BURNOUT AND WELLNESS SOLUTIONS FOR FACULTY

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1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Identify strategies to address burnout and improve wellness at the individual and section level.
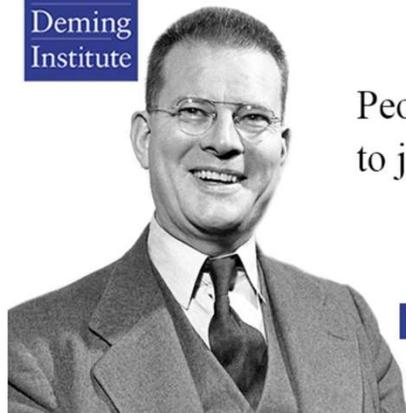
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A BAD SYSTEM WILL BEAT A GOOD PERSON EVERY TIME
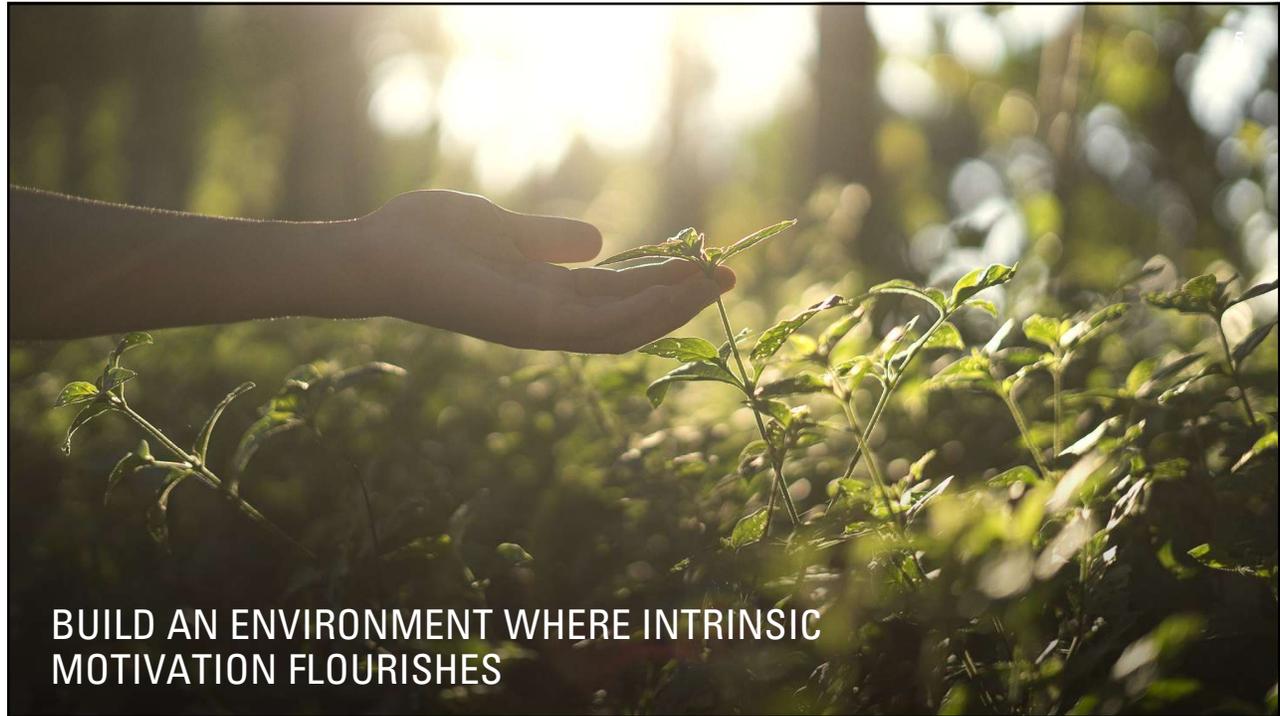

Quotes - The W. Edwards Deming Institute, image ChatGPT

3

3

Only by creating a management system that supports and respects people working in that system can an organization reach its potential.

Deming on Management: Joy in Work - The W. Edwards Deming Institute

4

4

BUILD AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE INTRINSIC MOTIVATION FLOURISHES

5

KEY STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS & EDUCATORS

01	02	03	04	05
Foster autonomy	Encourage mastery and growth	Connect to purpose and meaning	Build a supportive culture	Recognize and reward effort

Shanafelt, T. D. 2017 *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, *92*(1), 129–146; Gagne, M. J. Organiz. Behav. 26, 331–362 (2005) Ryan, Richard M.,. *Self-Determination Theory : Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness*, Guilford Publications, 2017.
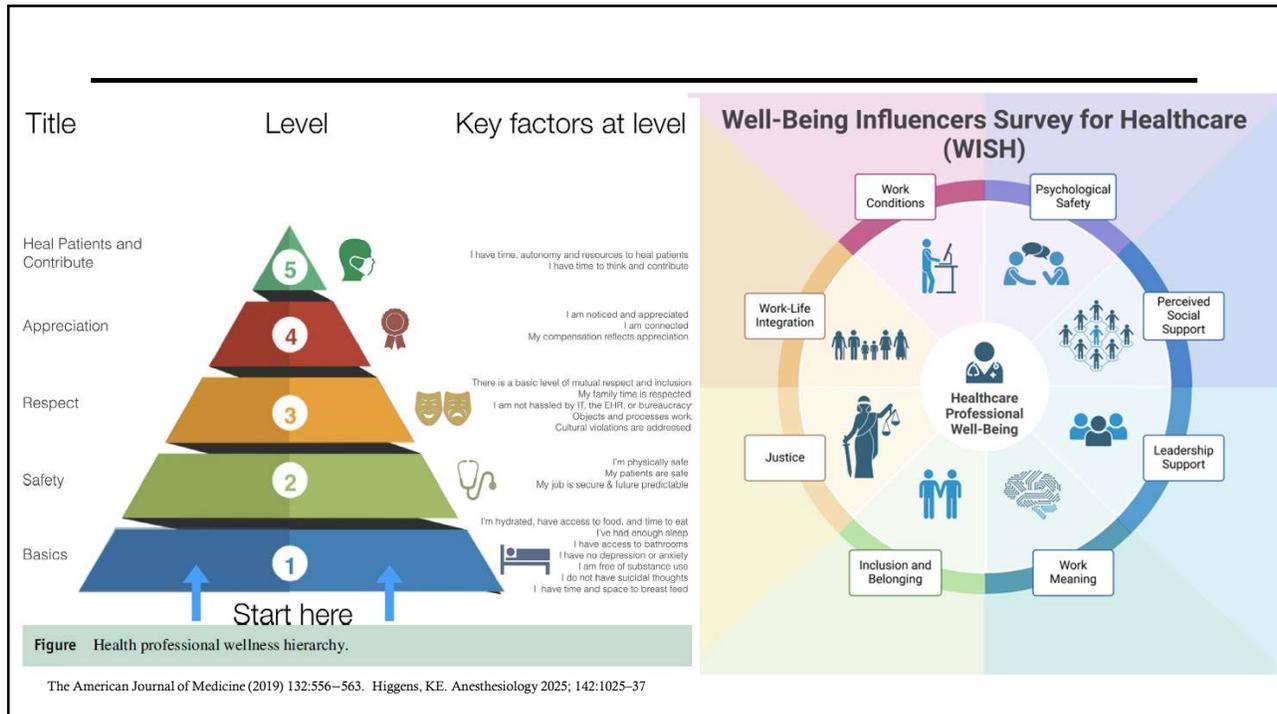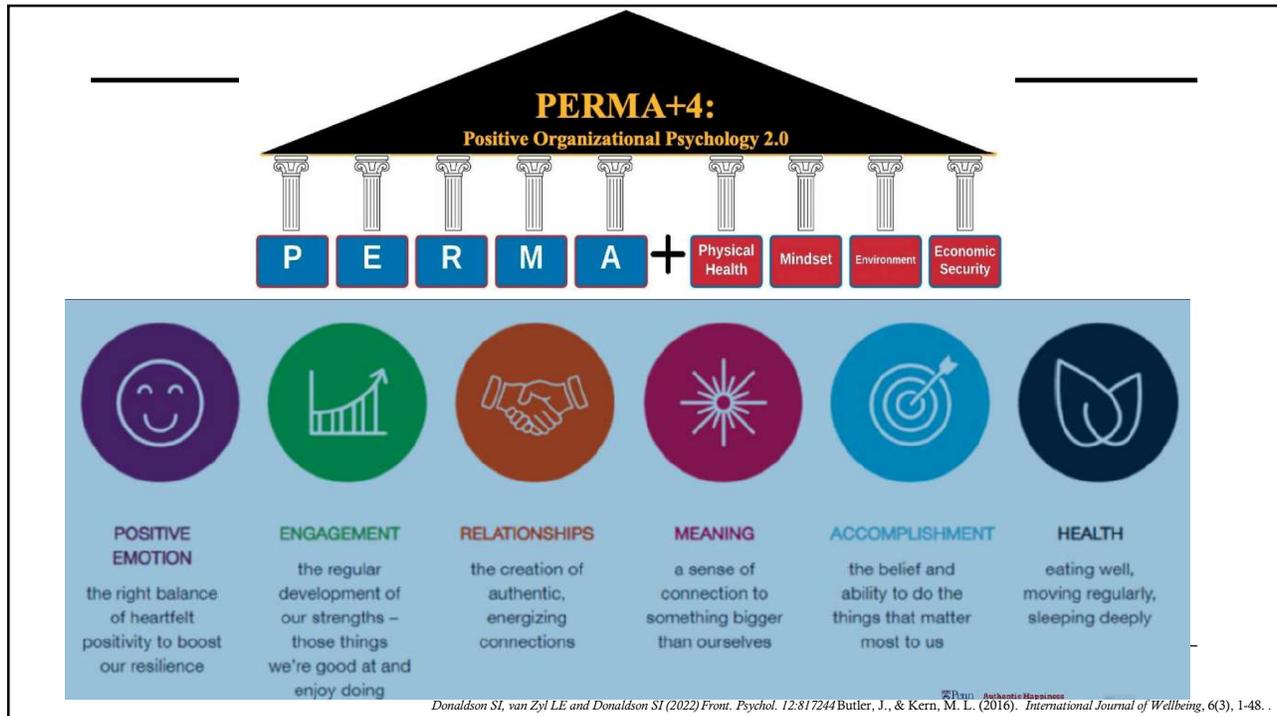
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Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

7

Figure Health professional wellness hierarchy.

The American Journal of Medicine (2019) 132:556−563. Higgens, KE. Anesthesiology 2025; 142:1025–37

8

4

PERMA+4:
Positive Organizational Psychology 2.0

P E R M A + Physical Health | Mindset | Environment | Economic Security

POSITIVE EMOTION
the right balance of heartfelt positivity to boost our resilience

ENGAGEMENT
the regular development of our strengths – those things we're good at and enjoy doing

RELATIONSHIPS
the creation of authentic, energizing connections

MEANING
a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves

ACCOMPLISHMENT
the belief and ability to do the things that matter most to us

HEALTH
eating well, moving regularly, sleeping deeply

Donaldson SI, van Zyl LE and Donaldson SI (2022) Front. Psychol. 12:817244 Butler, J., & Kern, M. L. (2016). *International Journal of Wellbeing,* 6(3), 1-48. .

9

Fellowship Program Director Responsibilities

Administration

Teaching

Scholarly activity

Recruitment

Evaluation

Supervision

Oversight

10

10

BURNOUT AND FULFILLMENT IN FPDS

Inadequate
protected time

Inadequate support
from leadership

Burden of
administrative
tasks

Burnout and stress

Overwhelming
clinical demands

Plans to step down
as PD

Challenges with
faculty and
recruitment

- Critical role of the program coordinator
- Professional Fulfillment
- Negative effect of protected time reductions
- Frustration with the ACGME survey
- Disparities in pay and promotion for program directors

Fiedorek, Thomas et al. Academic Pediatrics, Volume 25, Issue 8, 103005
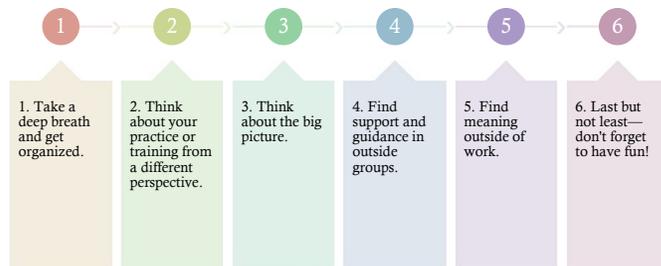
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CONSEQUENCES OF BURNOUT

- Decreased engagement and empathy
- Impaired leadership effectiveness
- Negative effects on trainee experience and learning climate
- Risk of attrition from academic roles
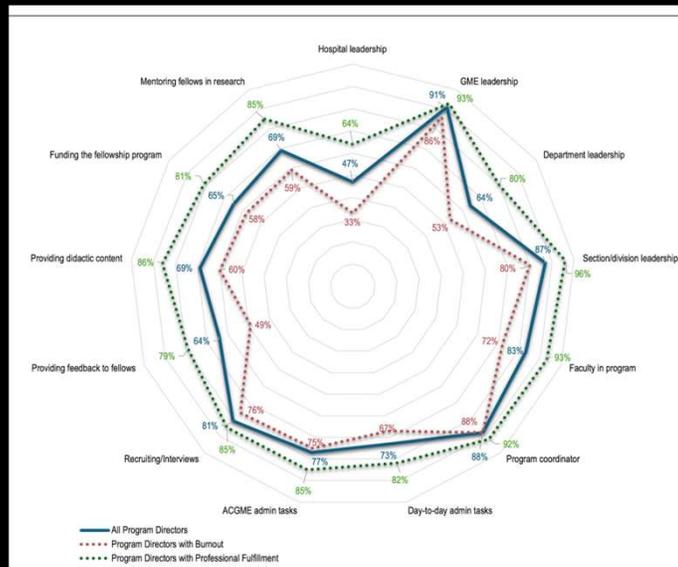
Fiedorek, Thomas et al. Academic Pediatrics, Volume 25, Issue 8, 103005

12

INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL STRATEGIES

1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Take a deep breath and get organized.	2. Think about your practice or training from a different perspective.	3. Think about the big picture.	4. Find support and guidance in outside groups.	5. Find meaning outside of work.	6. Last but not least—don't forget to have fun!

13

INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL STRATEGIES

Foster **self-awareness** and recognize signs of burnout

Prioritize boundaries and time management

Engage in **peer support or mentoring networks**

Mindfulness and reflective practices
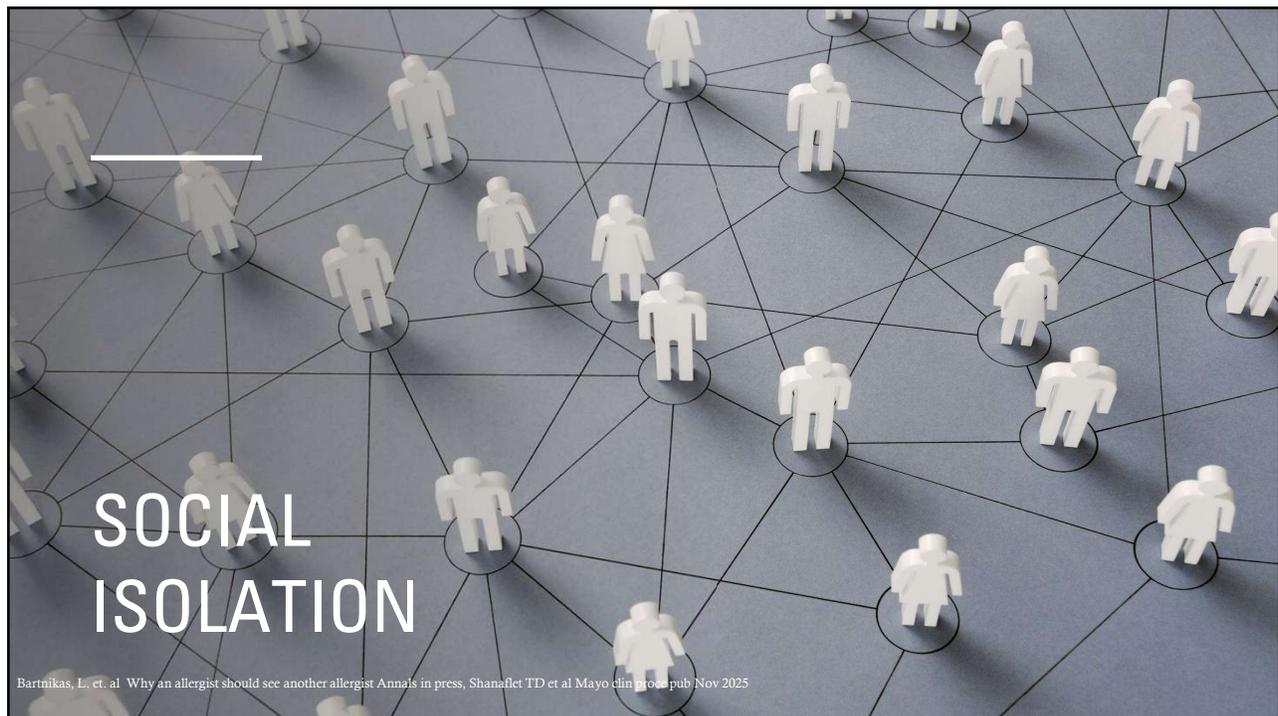
Advocate for realistic workloads

14

5-step "PEACE" process

- P - Plan: Actually sitting down to ask and answer the hard questions about what I truly want and when I'll do the work
- E - Experiment: Moving from just knowing about good strategies (like daily writing) to actually doing them consistently for a few weeks
- A - Analyze: Pausing to honestly analyze the data from my experiments, like tracking my time to see if it aligns with my values
- C - Challenge: Holding my limiting beliefs (like "I'm not a morning person") up to the light and asking, "Is this really true?"
- E - Establish: Actively creating or tapping into a support network for accountability instead of trying to do it all alone.

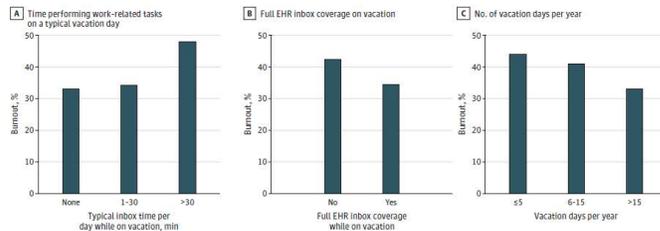National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity

15

SOCIAL ISOLATION

Bartnikas, L. et. al Why an allergist should see another allergist Annals in press, Shanaflet TD et al Mayo clin proce pub Nov 2025

16

EHR IMPACT ON VACATION

Figure. Personal and Institutional Vacation Behaviors and Prevalence of Burnout

Graphs show burnout rates in relation to time performing work-related tasks on a typical vacation day (A), full electronic health record (EHR) inbox coverage during vacation (B), and number of vacation days per year (C).

Improved physical and mental health

Lower risk of cardiovascular mortality

Reduced cellular-level markers of stress

Fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety

Sinsky, C. JAMA Network Open. 2024;7(1):e2351635
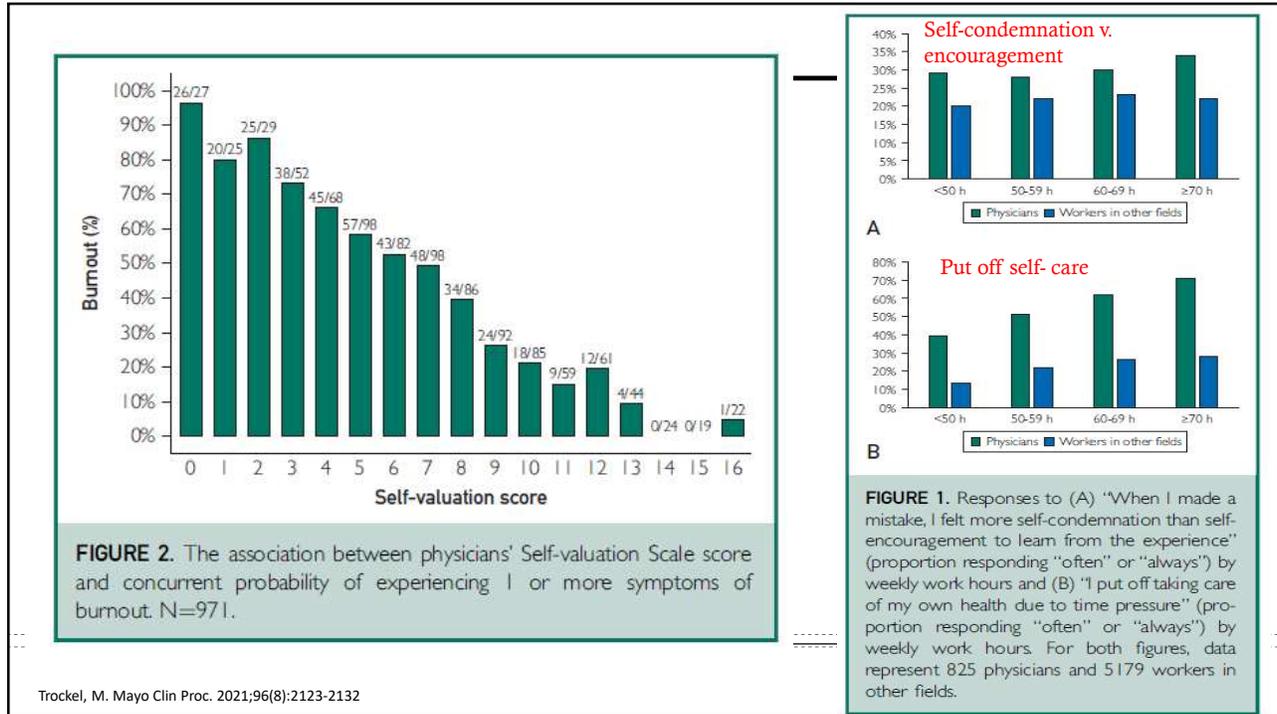
17

Self- valuation

is the constructive prioritization of personal well-being coupled with a growth mindset perspective that seeks to learn and improve as the primary response to errors and imperfections

How often have you experienced the following?

| During the past two weeks...	Never Score=4	Rarely Score=3	Sometimes Score=2	Often Score=1	Always Score=0
a. When I made a mistake, I felt more self-condemnation than self-encouragement to learn from the experience	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. I was less compassionate with myself than I was with others	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c. I put off taking care of my own health due to time pressure	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d. Taking care of my needs seemed incompatible with taking care of my patients' needs	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

Trockel, MT. Mayo Clin Proc. 2019;94(10):2022-2031

18

FIGURE 2. The association between physicians' Self-valuation Scale score and concurrent probability of experiencing 1 or more symptoms of burnout. N=971.

Self-condemnation v. encouragement

Put off self- care

FIGURE 1. Responses to (A) "When I made a mistake, I felt more self-condemnation than self-encouragement to learn from the experience" (proportion responding "often" or "always") by weekly work hours and (B) "I put off taking care of my own health due to time pressure" (proportion responding "often" or "always") by weekly work hours. For both figures, data represent 825 physicians and 5179 workers in other fields.

Trockel, M. Mayo Clin Proc. 2021;96(8):2123-2132

19

SECTION/TEAM-LEVEL APPROACHES

- Build **psychological safety** within teams
- Encourage **open discussions about workload and wellness**
- Share teaching and administrative responsibilities
- Recognize and celebrate faculty achievements

20
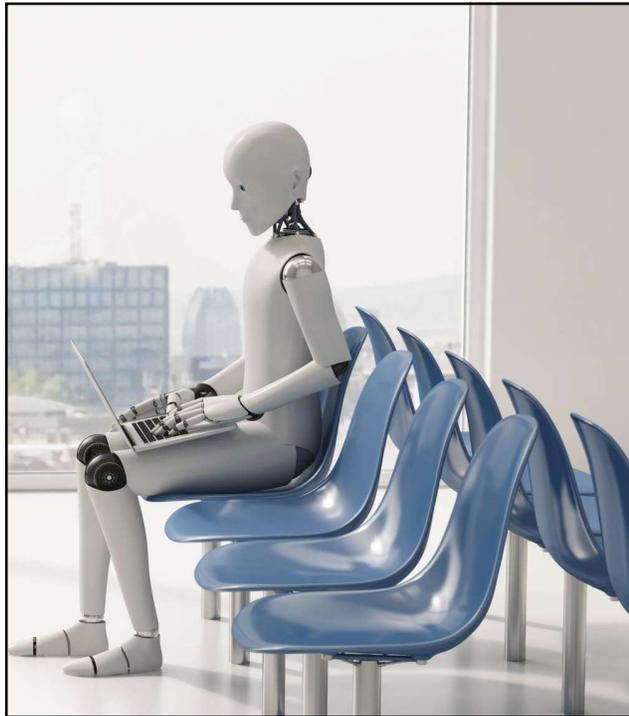
WHAT IS HUMAN FACTORS ENGINEERING (HFE)?

- HFE studies how **humans interact with systems and environments**
- Goal: **optimize performance, safety, and wellbeing**
- Core idea: *"Design the system to fit the human, not the human to fit the system."*

Zamudio L. J Patient Saf. Volume 21, Number 7 Suppl 1, October 2025

21

KEY HUMAN FACTORS PRINCIPLES

Workload management – match cognitive demands to human capacity

Usability and workflow design – streamline processes and reduce friction

Situational awareness – improve clarity and communication

Standardization – minimize unnecessary variability

Resilience engineering – design systems that adapt to stress

O'Dea A, et al. BMJ Open Quality 2025;14:e003222; Human Factors and Systems Thinking in Healthcare | American College of Healthcare Executives

22

APPLYING HFE TO THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR ROLE

Identify **pain points** in the PD's daily workflow (emails, evaluations, scheduling)

Simplify **information systems** and reduce redundant data entry

Align **policies and technology** with human limitations

Promote **shared mental models** across faculty and administration

23

COGNITIVE LOAD AND DECISION FATIGUE

- PDs make constant micro-decisions—curriculum, resident performance, conflicts
- High cognitive load leads to **errors, frustration, and fatigue**
- HFE strategies:
  - Automate repetitive tasks
  - Use visual dashboards for information clarity
  - Build structured decision aids

24
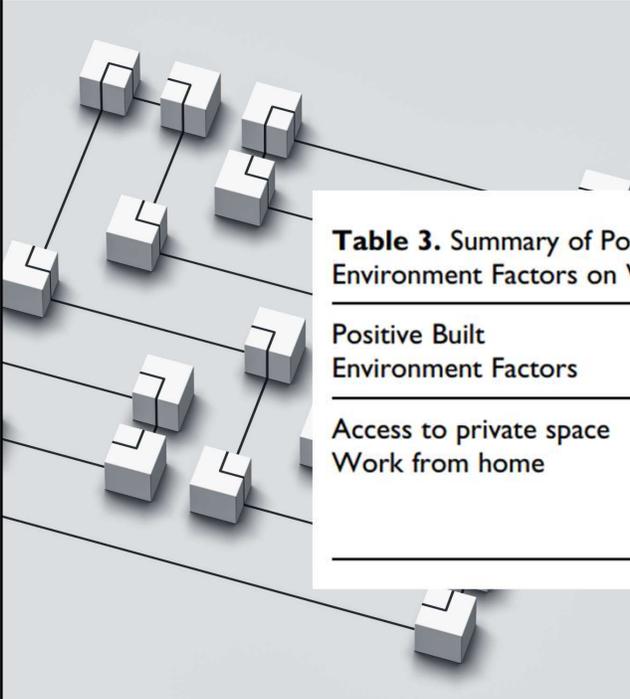
DESIGNING FOR WELLBEING

Table 3. Summary of Positive and Negative Built Environment Factors on Well-Being.

Positive Built Environment Factors	Negative Built Environment Factors
Access to private space Work from home	Excessive noise Poor patient flow Lack of natural light Obsolete furniture

quiet spaces,

tween teaching,
ection time

ne
s and meeting

lize recovery

Rossi et al. Health Environments Research & Design Journal 16(3

25

HOW TO PROMOTE KINDNESS ON A POPULATION LEVEL?

- **Seeing acts of kindness and caring**
  - Evoke elevation
  - Promote altruism
  - Promote a sense of connection

- **Seeing kindness media**
  - Can affect acceptance of others
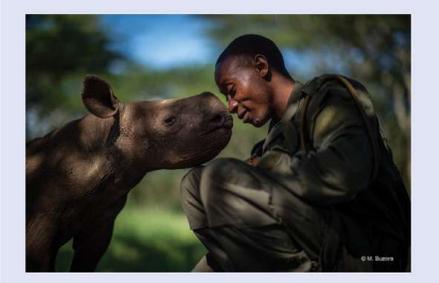 - Reduce dehumanization
  - Mutual respect
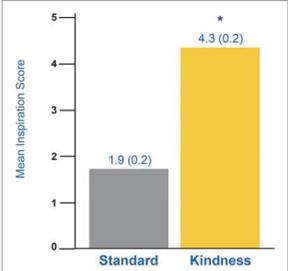
FIGURE 1 | Effect of Standard vs. Kindness Media on being inspired. Each bar reflects viewing group mean of self-reported responses to "feeling touched, moved, or inspired." *p < 0.001.

David A. Fryburg. Frontiers in Psychology. Jan 2021

26

Joy in Practice

Swensen, SJ. The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety 2017; 43:308–313

SIX EVIDENCE-BASED ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THREE PRIMARY OUTCOMES FOR JOY IN PRACTICE

27

WHEN TRYING TO SOLVE A PROBLEM

Challenge your assumptions

What is the data for this?

Facts = observable, neutral, no interpretation.

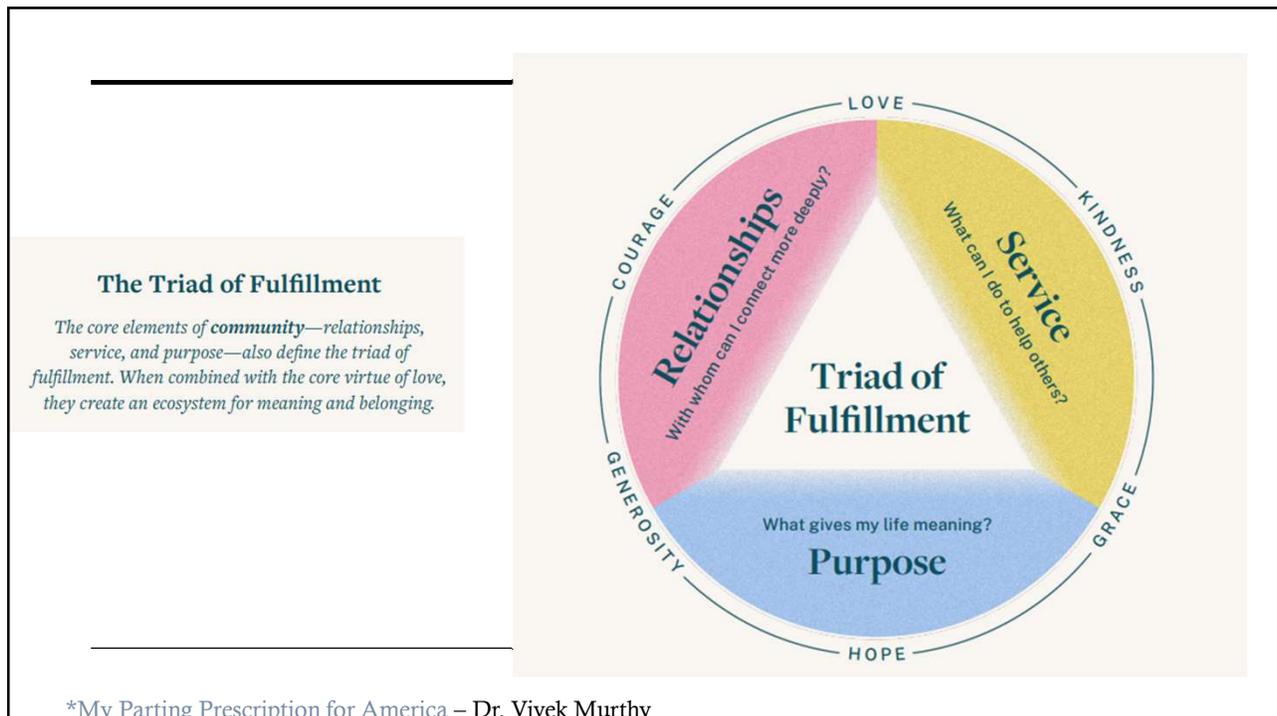Mind Your Mindset by Hyatt and Miller

28

28

CHALLE[NGE]

- What are the [...] frustration?

e.g.) coordinato[r...]

	Coordinator	PD/APD	Due
July	• Orientation for new fellows • Register A/I fellows for immunology course • Allergy: register new fellows on ABAI • Rheum: Register fellows in ACR • Schedule CCC and PEC meetings • Move applications to cortex/thalamus	• Orientation • Submit APE • Start to review applications	APE New fellows orientation
August	• Faculty availability for interview • Invitations to faculty for interview dates • Send invitations to applicants for interviews	• WebADS • Finalize list of candidates to interview	• Schedule applicant interviews • WebADS due
September	• Coordinate/run interviews • Schedule rank meeting • Verify correct number of rank spots in NRMP • Gather 3-month evaluations for new fellows • Review 1st year fellows elective schedules		
October	• Coordinate/run interviews	• Review interview data for rank meeting	• Rank meeting

29

The Triad of Fulfillment

*The core elements of **community**—relationships, service, and purpose—also define the triad of fulfillment. When combined with the core virtue of love, they create an ecosystem for meaning and belonging.*

*My Parting Prescription for America – Dr. Vivek Murthy

30

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Barsade, S. G. (2002). *Administrative Science Quarterly, 47*(4), 644-675

31

REFLECTION/DISCUSSION

What burnout challenges are you facing in your role?

Which strategies have been effective (or ineffective)?

How can we create sustainable wellness practices in our programs?

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

32

REFLECTION/DISCUSSION

> *"Design the system to fit the human, not the human to fit the system."*

What system-level barriers affect your wellbeing as a PD?

Which HFE principles could you apply immediately?

33