Wellbeing in times of Difficulty
Disclosures

• No financial disclosures
• Grant from AMA in Reimagining Residency
• Start on ABIM, Internal Medicine Board, July 1st, 2020
• AAIM Education Committee
• AAIM Faculty Development Committee

• Recent Chair of ACP Council of Early Career Physicians
• Served on Inaugural ACP Wellbeing and Professional Satisfaction Task Force
• Served on Board of Governors
• Served on Board of Regents
• Served as Governor-Elect NC Chapter
• Former Program Director, UNC Med-Peds Program
Acknowledgment

Kerri Palamara, MD, FACP
Director, Center for Physician Well-being, Massachusetts General Hospital
Lead, Physician Coaching Services, American College of Physicians
AMA president: 7 ways to keep peace of mind amid coronavirus fears and worries

Feelings of fear, worry and anxiety are normal. Here are practical tips from a psychiatrist for restoring what disruption threatens to take away.

Dr. Patrice A. Harris Opinion contributor
Published 12:01 p.m. ET Mar. 25, 2020 | Updated 1:45 p.m. ET Mar. 26, 2020


Acknowledgements
ACP as my Professional Home
Physician Well-being and Professional Fulfillment

Providing guidance and resources that foster communities of well-being for internists to best serve patients and optimize professional fulfillment.

https://www.acponline.org/practice-resources/physician-well-being-and-professional-fulfillment
wellbeing in times of difficulty
Early Career Physicians

- NYACP represents over 1200 Early Career Physicians
- Early Career physician is a physician within 16 years of completing medical school

Aim:
- To enhance the professional development and quality of life for young physicians, fostering their involvement in the American College of Physician, and providing resources and support as they pursue a career in Internal Medicine

Offerings:
- Mentoring program
- Webinars on medical sciences, careers, and life:
  - Women in Medicine
  - Medical Education & Why it’s important for your career
  - Balance for Dual Family Physicians
  - Healthcare & Social Media
  - Vaping and Clinical Manifestations
  - Negotiations & Contracts
Resources:

NYACP Website [www.NYACP.org](http://www.NYACP.org)
ACP Website: www.acponline.org/coronavirus

ACP would like to acknowledge your dedication to the well-being of patients, colleagues, and yourselves during this incredibly stressful time. You are the heart and soul of our profession. If you feel afraid and isolated right now please know that you are not alone. Our Internal Medicine online community is strong and vibrant. We support each other and we will get through this together. Join us on twitter at #dontworryalone.
Resources:

For the Frontlines www.forthefrontlines.org
Free crisis counseling, 24/7 for front line workers facing fear, anxiety, stress, isolation.
Agenda

• Checking in with you & where we are today
• Overview of Resources / 7 Strategies
• Overview of Practices for Positive Psychology
• Allow others to share
• Questions!

What We’re Hearing

- Uncertainty about screening and frequently changing PPE recommendations/supply leave people feeling exposed and underprepared.
- The uncertainty of clinical presentation of patients with COVID-19.
- The lack of testing capability creating uncertainty.
- The fear of working in healthcare if you are worried about your own health or the health of someone in your home.
- The anxiety about who we may expose or infect if we become ill.
- Worrying about loved one’s, financially and medically.
- Fear that we or our colleagues will die.
- Feeling useless at home when we can’t be at work.
- Working in new roles outside of comfort zone.
- “Worrying about daycare and home schooling, and the general status of our homes/family.”
- “I miss people, and physical connection. “
- “My world feels so foreign to me”.

I miss people, and physical connection. “
Checking in with you & where we are at today
Where on Earth are we?
Moving Forward – You are Never Alone
7 Things to Ponder and Consider
1. Feel and acknowledge your feelings

- We are all in this together
- Experts are working at all levels
- It's ok to be afraid
- Avoid catastrophic worry
- Work the problems as they come up
We have a choice to make each moment, each day.

This pandemic experience is a massive experiment in collective vulnerability. We can be our worst selves when we’re afraid, or our very best, bravest selves. In the context of fear and vulnerability, there is often very little in between because when we are uncertain and afraid our default is self-protection. We don’t have to be scary when we’re scared. Let’s choose awkward, brave, and kind.

And let’s choose each other.
Assumption
Going Forward

You are here!
Osler had a Great Approach
2. Channel your worry into actions

- Know your job
- Know the standards (UMMC, CDC, MS DOH)
- Understand changes happen to the standards rapidly
- Wash your hands, wear PPE
- Report your symptoms / get tested
- Read important Emails and other communication.
- Be flexible
  - Assume best intentions
Apollo 13

- Everyone had a role from top to bottom
- Failure was not an option
- People encouraged to work the problems
“WE CANNOT SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS WITH THE SAME THINKING WE USED WHEN WE CREATED THEM”

We do the best we can with what we know, and when we know better, we do better.

— Maya Angelou —

A little Albert and Maya goes a long way
3. Get your body and mind moving

- Stay active
- Take care of your physical needs
- Constant stress requires constant self-care
- Don’t ignore your physical and emotional needs.
- **Be kind to yourself**
Take care of yourself first.....

Self-Care

Increasing your own well-being through self-care behaviors
Taking care of your spiritual health
Taking care of your mind & thoughts
Taking care of your physical health & body
Taking care of your emotions

Self-care is not selfish.
You cannot serve from an empty vessel.

Eleanor Brownn with 2 Ns
eleanorbrownn.com

© Dr. Claire Nicogossian 2014 www.momswellbeing.com
Physical, Emotional, and Mental

“Chance favors the prepared mind.”

LOUIS PASTEUR
Spiritual, not (necessarily) religious
4. Unplug

- Maintain a platform of reliable information
- Read critical emails
- Give your brain and emotions a break when possible
- Deal with the present
- Avoid catastrophic worry
- Avoid “future-tripping”
5. Stay Connected & Stay Kind

- It is tempting to isolate and hide within the business of this crisis.
- Remember our colleagues are scared too.
- The patients need us to be clear headed in times of distress.
- Try kindness and connection over isolation and loneliness.
6. Create New Routines

- Be “day tight” in your new routines
- Remain flexible to changing roles and requirements.
- When in doubt, ask and clarify your role
Oslerian Principles of Day Management
Day Tight Compartments

• Osler inspired by Thomas Browne, Marcus Aurelius, and Thomas Carlisle,
  • “It is not our goal to see what lies dimly in the distance but to do what clearly lies at hand.”

• Living today without
  • Worries about the past
    • Resist regret
    • Worries about the future
    • Resist catastrophic worry

• Allowed him to be task oriented and emotionally stable despite his busy life

• Osler was no stranger to deadly outbreaks.
7. Lead from where you stand

- Be a role model when you can
- Model healthy behaviors in the setting of this tragedy
- Practice patience / understand “decision fatigue”
- Show grace
- Pick up and check on others
Understand the needs of your colleagues

Table. Requests From Health Care Professionals to Their Organization During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Pandemic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Principal desire</th>
<th>Concerns</th>
<th>Key components of response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear me</td>
<td>Learn to adapt and act on health care professionals’ expectations and concerns.</td>
<td>Uncertainty whether leadership recognizes the most pressing concerns of frontline health care professionals and whether local physician expertise regarding infection control, critical care, emergency medicine, and mental health is being appropriately harnessed to develop organization-specific responses.</td>
<td>Create an array of rapid and feedback channels (webinars, Nurses, social media, blogs, local teams and others) and ensure that the voices of health care professionals are part of the decision making process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect me</td>
<td>Reduce the risk of health care professionals acquiring the infection and becoming a vector to family members.</td>
<td>Provide adequate personal protective equipment, rapid access to occupational health with efficient evaluation and testing if symptoms warrant, information and resources to avoid taking the infection home to family members, and accommodation to health care professionals at high risk because of age or health conditions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare me</td>
<td>Provide the training and support that allows provision of high-quality care to patients.</td>
<td>Develop rapid training to support a basic, critical knowledge base and appropriate backup and access to experts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support me</td>
<td>Provide support that acknowledges human factors in times of extreme work hours, uncertainty, and intense exposure to critically ill patients.</td>
<td>Clear and unequivocal communication must acknowledge that everyone is experiencing novel challenges and decisions, everyone needs to rely on each other in this crisis. Individuals should ask for help when they need it, no one needs to make difficult decisions alone, and we are all in this together.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care for me</td>
<td>Provide holistic support for the individual and their family should they need to be quarantined.</td>
<td>Provide physical support for individuals, including access to healthy meals and hydration while working, lodging for individuals on rapid-cycle shifts who do not live close to home, transportation assistance for those in steep-depressed weeks, and assistance with other tasks, and provide support for critical care needs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaddressed</td>
<td>Understand the organization will support the care of personal or family needs if the health care professional develops infection and provide innovative support for individuals living away from their families, support for tangible needs (eg, food, children), check-in and emotional support, and part-time if quarantine is necessary.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Recap

• We are in an unprecedented time – a true medical and societal inflection point

• Remember to (try):
  • Feel and acknowledge your feelings
  • Channel your worry into actions
  • Get your body and mind moving
  • Unplug (from toxicity)
  • Stay connected / Stay Kind
  • Create new routines / be flexible
  • Lead from where you stand
How Positive Psychology Can Help
Take a Deep Breath

Photo Credit: https://medium.com/@mikenseer/the-life-hack-you-can-take-anywhere-breathing-20f0627d0f73

Power of Laughter

• **Try laughing** – at yourself or something funny.

• Laughter is contagious, and data shows that even if it is not authentic, it still makes you feel better!

• Helps with coping, resiliency, health

• Check out this CocaCola commercial for a happiness booster or a laugh! [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1veWbLpGa78](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1veWbLpGa78)

Practice Gratitude!

• Deliver authentic praise for a job well done or positive feedback
• This strengthens connections between us, sparks motivations in both individuals, and boosts our happiness.
• This is easy, can be done in person or by email, and can make someone’s day! Be specific - give thanks and express your appreciation
• Other ways – gratitude journal, give back in service to someone, send positive energy to others, meditate, forgive

5 Ways to Express Gratitude

1. Vocalize
   - Verbally express your gratitude
   - Thank you's BIG and SMALL
   - Detail what left an impression

2. Written
   - Hand Written Notes
   - Gratitude Journal
   - Anonymous Notes

3. Service
   - Give back to people you love
   - Pay forward kind acts
   - Serve your community 1-2 hours

4. Energy
   - Give patience and understanding
   - Listen to those who need a listener
   - Imagine your love spreading to others

5. Forgiveness
   - Stop holding onto things
   - Respond instead of react
   - Forgive yourself

Photo Credit: https://www.betterbalancedmama.com/five-ways-express-gratitude/
A Few Unique Ways to Express Your Gratitude Today
Practice 3 Good Things
Forty-five good things: a prospective pilot study of the Three Good Things well-being intervention in the USA for healthcare worker emotional exhaustion, depression, work–life balance and happiness

J Bryan Sexton,1,2 Kathryn C Adair1
Gratitude exercise - Rx

• What am I grateful for in my life?
• What is going well in my life?
• What is working for me?
• Do this for 7-15 days
  • Think sinusitis
Happiness Boosters

• Reach for it when you need an infusion or energy or enthusiasm... or sooner

• Rewire your brain in small steps toward a happier state of being

• Be more productive, creative, efficient

• Know the feeling that tells you when you need it

*Mood changes vary from person to person but try some of these activities to find out what makes you most happy.
Illustrations: Getty, Huffington Post
Examples

- 3 Good Things
- Practice Gratitude
- Meditate
- Have something to look forward to
- Be a positive role model
- Connect with others
- Random acts of kindness
- Mindfulness – music, photos, brief pauses, breathing, reflective writing, laughter
- Exercise
- Tik Tok
Some examples...
Physical Distance ≠ Social Isolation!!

• **Share a good story!**
  - This connects us while boosting happiness, creativity, and open-mindedness in both parties.
  - Allows you to re-live the experience and repackage what was great about it.
  - The listener gets a chance to experience your positivity and are also reminded of their own positive experiences.

• **Reach out and talk to someone!**
  - The next time you are busy or overwhelmed at work, consider talking to someone about something non-medical for just a few moments, rather than burying yourself further in your work.
  - This actually INCREASES efficiency and productivity!

Soler-Gonzalez et al *Front Psychol.* 2017; 8: 1475.
The Power of Narratives in Medicine

During this unexpectedly emotional and stressful time, members of medical communities like UMMC often reflect on their own well-being as they focus on the immediate needs of others. By sharing stories, however, we can express our fears, challenges, triumphs and ingenuity and reconnect to our colleagues, friends, and even ourselves. In this spirit, UMMC’s Office of Well-Being in collaboration with the Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities is joining other institutions like Emory and University of Washington Medical School in offering a platform to enable any member of the UMMC community to share COVID-19 experiences and reflections (maximum 55 words).

This forum will help us understand, appreciate, or process something about this pandemic and the way it has radically changed our everyday lives, particularly for those at UMMC. We invite ALL members of the UMMC community to contribute their short reflections here. You may prefer to identify yourself or post anonymously.

The stories are posted below are 55 words or shorter and are published with permission. Be sure to count your words before submitting it. Would you like to see your story published?

Finding Courage Through Fear
Covid-19 brings fear to my mind. Health care workers courageously
Have a positive mindset!

- It is ok to be afraid, in fact, we should be! The trick is in the mindset!
- When you aren’t sure how to act or what to do, ask yourself, “what would my positive role model do”?
- When you are really overwhelmed, focus on the baby steps and put one foot in front of the other. Ask yourself, “what is the next thing I need to do?”
- Consider this quote from Mark Twain – “Courage is not the absence of fear, it is acting in spite of it.”
Finally, when talking with someone (or yourself)...
1) Consider the need behind the feeling first
2) then focus on how that need can best be addressed

Inspired by the work of Jan & Jon Manske (2005) http://radicalcompassion.com,
How to Make These Happen

• Commit to 1-2 of these practices today.
• Find a reliable time to do it, and hold yourself to that.
• Share these with others!
• Connect! Bring people together via Zoom for a non-business meeting!
• Notice your feelings and your mood – reach for these tools when you can most use them!
On the Horizon

• Look to you Chapter for ongoing Wellbeing-Programming
• Look to ACP, NAM, AMA for same
• Don’t be afraid to speak up, share your stories, write things down, express your thoughts
When this is over,
may we never again
take for granted
A handshake with a stranger
Full shelves at the store
Conversations with neighbors
A crowded theatre
Friday night out
The taste of communion
A routine checkup
The school rush each morning
Coffee with a friend
The stadium roaring
Each deep breath
A boring Tuesday
Life itself.

When this ends,
may we find
that we have become
more like the people
we wanted to be
we were called to be
we hoped to be
and may we stay
that way—better
for each other
because of the worst.

LAURA KELLY FANUCCI
There are so many helpful references and resources for this. Here are a few that support the evidence behind many of these theories, but there are many more beyond this.

- **Square breathing** - Ma et al, *Front Psychol*. 2017; 8: 874.
- **Happiness Boosters** – Scott et al [https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.59215086](https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.59215086); Wildschut et al, *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 17(5) · October 2008
- **Social Isolation/Loneliness in the Workplace** - Soler-Gonzalez et al *Front Psychol*. 2017; 8: 1475.
- **Wheel of Needs** – Manske [http://radicalcompassion.com](http://radicalcompassion.com)

Helpful Books on Happiness:

- **Authentic Happiness** by Martin Seligman
- **Stumbling on Happiness** by Daniel Gilbert
- **The Happiness Advantage** by Shawn Achor
- **Happiness Is an Inside Job: Practicing for a Joyful Life** by Sylvia Boorstein
- **The Happiness Project** by Gretchen Rubin
- **The Happiness Hypothesis** by Jonathan Haidt (+ Summary)
- **The Happiness Equation** by Neil Pasricha
- **Happiness by Design: Finding Pleasure and Purpose in Everyday Life** by Paul Dolan
- **The Happiness Factor: How to Be Happy No Matter What!** by Kirk Wilkinson
- **The How of Happiness** by Sonja Lyubomirsky
- **Solve for Happy** by Mo Gadwat
- **Happiness: Lessons from a New Science** by Richard Layard and Baron Layard
Seek and find some serenity....
Questions?!  Comments?  rwardrop@umc.edu