



For you, your career, and your life

RAP

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Minding Your Own Wellness: You Can Be the Example Others Want to Follow

Pay attention to your own wellness and you'll gain resilience. You will not only see the benefits in your own life, but in the lives of those around you.

Develop Extra Reserves

"People in the helping professions don't get a pass on life and are not immune to things such as a job loss, death of a loved one, or a divorce," says wellness coach Sam Hester, author of *Soar to Success Minus the Stress*. His clients include busy chief executive officers, physicians, attorneys and other high-powered professionals.

For people who are already working at high levels, getting "the edge" means taking better care of themselves, Hester emphasizes. In an environment where everyone is smart and talented, the extra edge can come from better overall wellness.

"Like it or not, we can't delegate our own physical wellbeing," he says. "So we need to develop extra physical and emotional reserves. Staying fit helps us do that. A higher level of fitness allows us to function more effectively in our own lives. In

turn, it equips us to better take care of others."

Start Early in Your Career

You may think you are just too busy to work out or worry about wellness. But the sooner you start setting wellness goals, the better.

"What we know is that when you're young—under 35—you can be fit without being truly healthy," says Hester. "Youth allows us to get away with a lot more than we can when we get older. After 40, to be fit you almost always have to be healthy."

Small Changes Yield Results

One of the most effective wellness steps working people can take—even when they are working long hours inside—is to take slightly longer breaks. "Fifty minutes is about as much time as we can comfortably focus our attention to a task at hand," Hester notes. "So, instead of the old idea of five-minute breaks every hour, try taking them for ten minutes."

Ideally, take your break

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You know it's important to maintain your own physical and mental health. When you're proactive about wellness, you develop greater resilience to stress. Yet with the grueling schedule of residency training, that can be a real challenge.

Let your Resident Assistance Program be a resource for resolving issues that stand in the way of you becoming the best possible doctor you can be. Free for the asking, our caring professionals are just a phone call away.

Contact RAP: 813-870-3344

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"Live with intention. Walk to the edge. Listen hard. Practice wellness. Play with abandon. Laugh. Choose with no regret. Appreciate your friends. Continue to learn. Do what you love. Live as if this is all there is."

- Mary Anne Radmacher

Watching Your Own Wellness

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outside, he advises. “The human body was meant to move continually. So get the large muscle groups moving. You’ll not only feel better, you’ll become more alert and energetic, and you’ll burn off stress hormones and their effects. A change of focus not only increases your ability to handle stress, it also allows creative breakthroughs to happen. When you can do this, you’ll feel better and be more productive when you return to work.”

Set a Good Example

Your own physical health and energy level can benefit your career. “The first thing that people notice when they meet you is your physical appearance,” Hester notes. “And—like it or not—they make judgments about your competency and credibility as a doctor by what they see. So, maintaining your own body as the picture of good health is one of the best things you can do for your patients and your career success.”

Your Resident Assistance Program

The RAP newsletter is provided as a benefit to medical residents at the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine.

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Mental Health: Risk Factors for Doctors

It’s probably not surprising that burnout is highly prevalent among medical students, residents and physicians. Christine Moutier, M.D. helps audiences of faculty, residents, and medical students gain a better understanding of the serious mental health issues of burnout, depression and suicide prevention. Moutier serves as Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine.

“In residents, studies show burnout rates of 41-90%,” Moutier reports. “In residency, levels of burnout and depressive symptoms rise quickly within the first few months of residency. ACGME work hour changes appear to have decreased burnout rates modestly, but study results have been contradictory.”

Resident distress—including burnout and depression—is associated with medical errors and poorer patient care. “The data on physician suicide risk consistently shows elevated risk for both men and women, but particularly for women physicians,” Moutier explains. “Women physicians have a 240% (or 2.4X) higher risk of suicide compared to their non-physician counterparts.”

So how can physicians, including residents, lower their risk of suicide, depression and burnout? Researchers have identified a number of protective factors as well as risk factors for physician distress, says Moutier. These factors found in a 2009 study of orthopedics surgery residents by M.C. Sargent are summarized below.

Protective Factors

- *Leaves personal concerns out of workplace*
- *Support from other medical families*
- *Has an in-program mentor*
- *Draws on religion or faith*
- *Makes time for exercise/hobbies/vacation*
- *Low level alcohol use*
- *Makes time regularly to be alone with mate*
- *Perceives help from program for mate’s adjustment*

Risk Factors

- *Sleep deprivation*
- *High level work-life conflict (feels torn between)*
- *Interrupts work with personal concerns*
- *High level anger, loneliness, or anxiety*
- *Stressed by work relationships*
- *Anxious about own competency*
- *Has problems “unplugging” after work*
- *Uses alcohol regularly*

Resources:

www.onlinefitnesslog.com
<http://executivewellnesscoach.net/Book.html>
www.prevention.com/cda/healthtracker.do
www.heart.org
www.doctorswithdepression.org
 American Foundation for Suicide Prevention <http://www.afsp.org>
 UCSD School of Medicine <https://www.ucsdwellbeing.org/welcome.cfm>
 American Medical Association Physician Resources www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/public-health/promoting-healthy-lifestyles/healthier-life-steps-program/physicians-personal-health.page