

Practicing What We Preach: Self-Care and Wellness for School and Board Staff



Ian Manion, Ph.D., C.Psych.



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Disclaimer

- Those that can ... do
- Those that can't ... teach
- Those that really can't ...



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Give Keynotes!



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Today's Outline

- A bit of school mental health context
- Stress and mental health (signs, sources)
- Parent and family stress
- Stress in the workplace (including education)
- Self-care and coping
- Self-care for leaders
- Resiliency
- Questions



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Triggers and Discomforts

- sensitive topic
- can trigger strong emotional reactions: anger, hopelessness, frustration, worry, guilt
- it is appropriate to feel a bit uncomfortable
- throughout there will be opportunities to reflect and to consider change, responses and strategies



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Why Child and Youth Mental Health?

- It's very common (13-25%)
- Not everyone gets help (only 1 in 6 access services)
- 70% of adults with a mental illness indicate that it started before they were 18 (50% before 14)
- **Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in ages 16-24 (Statistics Canada, 2002)**
- If one mental health disorder is present, more than likely there will be other problems present (45% have more than 1 most often evident at school)



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Mental Health in Schools

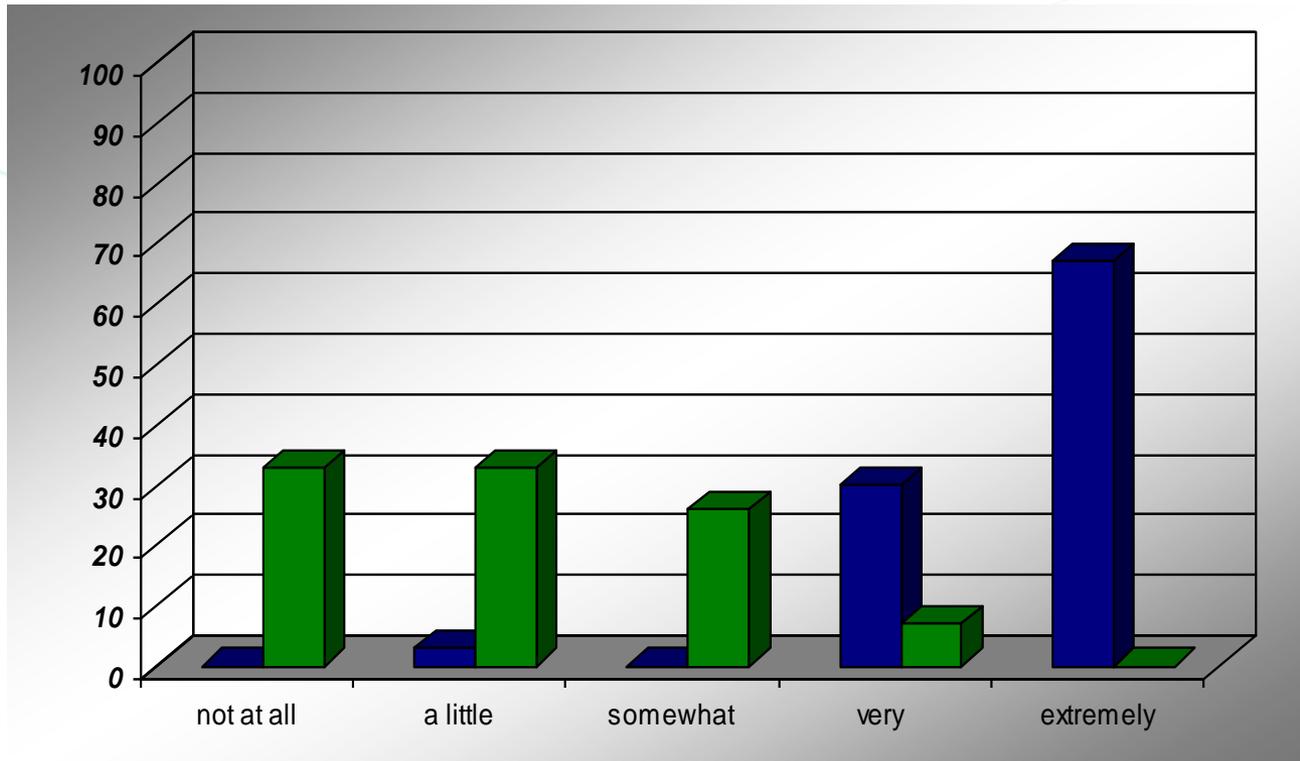
- Stigma Reduction
 - universality, accessibility, acceptability
- Promotion and Prevention
- Identification and early intervention of mental health problems
- **Schools can be a hard place to work so we need to support the mental health and wellness of teachers and other staff too!**



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Concern about Mental Health...



Educator Preparedness...



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If we should lose
cabin pressure ...

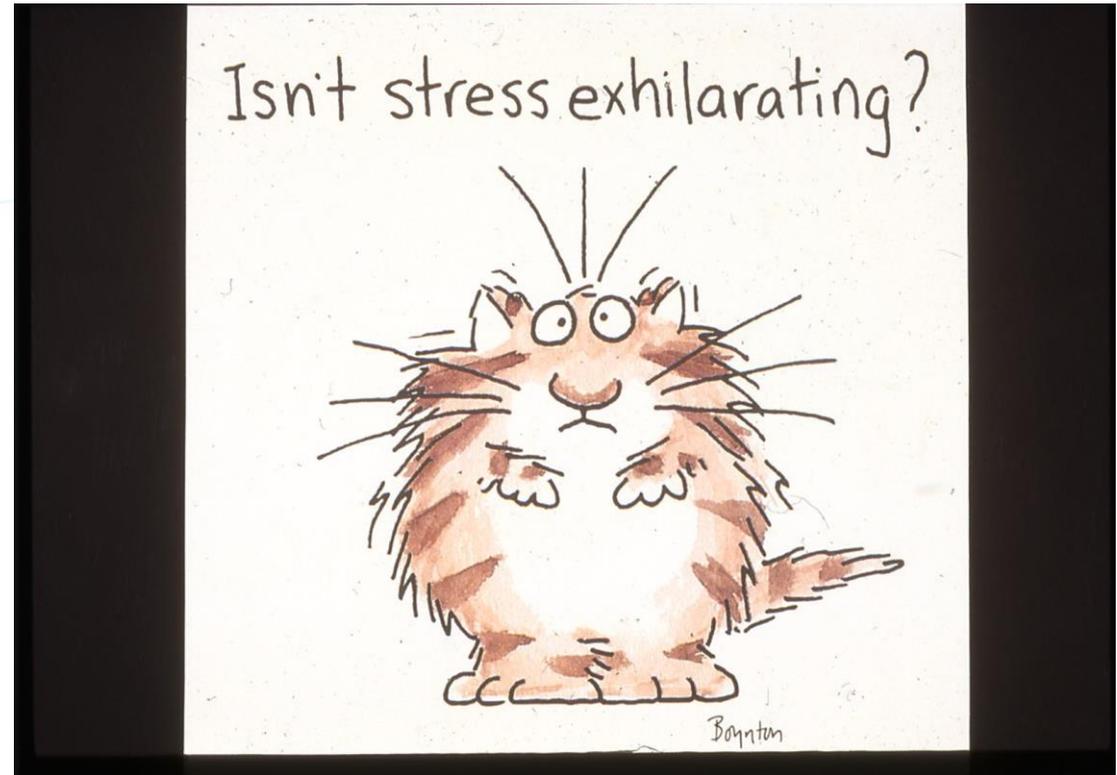


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Stressor

Any change that requires modification in an individual's life pattern



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Effects of Stress

- On your body
- On your thoughts and feelings
- On your behaviour



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Signs of Stress

THE 24 WARNING SIGNS OF STRESS

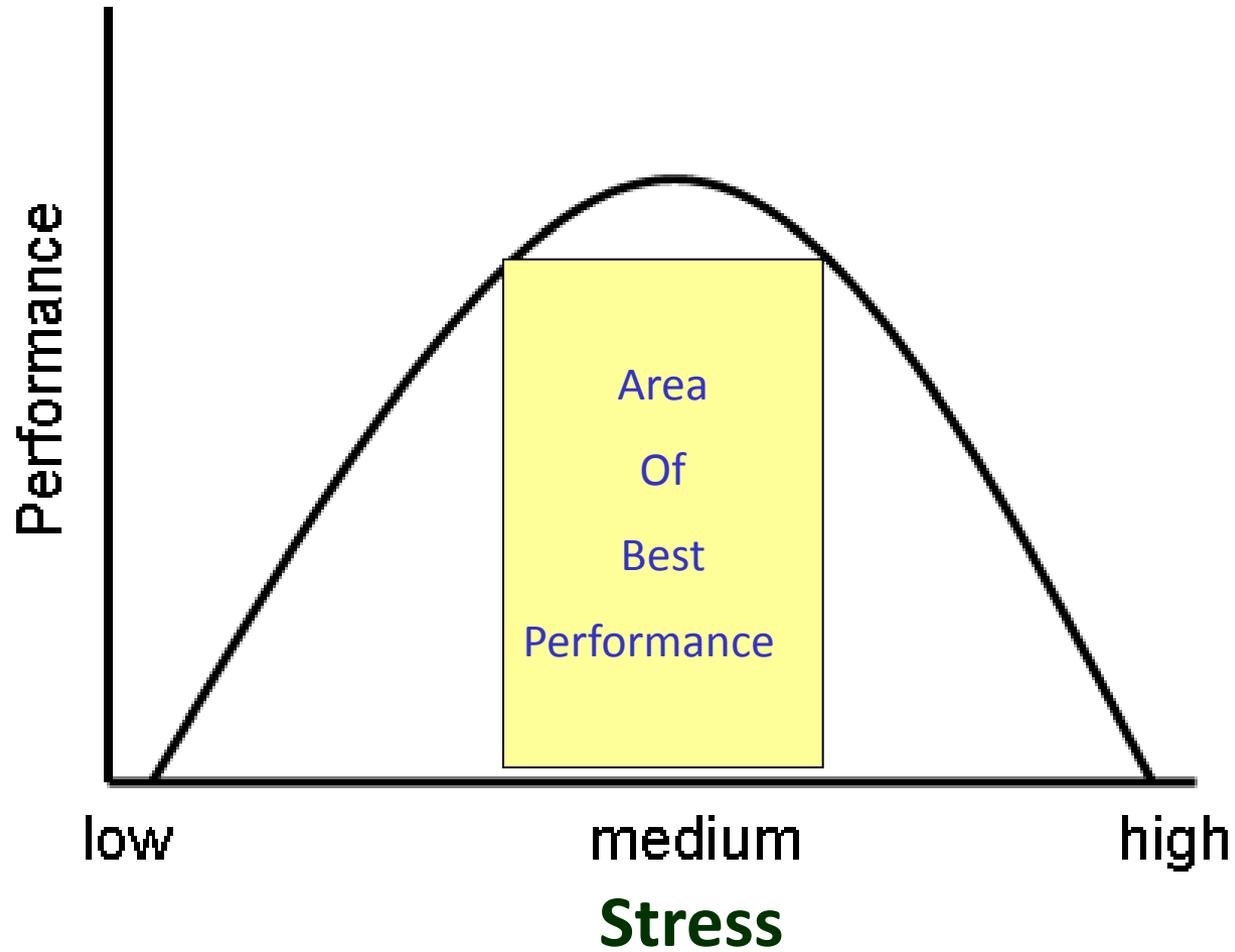


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The Stress Curve

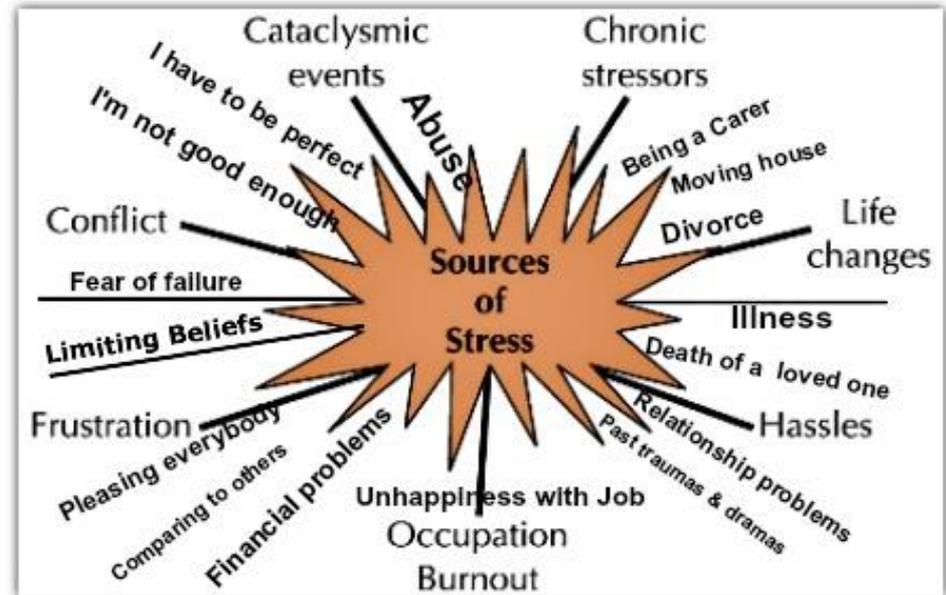


Sources of Stress

THE SEVEN KEY LIFE DIMENSIONS



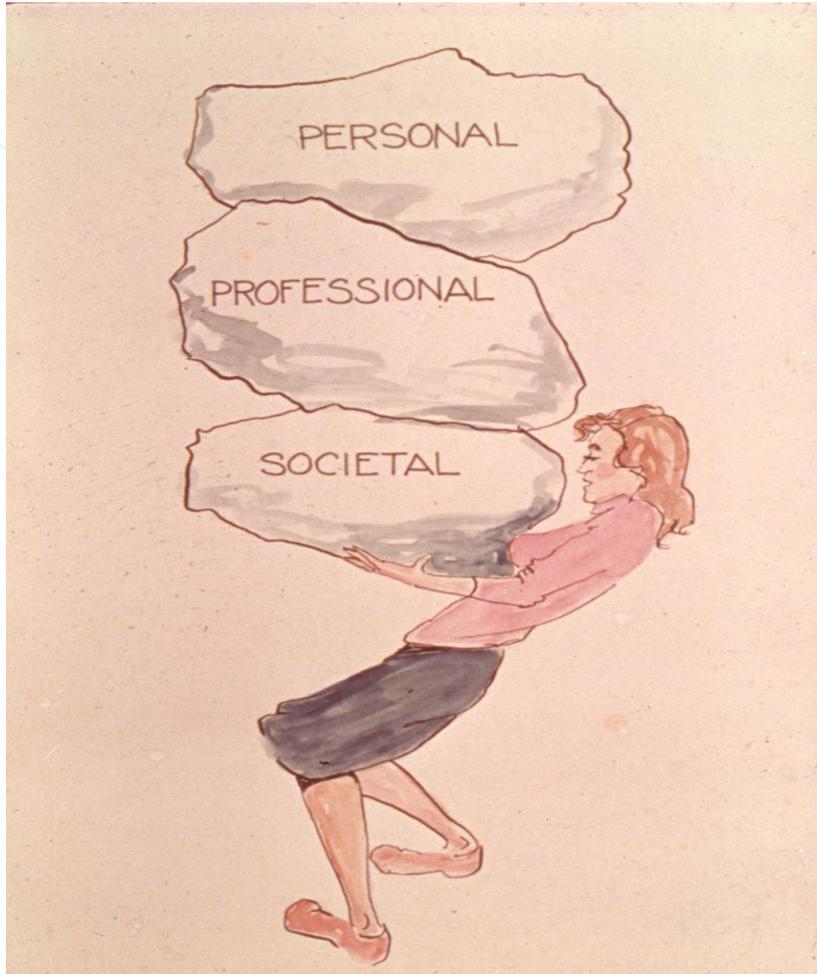
Figure 7



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Pile Up (additive nature of stressors)



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Stress and Illness



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Employment Opportunities

One couple to procreate and raise a child. No experience necessary. Applicants must be available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and must provide food, shelter, clothing, and supervision. No training provided. No salary; applicants pay \$140,000 (probably triple that now) over the next 18 years. Accidental applications accepted. Single people may apply but should be prepared for twice the work.



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Parent Stressors

- Financial costs
- Time for care of the child (children)
- Social isolation
- Problems finding caregivers
- Behavioural and emotional problems
- School problems
- Health problems
- Dealing with the professionals
- Worrying about the future
- Stigma (actual and perceived)



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An accident just waiting to happen?





What is your familial mental health loading?



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Early Signs of Parent Stress & Burn-Out

- Sudden change in behaviour or mood
- Chronic sense of frustration
- Feeling alone in child rearing
- Inconsistency in your response to your child
- Fear of the consequences of your own anger



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Workplace Stress

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search ID: aban418

**“What do I do? I’m a high stress teacher.
I mean a high school teacher.”**



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5 Sources of Work Stress

1. Job intrinsic (physical space, work load, time pressure)
2. Role (ambiguity, clarity)
3. Career development (security, advancement)
4. Relationships (peers, supervisors, bullying)
5. Organizational structures (decision-making)



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Signs of Work Stress Burn Out

- Emotional exhaustion (emotionally overextended, compassion fatigue)
- Depersonalization (cynical, loss of idealism, negative attitudes towards recipients)
- Reduced accomplishment (decreased professional efficacy and productivity)



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Practically Speaking

- Enjoyable work activities now drudgery
- Bitter about job, boss, employer
- Dreading going to work (Sunday pm depression)
- Easily annoyed by co-workers
- Envious of those who are happy in their jobs
- Non-work relationships affected



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Absenteeism versus presenteeism



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Education and Teaching in Canada

- 40% leaving within 5 years (Clandinin et. al., 2012)
- 62% don't feel that they get adequate recognition from parents (Martin et. al. , 2012)
- 46% feel job description is flexible (Martin et. al. , 2012)
- 90% positive job security (Martin et. al. , 2012)
- 70% compensation inadequate (Martin et. al. , 2012)
- Biggest stressors (Martin et. al. , 2012)
 - Multiple roles
 - Behaviour problems
 - Special needs
 - Workload



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TEACHER BURNOUT - BY MJBIRD4

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Recognizing that you may be struggling



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Ear Ache

Psych Ache

- Pain (inside)
- Dizzy
- Hard to concentrate
- Irritable
- Can't sleep
- No appetite
- Stay home
- Less social
- Physical symptoms
- Go for help right away

- ✓
- ✓
- ✓
- ✓
- ✓
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- ?

(Peggy Austen, 2005)



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Who Usually Notices A Problem?

- Family
 - Partner
 - Children
 - Extended family
- Friends
- Colleagues

Early intervention is the most effective way to prevent future problems.



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When To Be Concerned?

- **May be signs of an underlying mental disorder if they are:**
 - intense;
 - persist over long periods of time;
 - interfere with one or more aspects of your life.



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...s back, anxiety has eyes



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...hlin, *The Neurotic's Notebook*

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Adaptive versus maladaptive coping



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Do you know when to go for help?



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Barriers to Help-Seeking

- Stigma
- Should be able to handle it
- Time
- Finances
- Invulnerability
- Job security



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Self-Stigma

Family Stigma

Structural/Public Stigma



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Whose Responsibility Is It?

- Personal responsibility
- Family responsibility
- Organizational/corporate responsibility



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'You need to go home, take a long relaxing bath surrounded by aromatic candles and do an hour of yoga; but that's out of the question. How about a five minute smoking break?'



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Personal responsibility for self-care



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What do you value?



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Self-Talk And Unrealistic Beliefs

- “I must be liked by everyone I know”
 - “Other people cause all my problems”
 - “I must find the perfect solution to every problem”
 - “If I don’t do it then it won’t get done well”
-
- “I am trapped in this job”
 - “I can’t handle this”
 - “Nothing is ever going to change”



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Some Personal Cognitive Strategies

- Relaxation / meditation
- Challenging self-talk
 - Reality testing (be your own lawyer)
 - Look for alternative explanations (detective work)
 - Put it in perspective (project years from now)
 - **Turnbull principle**
 - Use goal directed thinking (problem solving)
 - Use imagery for acute pervasive thoughts



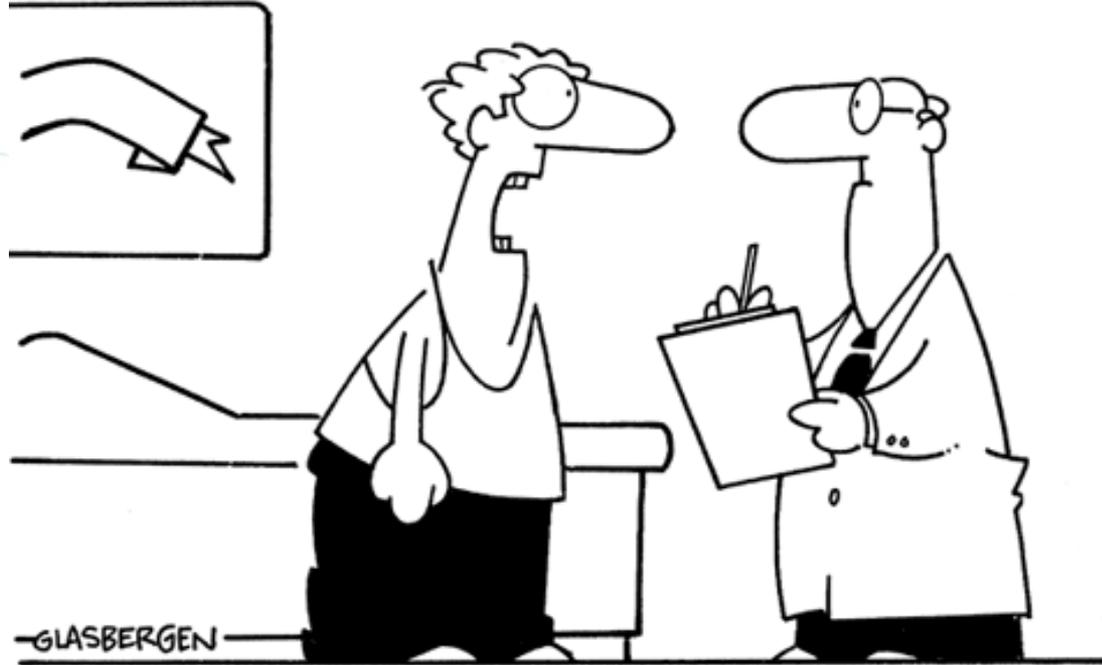
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First World Problems



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**“I’m learning how to relax, doctor —
but I want to relax *better* and *faster*!
I want to be on the cutting edge of relaxation!”**



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15 Stress Reducing Tips

1. Watch self-talk
2. Get involved in something larger than yourself
3. But learn to say no
4. Talk it out
5. Learn to pace yourself
6. Give in occasionally
7. Get enough exercise
8. Develop leisure activities that you enjoy
9. Take one thing at a time
10. Fire Superman/Superwoman
11. Focus on the positive
12. Eat properly
13. Get adequate sleep
14. Have a good laugh at least once per day



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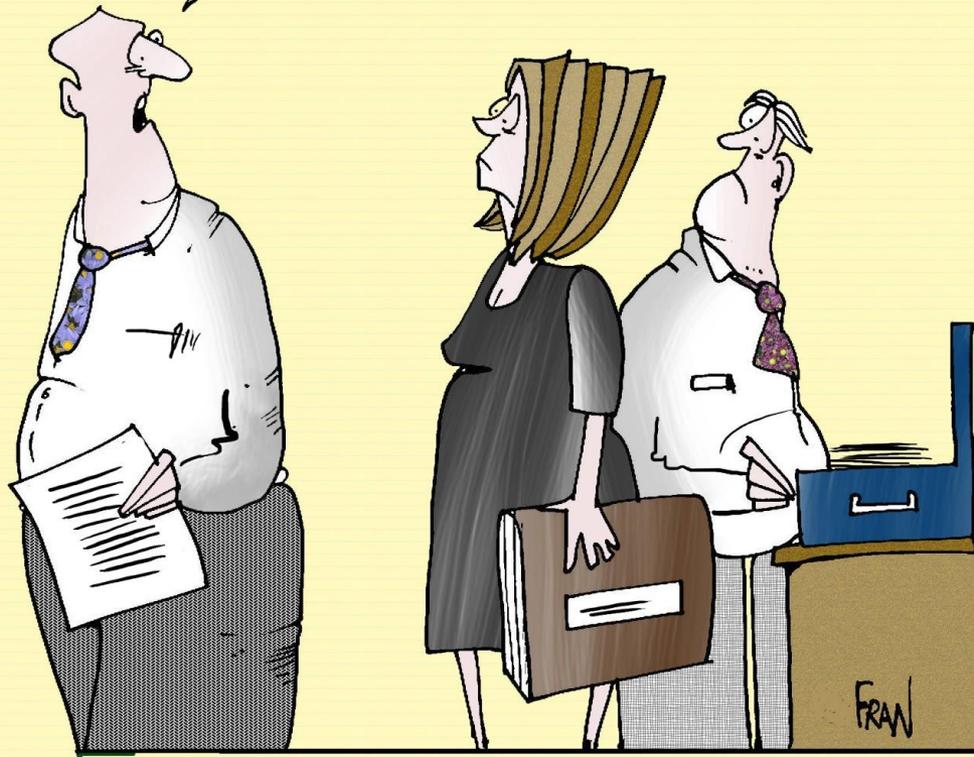
Workplace responsibility for self-care



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I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO STAY LATE TONIGHT,
I WANT YOU TO ATTEND THIS TALK ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE



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Work-Life Balance is Bullshit

Thursday, May 5, 2011 - Health, Work, Work and Family, Work-life balance

I spat out the words with an anger that surprised me: "Work-Life balance is **bullshit**."



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Working Together for Self-Care

- Staff satisfaction
- EAP
- Mentors
- Orientation and buddying
- 101 workplace strategies (ground up)
 - Modern Family lunch
- Celebrating success along the way



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What Would You Do?



Photo by Gautam Dhar



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Leadership Self-Care

- Dealing effectively with conflict
- Use effective communication
- Hire the right people
- Trust your people
- Enjoy the moment and reflect on successes
- Ask yourself why are you a leader beyond financial benefits
- Beware of the work life balance clichés
- Don't take yourself too seriously
- You can only do what you can do!
- Accept the limits of what you can control
- Cultivate a support system (mentors for mentors)



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Coping versus mastery model



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A Few More Tidbits!

- Put yourself on your calendar
- Make a list of what you enjoyed doing as a child and do one every week
- Take a look at how you are spending your time and energy
- Make sure that your leadership position is a good fit
- Fall in love with the word no



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What are you willing to change knowing
that change is tough at the best of
times?



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Into everyone's life a little rain must fall



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Resiliency

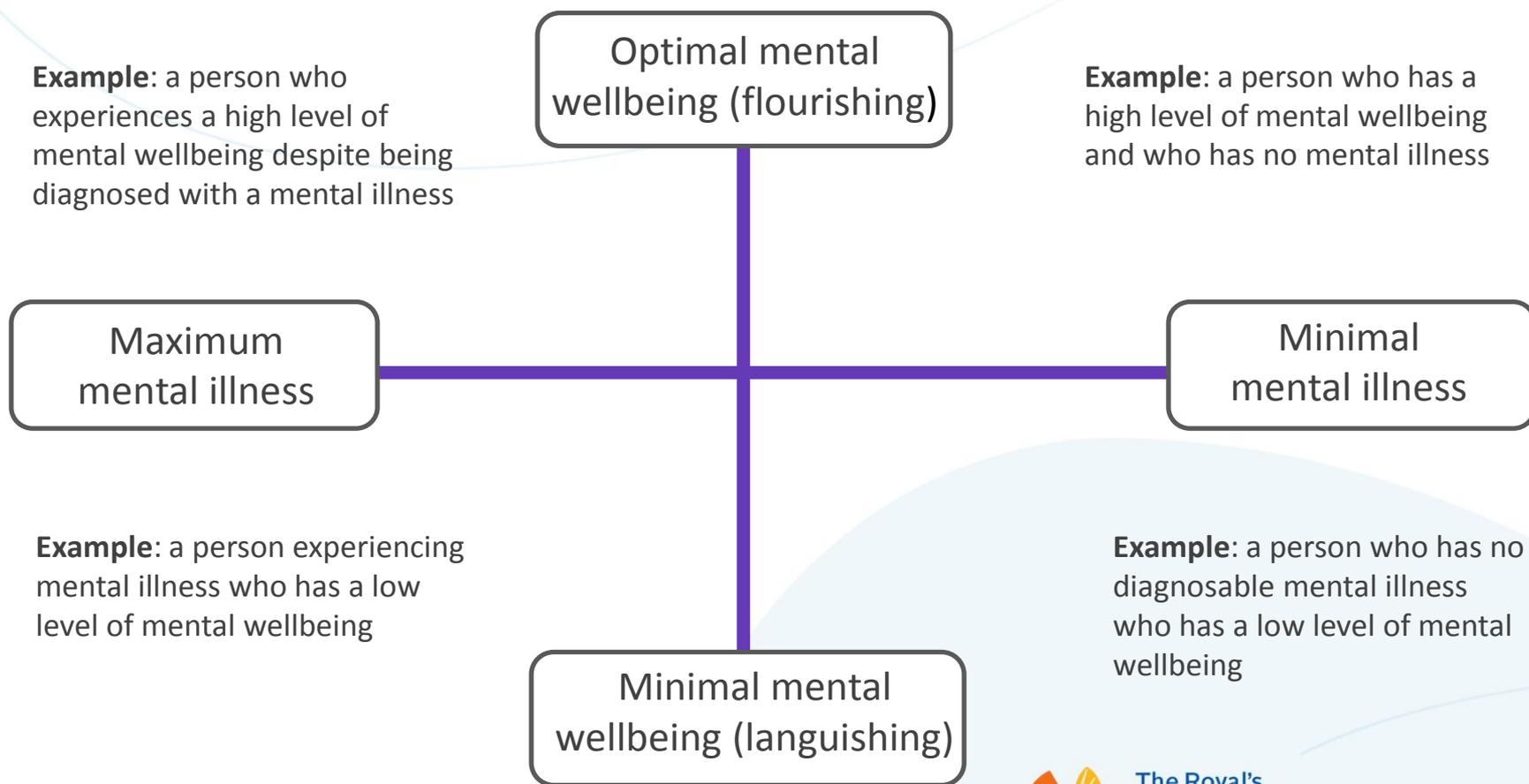
- Most simply put: resiliency is the ability to bounce back from adversity
- 2 things need to be present:
 - Adversity
 - biological, environmental, ...
 - The ability to overcome adversity and to thrive
 - Internal and external resources
 - Coping skills (e.g. emotional regulation)



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A Model for Mental Health and Wellness



Keyes, 2003



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Resiliency



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What is Positive Mental Health?



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Engagement and Relationships Matter

“Kids can walk around trouble if there is someplace to walk to and someone to walk with”

Tito in
Urban Sanctuaries
(McLaughlin, Irby &
Langman, 1994)



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Thank You! Questions?



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