



FOCUSING PROGRAM DIRECTOR ENERGY... OPTIMIZING RESULTS


Justin L. Lockman, MD, MEd
 Associate Chair, Education
 Anesthesiology and Critical Care Medicine
 AASPD November 2021

1

DISCLOSURES


- No relevant financial disclosures
- Current PAPDA president
- Current SPA Board of Directors member



2

DISCLAIMERS


- I'm not very good at being vulnerable
 - Even worse with strangers
- I'm not perfect at doing the things I will talk about here



3

OBJECTIVES

- By the end of this discussion, the learner will be able to:
 - Discuss causes of stress for program directors
 - Create a resilient system to decrease stress
 - Learn about an empty inbox and how it can change your life



4

BEING A PROGRAM DIRECTOR...




5

BEING A PROGRAM DIRECTOR...



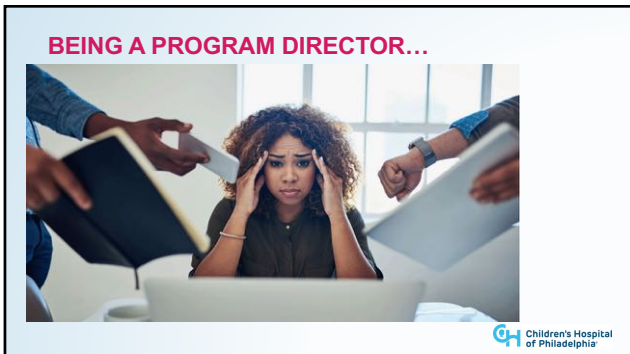

6



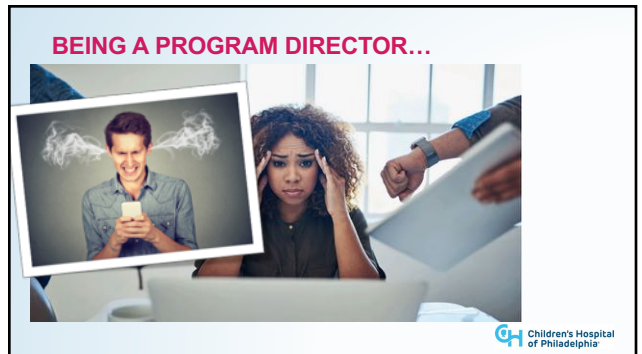
7



8



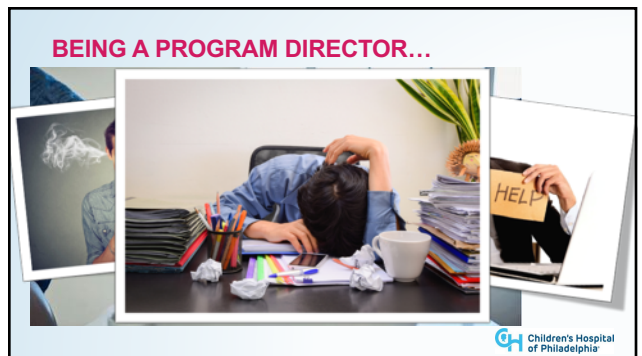
9



10



11



12

CAUSES OF STRESS

- Alphabet soup
 - ACGME, ABA, GMEC, ECFMG, JCAHO, NRMP, ERAS...



13

CAUSES OF STRESS

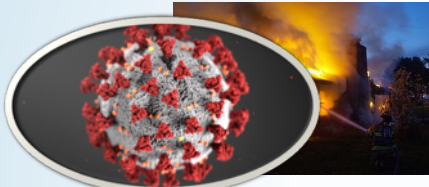
- Alphabet soup
 - ACGME, ABA, GMEC, ECFMG, JCAHO, NRMP, ERAS...
- Constant emergencies



14

CAUSES OF STRESS

- Alphabet soup
 - ACGME, ABA, GMEC, ECFMG, JCAHO, NRMP, ERAS...
- Constant emergencies



15

CAUSES OF STRESS

- Alphabet soup
 - ACGME, ABA, GMEC, ECFMG, JCAHO, NRMP, ERAS...
- Constant emergencies
- Human Resources issues



16

CAUSES OF STRESS

- Alphabet soup
 - ACGME, ABA, GMEC, ECFMG, JCAHO, NRMP, ERAS...
- Constant emergencies
- Human Resources issues
- Not to mention.... My own life, family, career, worries




17

AND OF COURSE... RECRUITMENT / ONBOARDING / OFFBOARDING




18

I QUICKLY REALIZED
NOT ONLY WAS I
NOT THRIVING,



19

I QUICKLY REALIZED
NOT ONLY WAS I
NOT THRIVING,
I WAS AT RISK FOR
TOTAL CAREER FAILURE



20


AND THOSE FIRES I WAS PUTTING OUT...




21

SO... WHAT TO DO?



- Think strategically
- Create a resilient system
- Design your ideal team
- Find/use administrative support
- Clear your inbox
- Celebrate small moments of joy



22

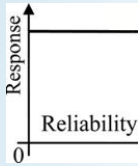
THINK STRATEGICALLY

- Given infinite tasks and finite time... What *should* I be spending my time on?
 - Triage
 - Impact
 - Focus is critical
 - Concept of deep work





23

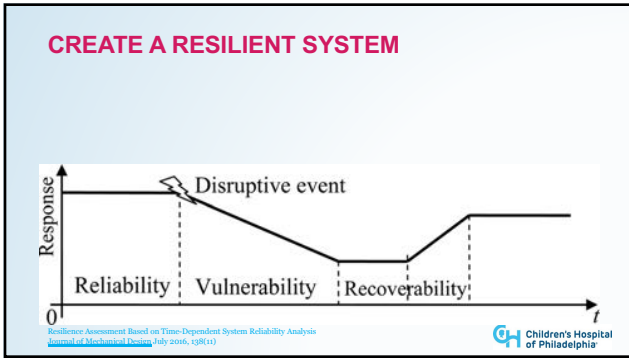
CREATE A RESILIENT SYSTEM



Resilience Assessment Based on Time-Dependent System Reliability Analysis
Journal of Mechanical Design, July 2016, 138(11)



24



25

CREATE A RESILIENT SYSTEM

- Disruptive events are the NORM
 - Unpredictability is the one predictable thing!

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

26

CREATE A RESILIENT SYSTEM

- Disruptive events are the NORM
 - Unpredictability is the one predictable thing!
- Every time you solve a problem, solve it forever (if you can)!**

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

27

CREATE A RESILIENT SYSTEM

Examples:

- Fellow jeopardy system
- ACGME WebADS updates
- Interview day nonclinical time

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

28

CREATE A RESILIENT SYSTEM

Will your program keep running if you don't show up?

- Do not rely on an individuals
- Build (and share) checklists

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

29

DESIGN YOUR IDEAL TEAM

- Associate/Assistant Program Director(s)
- Rotation Directors
- Recruitment Chair
- Didactic Course Director
- Mentorship leader
- Onboarding Chair

- Find the right people, give them clear instructions, let them build their own teams, and trust them (with oversight)
- Be ready to step in if you need to, but don't step on toes

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

30

FIND AND USE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- We like to do things ourselves
- Program coordinator likely looking for ways to support you better
 - Regular meetings key
 - Clear and written instructions about what to do/how/style
 - Annual checklist
- When people grab you in the hallway with a problem... tell them to send you an email with their proposed solution and then set up a meeting to discuss



31

CLEAR YOUR INBOX (AND YOUR BRAIN)

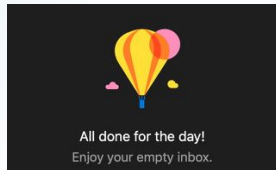
- Your brain is great at having ideas, terrible at storing them
 - Fear of dropping the ball creates stress and anxiety
 - Create an AIRTIGHT system to eliminate this risk



32

CLEAR YOUR INBOX (AND YOUR BRAIN)

- Use inbox as an inbox – triage to other folders
 - Including: Brain dump into your computer
 - Respond only if < 2 min
- My folders:
 - Inbox
 - Urgent To do
 - To do
 - Waiting for
 - Archive
 - Trash



33

CLEAR YOUR INBOX (AND YOUR BRAIN)

- Before going home, check “Urgent To Do” Folder
- When time to focus, check “To Do” folder
- When asking others to help/do something, copy yourself and put that in the “Waiting For” folder
 - Periodically check in with people
 - Never use brain power to remember these things



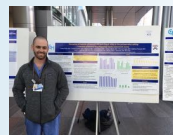
34

CELEBRATE SMALL MOMENTS OF JOY



35

CELEBRATE SMALL MOMENTS OF JOY



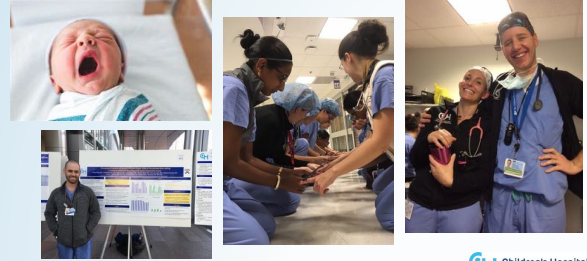
36

CELEBRATE SMALL MOMENTS OF JOY



37

CELEBRATE SMALL MOMENTS OF JOY



38

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- Getting Things Done (Allen) is a great book about empty inboxes and organizational systems
- I have benefitted along the way from great mentorship, great teammates, and great administrative support



39

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!



40