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Put Some Slack in Your Rope: Resident Work/Life Balance

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Presenter Disclosures

Erin Robles-Sheeman, DPM, FACFAS
Nothing to Disclose

Allison Ventura, PhD
Nothing to Disclose

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Learning Objectives

1. Define successful work-life integration
2. Provide examples of wellness and resilience strategies to manage your time and expectations during residency

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Work and Life?

- Work
 - activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a purpose or result
 - task(s) to be undertaken

- Life
 - the experience of being alive

Work is a part of Life
Work is not Life




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Slack in Your Rope?

Resident Work/Life Balance?

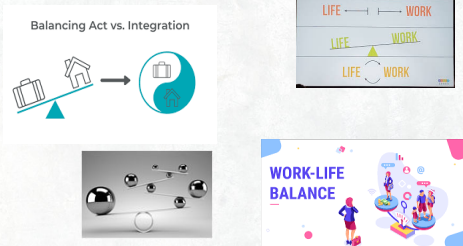


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Balance does **NOT** exist!


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Balance vs. Integration?







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Integration means coordinating, blending and bringing elements of work and life into a unified whole.






Balance doesn't work because it implies a zero-sum game.

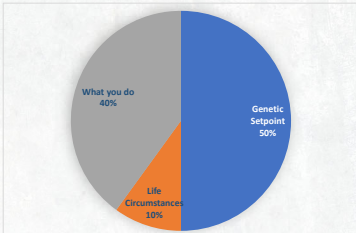
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How do you **integrate** during residency (& beyond)?







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Etiology of Happiness... for Work *and* Life



...What you do matters... not a victim!








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Resilience

Resilience: the ability to survive *and* thrive in despite life's daily ups and downs, curve balls, and stressors.

- **Survive:**
 - Navigate stressful situations successfully
 - Bounce back after a challenging, adverse situation
 - Minimize life suffering
- **Thrive:**
 - Ability to flourish in life
 - Optimize well-being and life satisfaction
 - Be as effective as possible in everything you do

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Work-Life Integration... for Happiness, Wellness and Resilience

- Ordinary processes...NOT magic
- Can be learned through healthy skills, strategies, and routines
- Must be done regularly ... doesn't ever stop



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Recipe for Life Ingredients

- Developing helpful and optimistic thinking
- Seeking "good" social support
- Good sleep
- Clarifying values and doing what matters most
- Emotion regulation
- Regular exercise
- Role models
- Mindfulness-based practices
- Purposefully practicing gratitude
- Perseverance
- Scheduling time for recreation and relaxation
- Receiving mentoring
- Cultivating positive emotions
- Healthy, balanced diet
- Problem-solving skills

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Values

- Represent chosen life paths that motivate us, enrich our lives, and give us a sense of purpose and meaning
- Are like a life compass or roadmap that points us in the direction that matters most
- Signify who we want to be known by our family, friends, work colleagues, and community members



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Value Domains: The Many Hats We Wear

- Resident
- Colleague
- Romantic or intimate partner
- Family Member- Parent, Sibling, Son/daughter
- Friend
- Spiritual
- Self care/health

"A meaningful life comes when people are happy in their work and love."
- Sigmund Freud

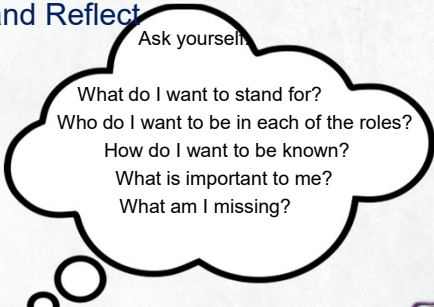


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Stop and Reflect

Ask yourself:

- What do I want to stand for?
- Who do I want to be in each of the roles?
- How do I want to be known?
- What is important to me?
- What am I missing?



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Clarifying Values by Creating "Value Statements"

How you want your life to be in certain domains.


- **Example Value Statements:**
 - **Work-Life Integration**
 - Do my best, perfection does not exist
 - There will always be more to do, it's okay
 - Get sleep and exercise
 - Take time to chat with my colleagues
 - When at home, be at home- turn off notifications

* make these "values statements" for ALL domains

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Mindfulness

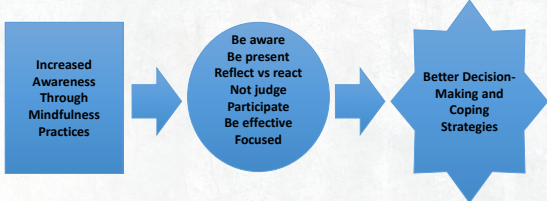
- The direct opposite of **mindlessness**
- Mindfulness is “the **awareness** that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally with an element of openness to the unfolding of experiences moment-by-moment.”
–Kabat-Zinn, 2003



Mind Full, or Mindful?


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How Mindfulness Practices Work



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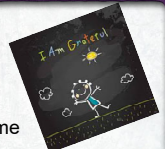
Mindfulness Activities



- Breathe 3min, 3x day
- Listening/conversations
- Coffee breaks
- Put down the phone
- Go outside & “just be”
- Commit to “being there” in activities
- Mindful exercise
- Mantra of the day
- Savor your meals
- Enjoy the pleasant experiences

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Gratitude as Special Type of Positive Attention



- The felt sense of wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for the small and big things that come along with life.
 - acknowledgement of the goodness in one’s life and the recognition that the source of this goodness lies *outside of the self*
- We experience gratitude when *intentionally* focus our attention on particular aspects of our lives that we are thankful for and have a deep appreciation of


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Tips for Expressing Gratitude

- **Don’t just go through the motions.**
 - Journaling is more effective if you first make the conscious decision to become happier and more grateful.
- **Go for depth over breadth.**
 - Elaborating in detail about a particular thing for which you’re grateful carries more benefits than a superficial list of many things.
- **Get personal.**
 - Focusing on people to whom you are grateful has more of an impact than focusing on things for which you are grateful.
- **Try subtraction, not just addition.**
 - One effective way of stimulating gratitude is to reflect on what your life would be like without certain blessings, rather than just tallying up all those good things.
- **Savor surprises.**
 - Try to record events that were unexpected or surprising, as these tend to elicit stronger levels of gratitude.

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Today is the day... and every day thereafter...



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