

Becker's Hospital Review | 3 ways physicians can avoid burnout before the holidays

BECKER'S **HOSPITAL REVIEW**

As we near the end of 2018, budgets are finalized, and medical providers reflect on the year's performance.

Whether it's excessive workloads, insurance changes or regulatory burdens, the demands just keep piling up. At no time in history has the medical industry faced so much pressure and change. For those in the industry, it may come as no surprise that more than [50 percent](#) of physicians experience symptoms of burnout.

Many [factors](#) can impact wellbeing of physicians, according to Darrell Kirch, MD, president of the Association of American Medical Colleges, including diversity, inclusion, team structures and support inside the workplace. These factors impact how quickly we can adopt change. Simply put, medical care providers are exhausted because the pace of change has accelerated more quickly than their ability to adapt. The rate of technological advancement during the year 2000 will be replicated every 30 minutes in 2020.

What used to be well-planned and linear is now an agile, chaos-driven environment requiring more energy than ever before to keep up.

Interestingly, energy is the root of all things. The same energy that ignites communities, creates light and fuels our transportation also powers our minds and bodies. New [physics](#) tells us we may actually be frozen light. What were once considered the building blocks of all matter, subatomic particles, aren't really made of energy, but simply are energy. Feeling burnout means we are no longer able to feel consistently positive energy.

Defined in physics as the capacity to work, energy can be renewed physically, mentally or spiritually. I left the corporate executive world two years ago to help companies understand how to tap into their own employees' energy potential to boost productivity, engagement and ultimately, profits. Our focus within the workplace has helped people recharge through aligning personal strengths with corporate strategy, including diverse thinking on teams, and tapping into personal power through spiritual recharging.

When employees recharge, they increase their personal energy, reduce burnout and become more productive. A recent Gallup poll found employees who use their strengths, skills and abilities every day are six times more likely to be engaged at work, 8 percent more productive and 15 percent less likely to leave their jobs. The engine that drives engagement is powered by recharging our "individual energy."

Here are three ways physicians can recharge before year's end:

1. Choose something in your life for which to be grateful and focus on that feeling. Our brains are naturally wired to remember the negative occurrences because from an evolutionary standpoint, it helps us reduce risk and protect ourselves (like remembering the sound of a rattlesnake). The nature of medical care places providers in an onslaught of unfortunate situations, illnesses and tragedy. When the mind is completely occupied in gratitude, however, it cannot simultaneously feel burnout. A [study](#) published through John Hopkins showed improvement in physician well-being by documenting three things for which they were thankful within two hours of bedtime each day. This conscious shift to gratitude helps "rewire" our outlook and recharge positive energy.

2. Believe that you can affect your life in a positive way. Research shows our positive beliefs alone can recreate the [effects of drugs](#), reduce pain, improve relationships and boost overall well-being. Speakers like Tony Robbins make millions by sharing techniques to help people set their personal vision and practice believing in obtaining it. Quantum physics also

reinforces the fact that our personal observations and behaviors shape the world around us. In short, focus your energy in the belief that you are making a difference, healing others and accomplishing positive things.

3. Take time for biofield balancing, prayer or other regular spiritual practices. They are proven to significantly improve physical and mental well-being. Each of these practices are rooted in the simple, abundant and endless supply of universal energy. The source of this “light” is referenced in many religions and traditions dating back to the origins of mankind. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, we just have to be still long enough to welcome it.

The simple act of stepping into a quiet room for a few minutes between patients to take a few deep breaths, imagine a balanced energy flowing throughout your body and visualize a positive outcome for your next encounter can instantly reset burnout and stress levels.

The current pace of change is exhausting, but these three techniques can help reduce both temporary and long-lasting burnout in the medical services industry. Practicing before the holidays will help boost this year’s end and prepare you for a fresh start.

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