

RECIPE FOR WELLBEING

Flourishing is a “state of successful growth and happiness.” It represents your BEST possible future. You have emotional, mental, and social wellbeing when you are flourishing. How many of you can say that you are in a state of Flourishing? Could it better be described as a state of Languishing?

What factors contribute to your and your team’s languishing?

What contributes to your flourishing? I will share some ingredients to help you and your team flourish.

One factor is Burnout. Burnout is (WHO definition) “a syndrome conceptualized as a result of chronic workplace stress that has not been managed successfully.”

There are 3 dimensions to burnout:

1. Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion
2. Increased mental distance from one’s job
3. Feelings of negativism or cynicism related to the job

What are your external and internal causes of burnout?

Another factor is empathetic exhaustion. Empathy is our superpower. It is the capacity to see things from another’s point of view and feel what that person is feeling – both in the positive and negative. Empathy is an innate (neurobiological) quality and can be a learned quality. There are different types of empathy – cognitive, emotional, and compassionate. Those that are born with this quality are at higher risk because it is a natural skill/gift. That also makes it our Kryptonite. This is the cost of caring. The price we pay to do our jobs and do it well. We are trained to be care-givers. It is our job. There is more to this job than we are aware of. Empathy leads to Compassion.

A healthy work environment can enhance wellbeing for all. It starts with Culture. Culture is “the shared passion for achieving a fixed outcome and the beliefs and values which develop within a group of individuals who have come together to achieve the fixed outcome.”

Leadership creates and drives the culture. The Leader is responsible for the vision and the values of the organization. They embody and encourage the desired behaviors of the organization. What is your vision for your practice? What are the values of your practice? Does your team know and live these?

Recipe for Flourishing

Instructions:

1. Use the best ingredients. Don’t substitute for convenience.
2. Blend together. Don’t force it. You don’t want things to separate out. (silos)
3. DO NOT BURNout or OVERcook.
4. Allow for the proper time to get this right.

Ingredients:

MEANING – your purpose, your WHY, your calling. The purpose/meaning in our life is rooted in core values and beliefs. This is the single most predictive factor for wellbeing. WHY do you do this job? WHY does your Team do this job? Meaning provides the beliefs and values in the culture. This is why the team works there – their values align with the practice’s values. Your clients align with your Why – this creates trust and loyalty.

ACHIEVEMENT – the outcome of purpose. This is the fixed outcome that a team works towards. Part of wellbeing is knowing that you have accomplished your goals and had successes in your life. We need to celebrate the achievements, big and small. Hunt the good things. Savor the positive events and emotions. Acknowledging

your successes means your focused on the positive instead of the negative, the failures. Positivity is the active ingredient to craft a happy life full of growth, creativity, and resilience. It is renewable and reigns whenever positive emotions touch and open our hearts. It reflects and produces success and health. Positivity spells the difference between languishing or flourishing. Pride is one of the top positive emotions, along with love, hope, awe, serenity, amusement, and Gratitude.

GRATITUDE – is a positive emotion that involves being thankful and appreciative and is associated with several mental and physical health benefits. When you experience gratitude, you feel grateful for something or someone in your life and respond with feelings of kindness, warmth, and other forms of generosity. The practice of gratitude increases happiness by 25%. Gratitude can facilitate teamwork and enhance meaning. There are 3 stages of Gratitude: Recognize, Acknowledge, and Appreciate.

INTENT – Intent, Influence, and impact. What you do matters. Assume Good intent – from self and from others. Our intent comes from purpose and leads to achievement. Leaders influence their teams to follow the vision and to use their strengths as value to the team.

COMPASSION - Deep awareness of the suffering of another coupled with the desire to relieve it. It is being present in an energetic way for someone who is hurt/suffering. Our job description. It says energetic – not exhausted. Being compassionate has positive effects upon us – energizes, not empties us. Compassion results in our brains releasing dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and endogenous opioids. The benefit is same whether the compassion is focused on others or towards self. When we are stressed and cortisol is raging, it blocks oxytocin and our potential for compassion. A key point is that as caregivers only focus on the giving of care to others. We must focus as much on the caring for the giver. This is how we combat and prevent empathetic exhaustion.

Take these and whatever other ingredients and blend them together to create your culture. Each team member should add their own personal flavor – what makes them special – be it a skill, talent or experience. Burnout is about having to fit the same mold. Let your team Stand out!

Create a mission statement for your Team – how your culture will care and support them. Ask for their input for the Standards of Care for your Caregivers.

Instead of being stressed, we deserve to enjoy our just desserts – acknowledge the sweet smell of success, savor every morsel of joy from doing our jobs well and know that our souls are nourished and our purpose served.