An Approach to Physician Wellness

Reddog Sina, DO, PhD
MSU Family and Community Medicine
reddog@msu.edu

Objectives

- Increase awareness of and bring to light the conditions that affect physician wellness
- Identify movements in our profession that affect the underlying supports for physician wellness
- Based on Osteopathic Philosophy, make some basic recommendations about ways we can improve our wellness as physicians

A.T. Still

To find health should be the object of the doctor. Anyone can find disease.
—Philosophy of Osteopathy
"Stroke of Genius"

- Request
- My own history
- What do I do now?

This is not your grandfather’s profession

- Employment: increased 50% from 2012-2015
- Medscape: 82% F and 78% M are now employed
- Move from fee for service to meeting performance measures
- Decreased time with patients

Some Unhappy Facts

- Income > 75K does not increase happiness
- APA: 75% of US workers “not engaged” or “actively disengaged” in their work
- Medscape 2016 Report: 54% of F/M docs are “burned out” (4th)
- Severity is 4.37/7 (7th)
- Women > Men (55% to 46%)
- Average Income 2016 for F/M 207K (Only Endocrine and Peds are lower, up 6%)
- Michigan 46th in physician salaries
More facts, still unhappy

- 73% of FM docs would choose medicine again (1st)
- FM docs have 52% overall career satisfaction
- 29% would choose their specialty again (only IM is lower)
- About 54% (self-employed); 59% (employed) spend 10+ hrs/week on “bureaucratic tasks”

Impact of pressure at work

- 47% of FM docs (40% in Great Lakes region) report they have “biases toward their patients” (4th)
- 59% of FM docs report being happy at home (15th)
- 28% of FM docs report being happy at work (18th)

When asked about work

- Physicians don’t feel supported by their colleagues
- Professional courtesy is gone
- Policy being made by non-physicians
- De-professionalization of profession (PAs, NPs, DCs)
- Loss of status and loss of respect
**FM Lifestyle**

- 63% of FM docs exercise 2+ times per week (8th)
- 49% of FM docs are overweight (2nd)
- 52% of Male and 47% of Female physicians think their income and assets meet their needs
- Docs have a 7.7% divorce rate, with a divorce prevalence of 24.5%

**Depressed?**

8-10% of the population is on antidepressants
Don't be...

Benefits of Employment

- 54% of docs said work/life balance improved
- 81% feel a sense of Pride and Accomplishment
- 85% feel quality of care is improved
- 65% say Patient Outcome is more important than Financial Interests
- 72% are satisfied with their jobs (73% self-employed)

Most rewarding aspects

- 54% gratitude/relationships with patients
- 32% being good at job and finding answers
- 12% making the world a better place
Employment Complications

- Being employed creates a potential sense of competition— even without incentives
- We know what rolls downhill. It's smell wafts upward, but there's too much distance to the executive suite.
- We have a bad situation if we start kicking the dog.
- We need to learn from the Japanese Automakers, who revolutionized auto production and took over the market.

How do we do this?

As with everything, it starts with A.T. Still.

A.T. Still

Has not nature's God been thoughtful enough to place in man all the elements and principles that the word "remedy" means?

—Autobiography of A.T. Still
The Osteopathic Model

- We are taught to treat our patients based on the Triune Self.
- This teaches patients to develop their own wellness.
- The body is self-healing when allowed to be.

A.T. Still

- The work of the Osteopath is to adjust the body from the abnormal to the normal; then the abnormal condition gives place to the normal and health is the result of the normal condition . . .
- Osteopathy Research and Practice

Osteopathic Philosophy

Andrew Taylor Still wasn’t just the first Osteopath.
He was the first Cherokee Osteopath.

Osteopathic Medicine comes from American Indian philosophy.
Medicine Wheel is a Venn Diagram of Wellness

There is an Indian proverb that says that everyone has a house with four rooms: a physical, a mental, an emotional, and a spiritual. Most of us tend to live in one room most of the time but unless we go into every room every day, even if only to keep it aired, we are not a complete person.

Physical: Sleep More

- Physicians reported sleeping 6.5 hours/night during work week.
- Physicians reported needing at least 7 hours per night of sleep.
- 93% of physicians drank at least one caffeinated beverage daily.

American College of Chest Physicians, 2008

Physical: Exercise More

- One study 21% of physicians exercised 30 minutes/5 days a week (44% of general population).
- 40% of doctors don't meet physical activity measures (exerciseismedicine.org)
Physical: Improve Nutrition

- One study showed physicians found social, environmental and institutional barriers to good nutrition at work.
- These barriers resulted in physical, cognitive and emotional impacts on job performance.

Nutrition Journal 10 (2011): 18

Physical: Power of Touch

- Touch is healing—hugging has been shown to improve emotional wellness in women.
- Quantum: transfer of energy and that heals and balances the electron cloud of our human molecules.

Spiritual

- Gratitude and self reflection, religion or attending to the spirit.
- Meditation or walking in the woods.
- Rests frustration tolerance threshold.
- What is your path, and how do you stay on it?
- Are you living with integrity?
Spiritual

- Scheduled, regular positive social engagement
  - family
  - church
  - bowling league
  - Euchre club
  - Plan on regularly resetting stability—benign diffusing of negative energy

Emotional: 5 People on earth

- You need someone
  - who knows you when
  - who is going through something similar professionally (couple friends)
  - who is going through something similar personally
  - to take care of
  - who takes care of you (life coach)
- Essential for emotional stability

Mental: Covered

- Entire job is mental, and it is distracting from the other rooms
Wellness is balance

- Reset the abnormal: aberrant behavior should not be the workplace standard
- Demand normalcy: kindness should be the baseline
- Plan: Organization decreases stress
- Anticipate and reorganize: build tools for survival
- Honesty: know yourself well enough to know what will get better and what won't
- Laugh, Cry, enjoy chaos: humor is based in the unexpected

Megwiitch (Thank you)