Have sense of mastery or control
- Detach from suffering
- Enjoy strong self-esteem
- Attain professional status and respect
- Learn new skills
- Appreciate intellectual stimulation
- Adapt to the work environment
- Develop multiple roles
- Maintain a sense of humor
The Resilient Practitioner

- Manages emotions
- Sees challenges when encountering setbacks
- Examines problems to determine root causes
- Refrains from acting impulsively
- Maintains a positive outlook
- Is skilled at reading and understanding others’ emotions
- Has a high sense of self-esteem
- Stays focused on the attainment of meaningful goals
Proactive Coping

- Proactive coping = Goal management
- Reactive coping = Risk management
- Resilient practitioners are proactive copers
Determinants of Resilience

- Personality traits, not the nature of the work, may influence resilience most

- Resilient personality traits
  - Self-confidence
  - Sense of personal control
  - Optimism
  - Good problem-solving skills
  - High perception of fairness
  - Well developed psychosocial resources
  - Low cynicism
Proactive Copers

- Have vision
- See challenges, not threats
- See stimulation and opportunity, not loss
- See risks, not harm
- Anticipate potential stressors
- Integrate planning and prevention strategies with self-regulatory goal attainment
- Identify, use, and integrate social resources with goal attainment
Skills of Resilient Oncology Practitioners

- Ability to tolerate loss and break bad news
- Realistic expectations
- Belief that work is meaningful and self-validating
- High frustration tolerance
- Self-reflection and honesty
Skills of Resilient Oncology Practitioners

- Accept anger as normal
- Take time away weekly
- Learn to play
- Identify ways to rejuvenate
- Simplify
- Seek counseling to break circular thinking
Skills of Resilient Oncology Practitioners

- Acquire pertinent knowledge and skills
- Plan ahead
- Accurate role perspective
  - Restoration, healing, and *compassionate care*
- Maintain appropriate boundaries
- Accept that burnout is a problem
- Accept that burnout is preventable
- See burnout as an opportunity for personal/professional growth
Skills of Resilient Oncology Practitioners

- Set and pursue realistic goals
- Celebrate small victories
- Ask for as well as offer help
- Strive for resilience, not perfection