SUSTAINING PROVIDER WELL-BEING DURING COVID-19
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Reasons

◦ The extreme stress, uncertainty, instability, and difficult medical nature of global infectious disease outbreaks, such as Coronavirus (Covid-19), require special attention to the needs of healthcare personnel.

◦ Taking care of yourself and encouraging others to practice self-care sustains the ability to care for those in need.
Challenges

- Surge in care demands
- Changes in schedules, usual routines and ways you practice
- Ongoing risk of infection to yourself and loved ones
- Equipment challenges - shortages, uncomfortable, limit mobility and communication
- Providing support as well as medical care
- Psychological stress in the outbreak settings - while helping those in need can be rewarding - but also difficulty as workers may experience fear, grief, frustration, guilt, insomnia, and exhaustion.
Meet Basic Needs

- Be sure to:
  - Eat and drink at regular times, stay hydrated
  - Sleep-bank for sleep when sleep routines are irregular, create a routine before bed to signal your body and mind ready for sleep, optimize your sleep environment, limits exposure to screens at least 20 mins before bed

- Becoming biologically deprived puts you at risk and may also compromise your ability to care for you patients.
Take Breaks

- Give yourself time for quality breaks
- Whenever possible, allow yourself to do something unrelated to work that you find comforting, fun or relaxing
- Often healthcare providers feel guilty when they are not at work—recognize that taking appropriate rest leads to proper care of patients after your break
- Take a walk, exercise, listen to music, read a book, do those activities you find soothing and comforting.
- Try to practice mindfulness skills to manage intrusive stressful/anxious thinking
- **Validate any emotions you might be feeling.** There is no right or wrong way to process the COVID-19 experience. It is normal to feel a range of emotions including being overwhelmed, frustrated or angry, worried, anxious, restless, agitated, sad or fatigued.
Connect with Colleagues

- Talk to your colleagues and receive support from one another
- Infectious outbreaks can isolate people in fear and anxiety. Tell your story and listen to others’
- Do your best to express gratitude and work as part of a team
Communicate Constructively

- Communicate with colleagues clearly and in an optimistic manner
- Try to express frustrations or need correction constructively
- Compliments can be powerful motivators and stress moderators
- Share your frustrations but make sure to include solutions.

- A supportive work culture is vital to maintaining the resilience of clinicians during a crisis such as COVID-19
Contact Friends and Family

- Contact your loved ones
- They are an anchor of support outside the healthcare system.
- Sharing and staying connected may help them better support you.
Stay Updated while Limiting Media Exposure

- Rely on trusted sources of information
- Participate in meetings to stay informed of the situation, plans and events
- Graphic imagery and worrisome messages will increase your stress and may reduce your effectiveness and general well-being. Limit media exposure to a time of day and length of time that you find you can manage effectively.
Self Check-Ins

- Monitor yourself over time for any symptoms of depression or stress disorder:
  - Prolonged sadness
  - Difficulty sleeping
  - Intrusive memories
  - Hopelessness or Helplessness
- Talk to a peer, supervisor, or seek professional help if needed.
- **Practice self-compassion.** There is no road map. You are doing the best you can in a difficult situation. Take your situation day by day or hour by hour, if needed. Take breaks from work when you can.
Self Check-Ins

- When you notice stress and anxiety: pounding heart, racing thoughts, feelings of overwhelm
  - Pause to do deep breathing
  - Notice your thoughts, without judgement, allow the pause
  - Reflect on what you might need and how to get that need met
- Realize as you experience more stress your emotions are in an adjustment phase
  - Take time everyday to pause and be present with your thoughts
Honor Your Service

- Remind yourself that despite obstacles and frustrations, you are fulfilling a noble calling-taking care of others.

- Recognize your colleagues-either formally or informally-for their service.

- **Recognize the valuable role you and your colleagues play on the front lines of COVID-19**, you are making a difference and taking care of those most in need.
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Sessions available to Residents

https://snthomas.youcanbook.me/

Some free helpful resources available:

Calm
Headspace
Sovello
MyStrength
Find ways to see the positive. It can be easy to get overwhelmed hearing about the growing number of confirmed cases, shortage of resources and loss of life.

Try to find the hopeful stories about communities coming together to support local businesses, feed hungry children and families, donate money and critical supplies, and recognize front-line workers, like you, for their sacrifice.