Work Life Balance, Integration and Wellbeing

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What is “work-life balance”? 
There is no magic secret!
Do you have “work-life balance”? 

- Work 
- Family 
- Community 
- Self 

What level of (ideal) importance would you assign to each domain? (4 percentages that will add up to 100) 

How much do you actually focus on those four domains? (4 percentages that will add up to 100)
Working & Living in U.S.

Nationally: Compared to other industrialized countries, the U.S. offers fewer policies to support workers and families

Organizationally: Workplaces increasingly demand more hours and higher levels of commitment from their employees

◦ Work devotion schema (Blair-Loy 2003); Career mystique (Moen and Roehling 2004); Ideal worker (Acker 1990)

Home: Parenting, particularly in middle-class families, has become characterized by the need for intensive investments of time in childrearing.

◦ Time obligations children under 6 (Michel et al. 2011)
Working & Living in U.S.

Women and People of Color
- Double shift (Gerson 2011; Hochschild 1989)
- Raised bar (Hagan and Kay 1995)
- Subject to discrimination and additional stigma (Stone and Hernandez 2013)
- Gender similarities in experiences of work-family conflict (Simon 1995; Young et al. 2014)

Demands of Nonprofit Work
- Difficult to set limits and boundaries (Oelberger 2017), because constrained resources and commitment to the clients
- Vicarious or secondary trauma (also known as burnout) “is a process by which a professional’s inner experience is negatively transformed through empathic engagement with client’s trauma material” (Killian, K. 2008).
How to tackle this challenge?

Government

Federal, State, and Local Policies

- **FAMILY Act**, a national insurance program to provide working families with paid leave
- **Healthy Families Act**, which would allow workers to earn paid sick days
- “Right to Request” policies facilitate employee-employer discourse regarding flexible work schedules
- Subsidized childcare
How to tackle this challenge?
Organizationally

Organizational policies of flexibility and control
- Non-traditional hours
- Telecommuting
- Schedule control

Organizational climate and managers
- An overall responsiveness to and respect for employees’ personal needs vis-à-vis organizational objectives (57% report working for a NON-supportive supervisor Schieman et al. 2014)
- Reducing stigma of those who use policies (ie. “time deviants”, Epstein et al. 1999)
- Disclosure and relative comparisons (Young and Wheaton 2013)
- Modeling boundaries and policy use in terms of emails, working late, meeting times.
How to tackle this challenge? Personally

**Boundaries and Time use**
- Don’t do emails after hours
- Don’t work late from the office
- Don’t schedule meetings that are after hours
- Use schedule control wisely (Connelly and Ghodsee 2011)
- Avoid multitasking (Schieman and Young 2010)

**Boundaries and Expectations**
- There will always be more to do. What can realistically be cut?
- Collaboratively lower demand expectations

**Boundaries and Segmentation**
- Reduce border permeability (Clark 2000)
Key Points

The structure of work and employment relations is intense and demanding.

Policies matter – on a federal, state, and organizational level

Organizational climate and managers are significant

Boundaries are crucial to enable healthy and sustainable personal life and work
Suzanne
Stress – releases cortisol, an immune system suppressant & inflammatory agent.
Positive/Tolerable/Toxic Stress

**POSITIVE**
Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

**TOLERABLE**
Serious, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships.

**TOXIC**
Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.
Outcomes of Work-Life Conflict

Poor organizational performance.

Personal stress, which elevates cortisol.

Chronically elevated cortisol impacts immune system functioning, reduces muscle mass, increases fat, impairs memory and learning, cause sleep problems, and damage stomach, kidneys, and heart.
Adverse Childhood Experiences

Cause changes in the architecture of the brain that affect everything from physical growth to emotional development to the capacity to make healthy decisions as an adult.

It also increases the risk of alcoholism, depression, liver disease, intimate partner violence, STIs, smoking and suicide.

(MDH Health Disparities Report, 2013)
5 or more ACEs in MN

http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/cfh/program/ace/
Vicarious or Secondary Trauma

Vicarious or secondary trauma (also known as burnout) “is a process by which a professional’s inner experience is negatively transformed through empathic engagement with client’s trauma material” (Kilian, K. 2008).

It shows up as anxiety, trouble sleeping, difficulty concentrating, anger, unprofessional behavior. It can accumulate over time.
Our response to danger

Danger signals the body’s response – hormones released for ACTION.

Fight/flight/freeze response natural and normal, except when it isn’t.

Fear or anxiety triggers the body to maintain levels of cortisol and adrenaline, resulting in inflammation and reduced immune functions.
TRIGGERS or REMINDERS

Events or situations that instantly create highly emotional response.

Limbic system highjacks us, we are no longer in control.

Triggers are personal, often the result of past wounds.

Automatic response, but we can make choices around how we react.

Develop discipline around not reacting and shift to more resourceful, strategic state before taking action.
Dimensions of Resilience

AWARENESS
- Keeping the light on

BALANCE
- Rest and Recovery
- Realistic Optimism
- Self-regulation

CONNECTION
- With yourself and others
## Personal Strategies: Self-Care

### Nutrition:
Cortisol triggers cravings for sugar, fat, & carbs, lead to an imbalance in blood sugars and result in feeling tired, moody, or having poor concentration.

### Movement:
Increases the capacity of blood vessels, allowing for the delivery of oxygen, water, and glucose to the brain. Serotonin is released.

### Restorative Sleep:
Turn off electronics 1 hour before sleep.

### Mindfulness Meditation:
Insight Timer App or self-guided.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 - 15 minutes a day of spaciousness to start</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music, movement, ceremony, nature, sleep, gratitude, body work, social supports, breath work.</td>
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<td>Commit to identifying and shaving away negative personal habits.</td>
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<td>Practice noticing triggers and using new tools to self-regulate.</td>
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