Adagio versus Allegro:

“The Silent Anguish of the People”
“Survivor-Government”
Work-Life Balance From the Perspective of a Physician (Father) and Psychologist (Daughter): Building A Successful Life and Career

Caroline M. Poland, MA, LMHC, LCAC, NCC
Mental Health Counselor
Director, Taylor University Counseling Center
Upland, Indiana

Gregory A. Poland, MD, MACP
Mary Lowell Leary Professor of Medicine
Mayo Clinic
Rochester, Minnesota
Goals Today

• Acknowledge the damaging effects of poor work-life balance
• Discuss the concept of wellness and a practical model of wellness
• Point the way to practical solutions
• Connect the idea that work-life balance, wellness, and successful lives and careers are inter-related
If you make people think they're thinking, they'll love you; But if you really make them think, they'll hate you.

~ Robert Orben
The Reality

• The patterns you develop and establish in high school and college become your default habits throughout life.
• A successful life and career is a marathon – *not* a sprint!
• You have little hope of a successful career, much less happy life – unless you *understand and proactively practice* wellness and healthy behaviors.
• Balance is not dualistic.
Dangers

• Maintenance of the status quo is a powerful force
• “Premature cognitive narrowing” (creating such a narrow view of an issue that it causes the thinker to miss alternatives)
• Belief-dependent realism (fixed beliefs that are resistant to the data)
Concepts Which Enslave Us

• Where there is no possibility of satisfaction, nothing is ever enough.
• Some are in bondage to "never enough"
• So, how does one recognize "just enough" in a world of "infinite more?"
• Perhaps success is really all about "just enough"

Adapted from Nash and Stevenson, “Just Enough”, 2004
“We build our own prisons, and serve as our own jail keepers.”

John Gardner
Do You Want to be Successful?
OK, Then What is Success to You?
What Is Success?

- Successful people have the following characteristics:
  - High achievement
  - Multiple goals
  - The ability to experience positive pleasure
  - The ability to create positive/healthy relationships
  - Value accomplishments that *endure*

Nash and Stevenson, HBR Feb 2004
The Tantalus Effect
The Tantalus Effect

Tantalus was a mythological character punished with an eternal, raging thirst doomed to live in the middle of a magic lake whose waters receded every time he tried to take a drink.
Tantalus and Us

- Tantalus is a metaphor for us in the modern age
- We “thirst” for balance, but engage in behaviors that cause balance to recede away from us
- We are drowning not in a magic lake, but in an ocean of overwork, over-stimulation, and its consequences...
The Truth As We See It

• Work-life balance is an increasing issue and stressor in our lives
• There are consequences – intended and unintended – to this state of affairs
• Most of us do not have a very big “toolbox” for prevention, self-care, and ultimately – success!

• What Are We Doing About It?
Other Truths

• The emphasis on more and more productivity has outpaced our ability to manage it

• Can we recognize when we exceed what is healthy or desirable – where is the “tipping point”?

• There is a human limit to productivity and stress

• Many of us feel stressed, burned out, and depressed
  • The direct effects of this are significant, extensive, expensive, and disruptive
The Reality…

• From our 20’s to our 70’s we spend more awake hours at work than in any other single aspect of our lives…and the demand keeps growing

• How we choose to arrange “work” can:
  • Enhance health or create illness in ourselves, our families, our churches, our communities and our workplace
  • Help or hurt those we are called to serve
“Life’s A Blur”
## Characteristics of Healthy vs. Workaholic Workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Healthy Workers</th>
<th>Workaholic Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good collaborators and delegators</td>
<td>Unable to delegate or work as a team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially gregarious</td>
<td>Employees with few or no friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees who enjoy the process of working</td>
<td>Employees who work for the sake of working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated by intrinsic needs and creative contributions</td>
<td>Motivated by fear and loss of status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficient: They see the whole picture and step toward the goal</td>
<td>Inefficient: They get bogged down with details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative risk takers who stretch beyond customary bounds</td>
<td>Reluctant to take chances to achieve creative outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters of self-correction; when they make mistakes they learn from them</td>
<td>Unable to tolerate mistakes; they try to avoid them or cover them up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mayo Multi-Center Study Medical Student Burnout

Student distress:

• 45% burned out
• 52% screen + for depression
• 48% admit to at risk alcohol use
• Compared to 28% age match MN & 24% age matched US pop

*Dyrbye Acad Med 81:374-84*
Mayo Resident Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>R1- R3 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>30%-36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnout</td>
<td>41%-50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Determines Happiness?

Circumstances: 10%
Intentional Activity: 40%
Set Point: 50%

Lyubomirsky et al. Review of Gen Psych 2005;9:131
My Story – The “Everydayathon”

See patients, answer email, attend committees, answer telephone calls, answer beeper, IRB paperwork, appraisals due, attend a class, mentor a junior faculty member, dictations due, PPD due, comply with various internal threatening letters requiring my immediate action, attend multiple meetings, CME, teach, keep up on dictations, talk with patient families, answer secretary inquiries, side line consults, prepare talks, consult with DoD and Executive Branch, etc, etc, etc.
“Can’t you ever relax?”
The Every 15 Minute Appointment Schedule?

“When the Lilliputians first saw Gulliver’s watch, that “wonderful kind of engine...”, they identified it immediately as the god he worshipped. After all “...he seldom did anything without consulting it...”

~ Jonathan Swift, 1726
The Crazy Cycle

Dopamine surge

Increased anxiety

Multiple stimuli

Decreased anxiety

Dopamine valley

Increased anxiety
“Speed is the form of ecstasy the technical revolution has bestowed on man.”

~ Milan Kundera, Czech novelist
The Law of Productivity

- Productivity increases with increasing stress or pressure to maximize it
- Logical fallacy – increases in productivity are not infinite nor are they linear
  - Tools do not meet their promise
  - Tools themselves may cause or increase stress
  - The user or system has inherent limits
The Stress Response Curve

- Peak performance
- "Sweet Spot"
- Burnout
- Poor health
- Breakdown
The Future

NEXT EXIT
Dialogue (Daughter)

- Oldest of 3 children
- Myers-Briggs Personality Type: ESFJ
- Friends - children of other Mayo physicians and professionals
- High self-expectations, seeking to meet/exceed them
- Counselor at a private liberal arts university – experience with children of professionals
Dialogue (Daughter)

- Common themes among children of high-level professionals
  - Lack of time with parent
  - Unpredictable interruption of plans
  - Parent not mentally “present”
  - High stress households
  - High demands and expectations
Dialogue (Daughter)

- Consequences to children of professionals
  - Set-up for mood and eating disorders
  - Poor role-modeling in regard to work-life balance
  - Excessively goal oriented
  - Perfectionist tendencies
  - Black and white worldviews
  - Distorted definitions of success and failure
Consequences

- Negative job stress is correlated with:
  - Poor cardiovascular health
  - Increased risk of burn-out and depression
  - Increases in suicide and in drug/alcohol misuse/abuse
  - Increases in cancers and impaired immune function

NIOSH Expert Panel on Work-Related Stress
What Is Your Diagnosis?

- Chronic exhaustion
- Sense of besiegement
- Anger, irritability
- Self-criticism
- Negativity and cynicism
- Trouble sleeping
- Depression
- Helpless feelings, inefficiency
- Problems concentrating
BURNOUT!

• Chronic exhaustion
• Sense of besiegement
• Anger, irritability
• Self-criticism
• Negativity and cynicism
• Trouble sleeping
• Depression
• Helpless feelings, inefficiency
• Problems concentrating
Burnout

Webster’s Definitions:

• “To cause to fail, wear out, or become exhausted by making excessive demands on energy, strength, or resources”
What Burns Us Out?

- Bureaucracy
  These things poison innovation, passion, and progress AND burn up creative energy
- The rapid pace of change
- Lack of control
- Lack of autonomy
- Unrealistic productivity expectations
- Lack of agency and self-regulation
What Burns Us Out?

- The risk of burnout has common themes:
  - Consistent work overload
  - Lack of control over the extent to which the load exceeds their capacity
  - Confronted with conflicting values
  - Loss of autonomy

Spickard et al, JAMA 2002;288:1447-50
"You're only a victim once. The next time you're an accomplice."

~ Naomi Judd
I feel sick every morning.

All day long, I feel like either crying or punching people.

You've got a bad case of mahjobis crappus.
An Alternative Approach

• Historically, wellness was predominantly viewed as the absence of identified pathology.
• The enlarging concept of “health” suggests that it is the presence of positive components that leads to wellness and mental health.
Definition of Wellness

• “A way of life oriented toward optimal health and well-being, in which body, mind, and spirit are integrated by the individual to live life more fully within the human and natural community.

• Ideally, it is the optimum state of health and well-being that each individual is capable of achieving” (Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000)
Flourishing

- “A state in which an individual feels positive emotion toward life and is functioning well psychologically and socially” (Keyes, 2003)
- The opposite of this is *languishing*
Spectrum of Mental Well-Being

Mental illness and moderately mentally healthy (15%)
Mental illness and flourishing (1%)
Languishing (10%)
Mental illness and languishing (7%)
Mental illness and flourishing (1%)
Moderately mentally healthy (51%)
Flourishing (17%)

Adapted from Keyes, 2005
Flourishing

• The Midlife in the United States (MIDUS) survey found that “fewer than one quarter of adults between the ages of 25 and 74 fit the criteria for flourishing in life” (Keyes, 2003)

• To flourish in life, wellness (not just elimination of disease) must be practiced and enhanced
Wheel of Wellness Model

- Developed by Sweeney and Witmer in the early 1990’s
- Sought to bring together health, quality of life, and longevity
- Identifies seventeen components of wellness, organized under five different life tasks
Wheel of Wellness Model

- Five Life Tasks:
  - Spirituality
  - Self-Direction
  - Work & Leisure
  - Friendship
  - Love

- The Five Life Tasks are interrelated, and changes in one component can directly or indirectly change other components.
Wheel of Wellness
Wellness “Tools”

• With awareness of the Wheel of Wellness, one can increase self-care and wellness behaviors
• Start by defining and adopting SMART goals
  • Specific
  • Measurable
  • Attainable
  • Realistic
  • Time-oriented
Examples of Positive Steps

• Mindfulness – Intention – Goals
• Schedule adequate sleep, physical activity, recreation, and nutrition
• Increase wellness behaviors across domains of the wheel of wellness
• Break the Crazy Cycle
• Engage superiors & colleagues in support
• Monthly self assessment and evaluation
• Consider other tools (ProQOL evaluation, others)
• Confront our illusions…
“Illusions are the truths we live by until we know better.”
Our Definition of Work-life Balance

Meaningful regular achievement and enjoyment in each of the life quadrants.
Welcome to Dogbert’s seminar on work-life balance.

First, review this list of your priorities.

Family, job, exercise, vacation, must-dos, medical, eating, hygiene, sleep, romance, holidays.

You have time for three things. Work and holidays are two. You get to pick the third.
The Complexity of Success

• Goal: Enduring success

• A Kaleidoscope Of Success – Four Categories:
  • **Happiness** (feelings of pleasure/contentment about your life)
  • **Achievement** (accomplishments that compare favorably against similar goals others have accomplished)

Nash and Stevenson, Just Enough 2004
The Complexity of Success

• A Kaleidoscope Of Success – Four Categories:
  • **Significance** (making a positive impact on people, your field, your community)
  • **Legacy** (a way to establish your accomplishments so as to help others find success)

Nash and Stephenson: Just Enough 2004
The Paradigm of Limitation

• Those who achieve satisfying, enduring, multidimensional success consciously go after victories in all four categories.

• To get more wins, success rests on a paradigm of limitation in any one activity for the sake of the whole – “the reasoned pursuit of just enough”

Nash and Stephenson: Just Enough 2004
“Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.”

~ Carl Sandburg
Happiness and Success

• Well over 200 studies demonstrate that happy people are:
  • More productive and creative
  • Wealthier, better jobs
  • Better leaders and negotiators
  • More likely to marry, have happy marriages, and less likely to divorce
  • High levels of integrity and morality
  • Have more friends and social support
  • Stronger immune systems, physically healthier, live longer
  • More philanthropic
  • Better at coping with stress and trauma (resilience)
  • Spiritual beliefs

Lyubomirsky et al Psych Bull 2005;131:803-55
Positive Individual Traits

Strengths and Virtues

• Capacity for love
• Capacity for work
• Courage
• Compassion
• Resilience
• Creativity
• Curiosity
• Integrity
• Self-knowledge
• Moderation
• Self-control
“Happiness depends upon ourselves.”

Aristotle
Reality

• Antidepressants and anxiolytics are among the most commonly prescribed medications used by the US workforce

• Why??

• These drugs are used to treat disease that has already occurred

• Does this seem odd to you?
“If you don’t change direction soon; you’ll end up where you’re going…”
More Faster Now: The Antidote

- CrackBerry - allowing frequent email interruptions causes a drop in performance equal to losing at least 10 IQ points
  - Identify and cut out time wasters (most people can’t resist the Pavlovian “ping” of an email
  - “Acts of Choice”: quantity or quality?
- Trivial decisions affect your happiness!
- Break the “Crazy Cycle”
The Crazy Cycle

Dopamine surge

Increased anxiety

Decreased anxiety

Multiple stimuli

Increased anxiety
More Faster Now: The Antidote

- Learn to say “no”
- The lure of significance
- Eliminate insignificant activities
- “Unblur” the boundaries between work and home
- Disconnect
- Eliminate the clutter
- Move to a values-based framework
- Remember the “paradigm of limitation”
Ten Important Strategies

1. No smoking…ever…at all
2. Healthy eating and exercise patterns (exercise on the days you eat)
3. Sleep 8 hours/night
4. Moderation in alcohol
5. Engage in self-care behaviors
6. Develop healthy boundaries – learn to say no!
7. Mental and spiritual health behaviors
8. Identify and challenge cognitive distortions
9. Manage stress (avoid negative people)
10. Find FLOW
Flow

• “That state in which you are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter – the experience itself is so enjoyable that you do it for the sheer sake and enjoyment of doing it”

Boundaries

• “Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me. A boundary shows me where I end and someone else begins, leading me to a sense of ownership” (Cloud & Townsend, Boundaries, p. 29).

• I am responsible for, and can only control MY OWN thoughts, feelings, and behaviors
Boundaries

• Learning what we can control saves us time, stress, and energy
• Healthy boundaries safeguard against burnout
• Learning to say NO!
  • No to control over others’ behaviors
  • No to stepping in and taking responsibility for another person’s responsibilities
Boundary Issues at Work

- People asking for “favors” frequently or not respecting your time
- You are responsible for your responsibilities—know & prioritize them
- “Poor planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part” (Cloud & Townsend, p. 198).
- Set boundaries between work and home
  - It’s easier to be busy than to be effective”
Additional Adaptive Tools

- Resilience
- Willingness to expend energy, over the long run, on intentional goals
- Persistence
- Exclude toxic, negative people from your life
- Build an “army” of others that surround and support you
- Understand choices and consequences
- “Pay” yourself first
A Plan

• Self-retreat (know thyself…)
• Have an explicit plan for what you want your work-life balance to be
• Practice gratitude and forgiveness
• Practice happiness
• Practice wellness behaviors
• Develop a spiritual center (something greater than yourself)
• Have a higher calling (a purpose, service to others)
The Alternative Model

• Some of you may wish to embrace a lack of work-life balance. Follow these tips for success:
  • Say yes to everything- it will make you feel important and wanted
  • Isolate yourself. Social support and friendship is unnecessary for a successful life.
  • Never exercise. It wastes time that could be spent worrying or working.
The Alternative Model

- Never ask for help. It’s weak to do so.
- Don’t laugh. It’s a waste of time and energy.
- Make everything that goes wrong your fault. Personalize it.
- Embrace perfectionism
- Really ruminate about things in your life
- Dwell on negativity – shun forgiveness
“What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet forfeit his very self?”

Luke 9:25
“The strongest of all human drives is the desire to belong to the Inner Ring – an imaginary circle of the important. But, the ring is an illusion.”

C.S. Lewis
What Would You Do If You Weren’t Afraid?
“The reality is that there is no option where hard does not exist.”

H. Cloud, 2008
“And did you get what you wanted from this life, even so? I did. And what did you want? To call myself beloved, to feel myself beloved on earth.”

Final words written by Raymond Carver in “Late Fragment”
Self-Regulation: A Practical Strategy for Well-Being
Self-Regulation

- Critical for emotional well-being in all areas of life.
- Our ability to self-regulate is critical in protecting against burn out.
- Through self-regulation, we are able to regulate the amount of stress our body responds to, keeping us both physically and mentally healthy.
Self-Regulation Through the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

- The ANS unconsciously regulates bodily functions such as digestion, heart rate, respiratory rate, and arousal.
- It is responsible for the flight-or-flight response.
- There are two branches of this system: The sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.
Self-Regulation Through the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

• When we perceive a threat, our Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) is activated.
• This system gets activated by real threats, as well as things we perceive as threats, such as the judgments of others.
• We need sympathetic activation for survival, but consistent dominance is unhealthy.
• Many of us live in consistent dominance.
Self-Regulation Through the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

• “If an organism is stuck in survival mode, its energies are focused on fighting off unseen enemies, which leaves no room for nurture, care, and love. For us humans, it means that as long as the mind is defending itself against invisible assaults, our closest bonds are threatened, along with our ability to imagine, plan, play, learn, and pay attention to other people’s needs.” - *The Body Keeps The Score* (p. 76)
Self-Regulation Through the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

• Holding peripheral vision for 10 seconds produces a relaxed body (PNS dominance).
• Hold your hands up near your face out by your shoulders. Keep your head straight ahead while looking at your hands.
• As you do this, notice what’s going on in your body.
Self-Regulation Through the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

- Pelvic Floor Relaxation
  - Focus on four points: “the square of relaxation”
  - Try to “widen and relax” this square.
  - No clenching. Release your pelvic floor muscles.
  - This relieves pressure on the vagus nerve.
    - When the vagus nerve releases acetylcholine, it helps us relax.
Self-Regulation Through the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

- Handling the stressors that we are confronted with in both work and life WITH A RELAXED BODY helps us self-regulate, keeps us healthier, and helps protect against burn out.
Self-Regulation Through the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

• “Effective arousal modulation gives us control over our impulses and emotions: As long as we manage to stay calm, we can choose how we want to respond. Individuals with poorly modulated autonomic nervous systems are easily thrown off balance, both mentally and physically. Since the autonomic nervous system organizes arousal in both body and brain... a lack of fluctuation in heart rate in response to breathing not only has negative effects on thinking and feeling but also on how the body responds to stress.” - The Body Keeps The Score (p. 267)
The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) just issued a medical alert about a highly contagious and potentially dangerous virus that can be transmitted orally, by hand, or even electronically.

It is called Weary Overload Recreational Killer (WORK).

If you get WORK from your boss, or a colleague, or anyone else, DO NOT TOUCH IT. This virus can wipe out your personal life! If you come into contact with WORK you should immediately leave the premises.
Summary

- We are more productive than ever but suffer significant stress, burnout, and depression.
- Evidence and expert opinion demonstrates the negative effects of poor work-life balance.
- We need to move beyond a disease-orientation to include a prevention wellness-based model for healthy living.
- Successful people are successful at this.
- These are concepts we should intentionally teach and model.
Thanks!

Thanks to Ms. Pam Goins!

poland.caroline@gmail.com

poland.gregory@mayo.edu