



No One Should Care Alone

Creating Processes for Intentional Professional Connection in a time of “Social Distancing” ... and Beyond ...

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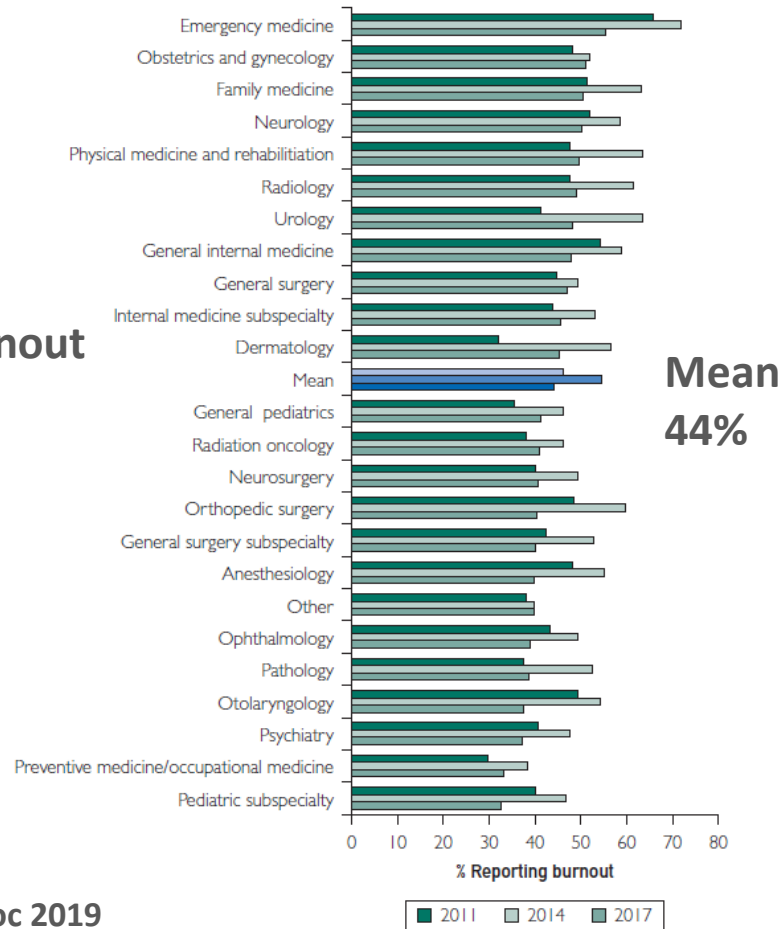
What is your organization presently doing
to create a deliberate professional
“culture of connection”?



Crisis?

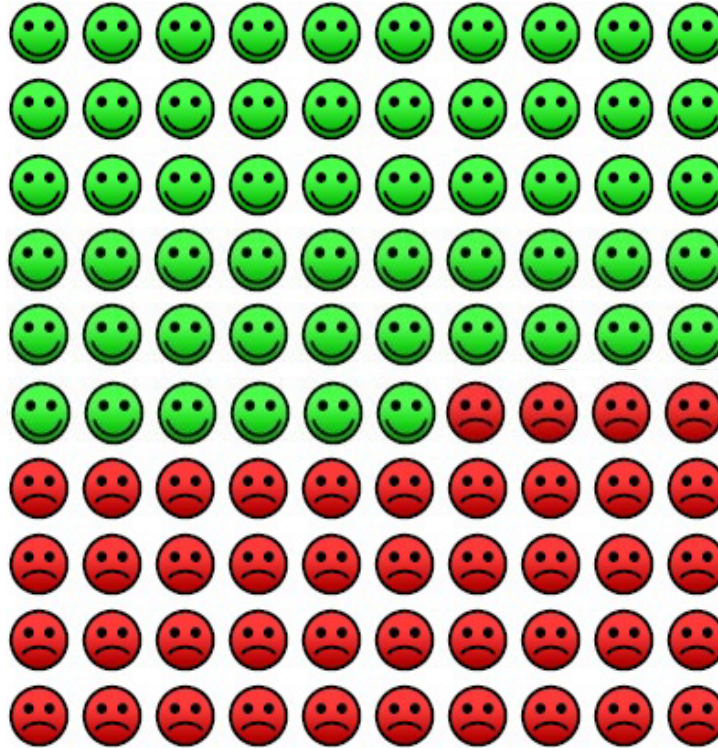


Physician Burnout 2017



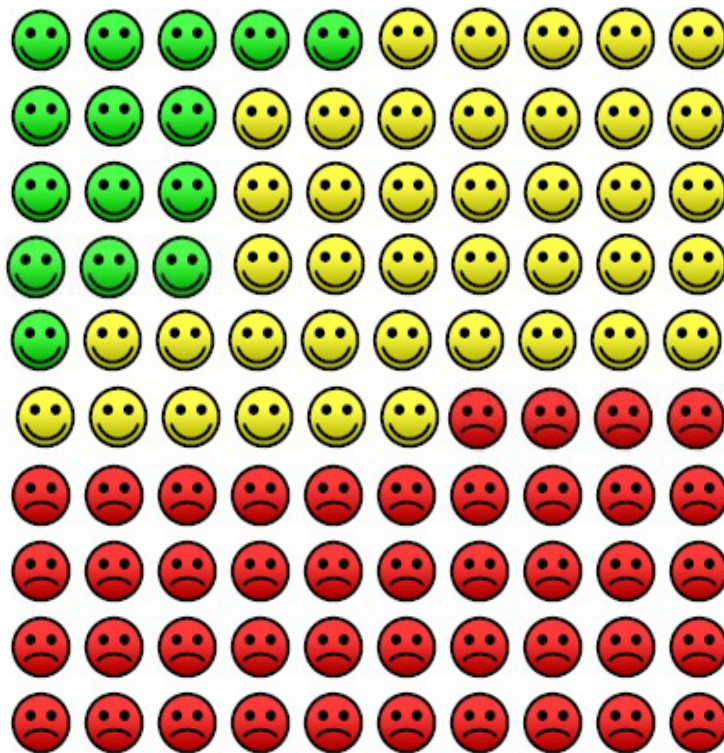
Shanafelt et al, Mayo Clinic Proc 2019

High Burnout 2017



Adapted from Shanafelt et al, Mayo Clinic Proc 2019

High Burnout 2017



Distress

“A multidimensional construct that includes burnout, depression, stress, work-life integration, professional satisfaction, and fatigue”

Shanafelt et al 2019

Our Programming



Clinicians



Administrators



**Patients
and Payors**

Adapted from Brightman, B. wklf.com

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Physicians' powerful ally in patient care

Medscape

‘DEATH BY 1000 CUTS’

2021 PHYSICIAN BURNOUT & SUICIDE REPORT

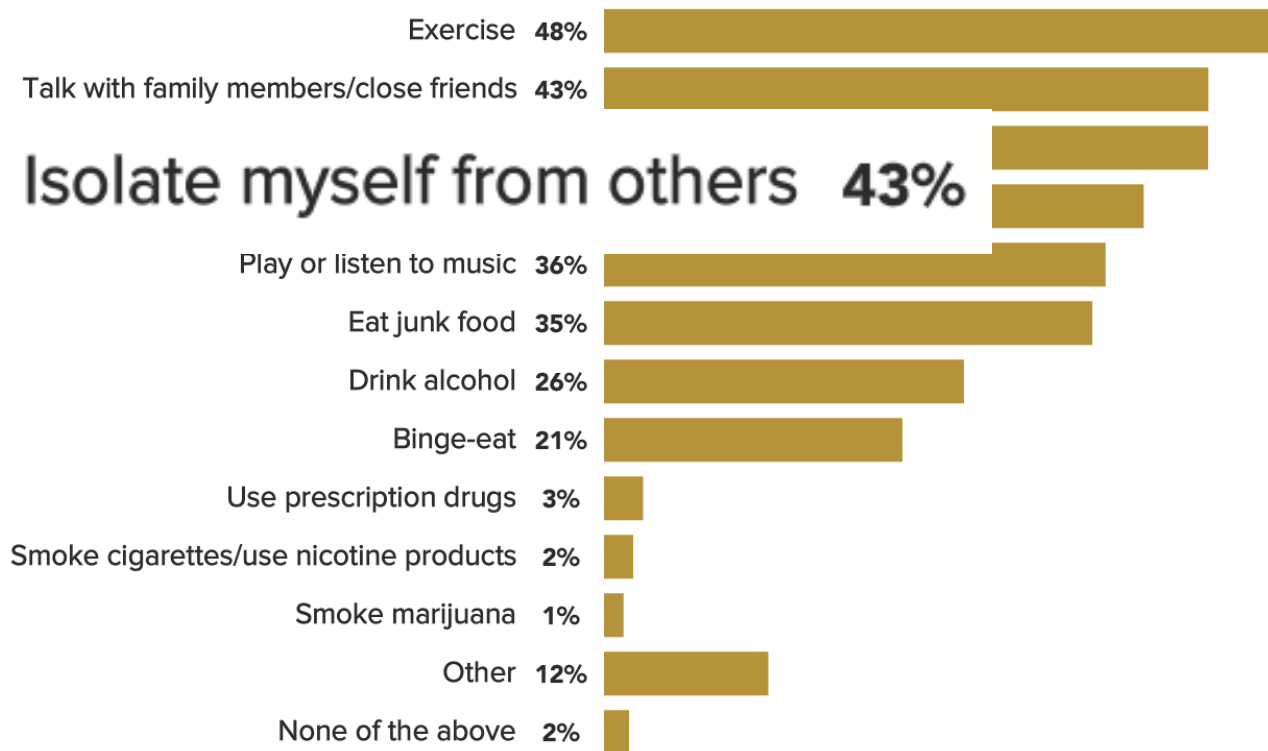


Medscape January 2021



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How Do Physicians Cope With Burnout?



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Have You Ever Felt Suicidal or Attempted Suicide?



13% ● Yes; I've had thoughts of suicide but have not attempted suicide

1% ● Yes; I've attempted suicide

81% ● No

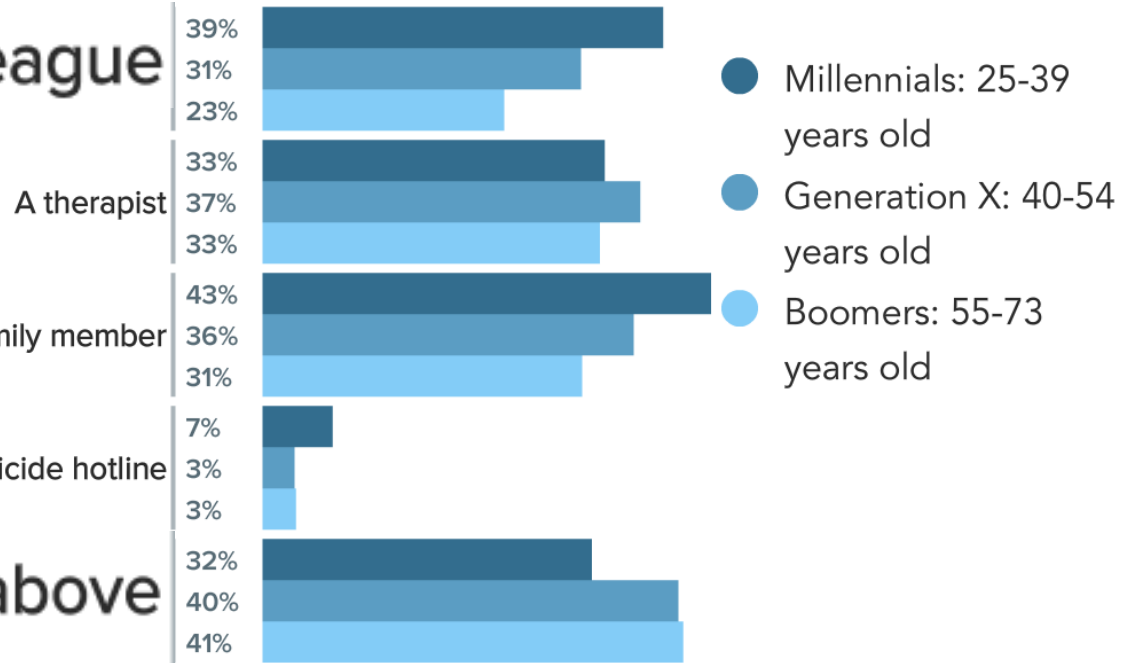
5% ● Prefer not to answer

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Whom Did You Tell About Your Thoughts of Suicide?



A friend or colleague



A therapist

A family member

A counselor on a suicide hotline

None of the above

Medscape January 2021

Does Your Workplace Offer a Program to Reduce Stress and/or Burnout?



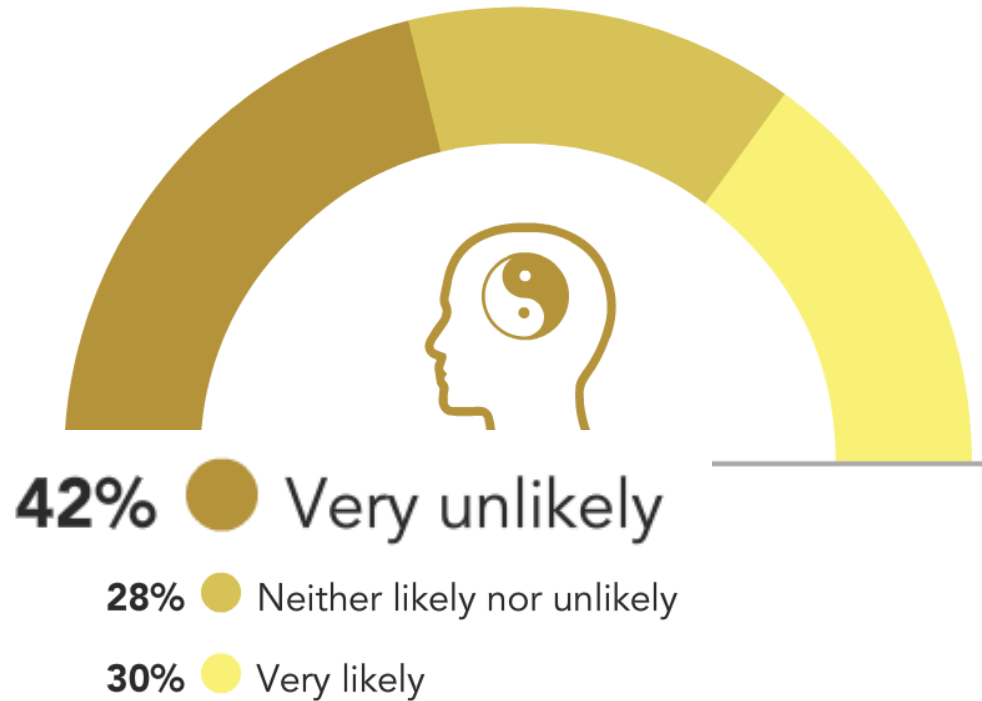
35% ● Yes

47% ● No

18% ● Don't know

Medscape January 2021

How Likely Are You to Participate in This Program?



Medscape January 2021

Distress 911

Burnout

PTSD

Moral

Distress/Injury

***Compassion
Fatigue***

***Relational
Dysfunction***

***Decision
Fatigue***



***Political
Polarization***

***Depression
and Anxiety***

***Economic
Uncertainty***

***Social
Unrest***

Emotion 911

Hopelessness *Anger* *Fear*

Numbness *Disgust* *Confusion*

Demoralization *Helplessness* *Rage*

Anxiety *Sadness* *Grief* *Isolation*

Guilt *Resignation* *Weariness*

Loneliness *Shame*

Loneliness?

“Despite living in the most technologically connected age in human development, people in this country are isolated and alone.

The percentage of Americans who report being lonely —40% — has doubled in a generation.”

Vivek Murthy, MD

Former Surgeon General of the US

What about Physicians?

“Graduate degree holders ... reported higher levels of loneliness and less workplace support than respondents who had only completed undergraduate or high school degrees.

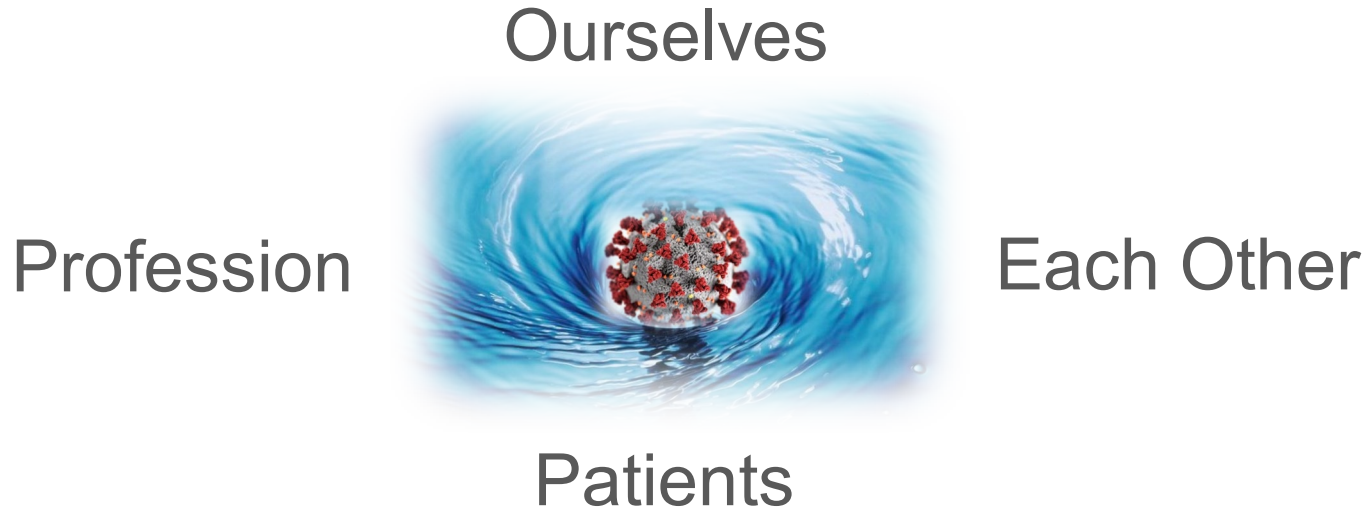
Professional degrees (law and medical degrees) were the loneliest by far, scoring 25% lonelier than bachelor’s degrees, and 20% lonelier than PhDs.



Shawn Achor, MA

Achor. HBR 2018

“Social Distancing” = *Disconnection*





*"Being socially connected is our
brain's lifelong passion
It's been baked into our operating
system for tens of millions of
years."*

Matthew Lieberman, PhD
Social: Why Our Brains are Wired to Connect

While many interventions to reduce burnout have been proposed, none is more important, in our view, than addressing the fundamental human need to belong.

Mark and Frederick Southwick, MDs



Southwick and Southwick, 2020





CULTURE

**By
Design**

Creating a Connection Culture ...

*“Not valuing time with other physicians
or allowing for informal conversations leads to a
soulless efficiency and professional isolation
that drains physicians of our ability to
help ourselves,
help each other,
and help patients.”*

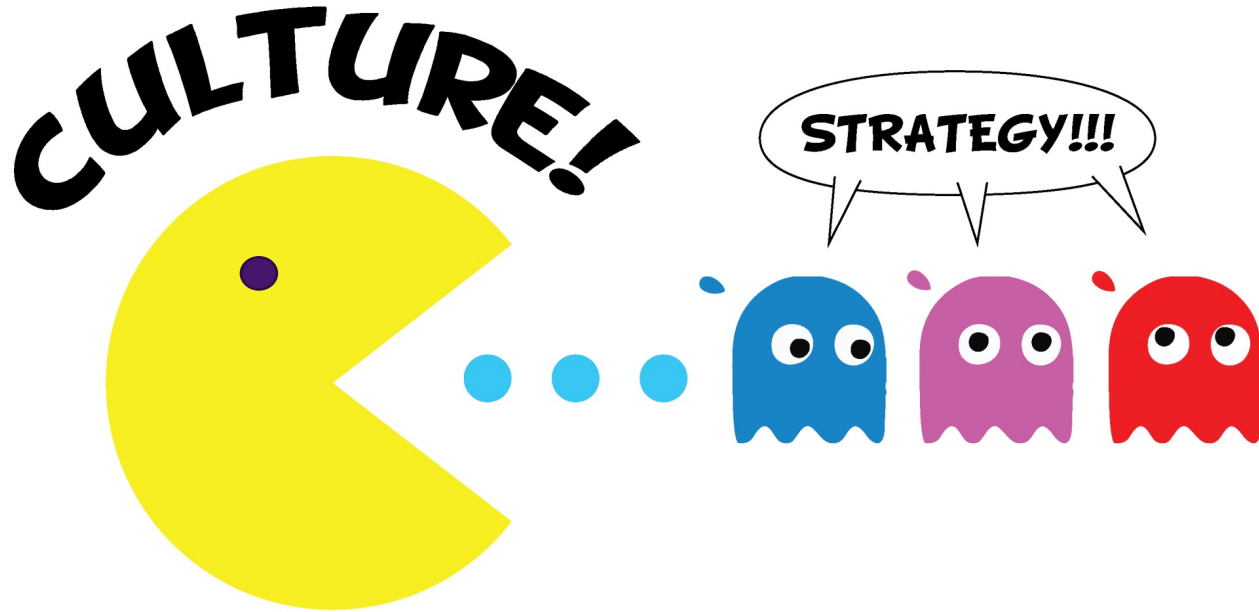
John Frey, MD

Frey; Annals FM 2018

The way a group
thinks,
acts,
and interacts



“Culture eats Strategy for Breakfast”



A Case Study in Culture ...

Yours!

Present?

Ideal?

Being a 5 STARRS[®] Connection Culture

Service

Teamwork

Attitude

Reflection

Renewal

Self Care



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In the Last Week:

1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Daily



Service

We recognize our teammates
for their good work.

1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Daily

Teamwork

We check in with our teammates,
and know about their joys and struggles.

1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Daily

Attitude

We help to create a positive and encouraging team culture.

1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Daily

Reflection

We regularly connect with those things
that have meaning in our work.

1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Daily

Renewal

We take time to celebrate our successes.

1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Daily

Self-Care

We take time for stress reduction/relaxation.

1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Daily

Connection Culture?

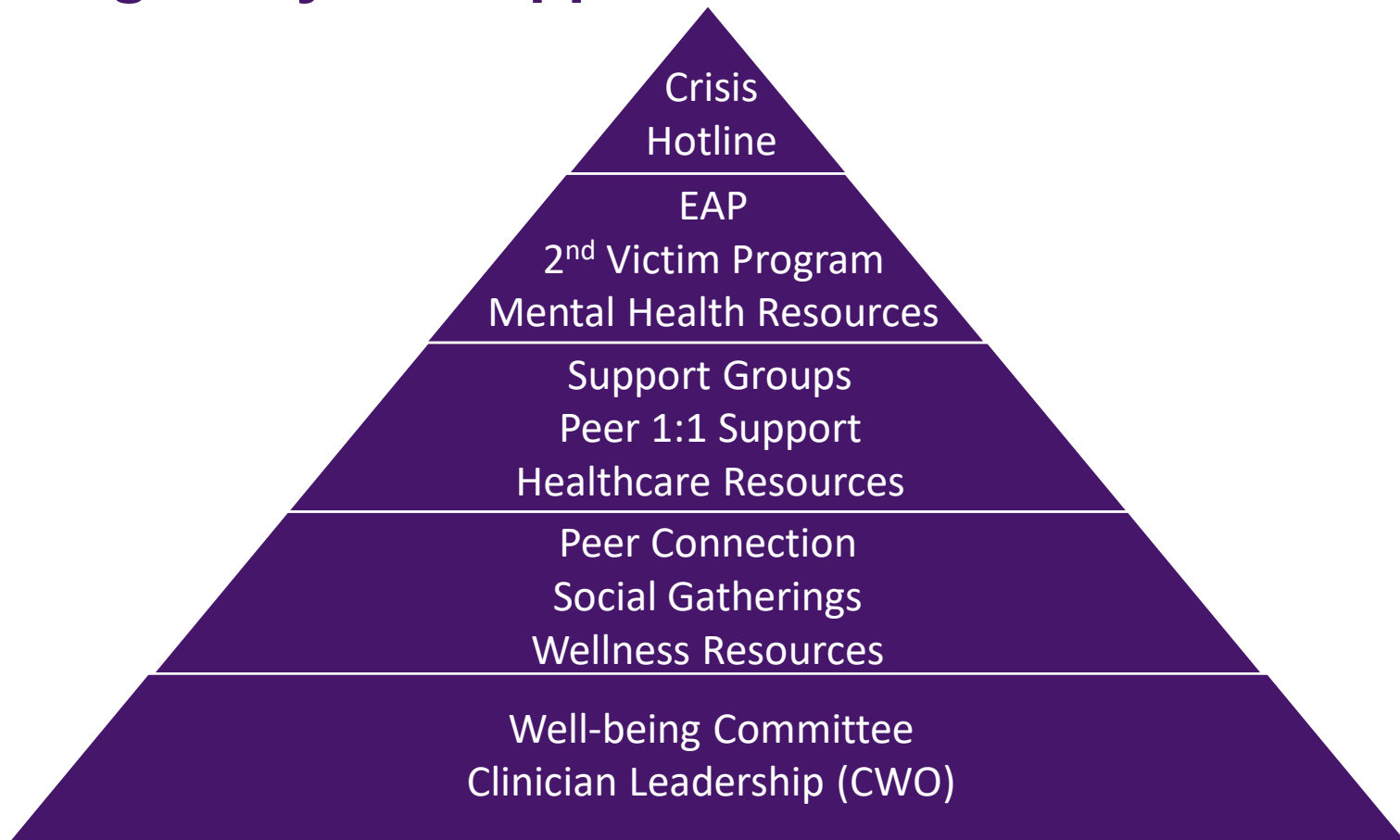


Your “Secret” Weapon

A photograph of two female doctors in white lab coats. They are both holding their black stethoscopes with silver chest pieces towards the camera. The chest pieces have the American Medical Association (AMA) logo on them. The background is blurred, focusing attention on the doctors and their stethoscopes.

Relationships with Colleagues

Taking a Layered Approach to Clinician In-reach



Professional “Gathering Spots” for Clinicians

- Online forums (examples: Sermo, Doximity, MomMD, QuantiaMD)
- Finding Meaning in Medicine Discussion Groups: [Link](#)
- COMPASS Groups – Mayo Clinic (COMPASS — COlleagues Meeting to Promote And Sustain Satisfaction): [Link](#)
- Balint Groups: [Link](#)
- “Doctor’s Lounge”
- PeerR_xMed



PeerR_x

www.PeerRxMed.com



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PR_x90[©]

Check-in

- “in as little as 90 Seconds” once a week by text, e-mail, phone
- “for up to 90 Minutes” once a month, preferably “live”
- “90 minutes every 90 Days” for **Rē**calibration



PR_x90[©]

Weekly Check-in questions (“90 seconds”):

- How are you doing?
- How can I help/support/encourage you?

Monthly Check-in questions (“90 minutes”):

- How are you doing?
- What’s going well?
- What are you struggling with?
- How can I help/support/encourage you?

Quarterly Check-in questions (“90 days”):

- How are you living out your values?
- What are your goals over the next 3 months?
- What are your dreams both personally and professionally?
- When’s your next vacation/adventure?
- How can I help/support/encourage you?





What might you do to create
a more deliberate professional
“culture of connection”
in your organization?

Additional References

- Greenawald, M. How to Create a Culture of Well-being in Your Practice. *Fam Pract Manag*. 2018 Jul-Aug; 25(4):11-15. [Link](#)
- Greenawald, M. Creating Intentional Professional Connections to Reduce Loneliness, Isolation, and Burnout. *Fam Pract Manag*. 2020 Sep-Oct; 27(5):20-24. [Link](#)
- Southwick M, Southwick F. The Loss of Social Connectedness as a Major Contributor to Physician Burnout. *JAMA Psychiatry*. 2020 May 1;77(5):449-450. [Link](#)



Let's Talk

The following AMA resources are available to support your physicians and staff:

- [Caring for Caregivers during COVID-19](#)
- [AMA COVID-19 Resource Page for Physicians](#)
- [JAMA COVID-19 Collection](#)
- [Steps Forward™](#)
- [Telehealth Implementation Playbook](#)
- [Behavioral health integration in physician practices](#)

www.ama-assn.org

Upcoming Programming

February 4

Rethinking wellness: COVID-19 and the search for meaning

Bryant Adibe, MD

System Vice President and Chief Wellness Officer, Rush University System for Health

February 11

Physician burnout: It's not a resiliency deficit

Colin West, MD, PhD

Professor of Medicine, Medical Education, and Biostatistics, Mayo Clinic

**For questions, please email:
Action.Labs@ama-assn.org**



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