Managing one's own stresses is the toughest part of practicing medicine. ~ Oscar London M.D., W.B.D.

Stress is the source of all types of illness. As a physician, you know that. However, as the quote says above, managing your own stress can be the most challenging thing for you to excel at in your profession. But it doesn’t have to be. You are the one who is in control of how you feel. No one else is. You may not think that you have 100% control of the emotions that you feel on a daily basis given your hectic and demanding schedule … but you sure do!

I have compiled these Top 7 Tips so that you can implement them immediately, avoiding the inevitable burnout that stress and the feeling of overwhelm will lead you to. My intention is to shift the medical profession culture from Physician Burnout to Physician Wellness.

Before you read my Top 7 Tips, you need to decide, really decide (i.e., cutting off all other options) that YOUR overall health and well-being is just as important as your patients … matter of fact, MORE important than your patients' health. Because, without YOUR optimal health, what are the ramifications to your patients, your family, loved ones, and most of all your future career and personal life?
Read these tips carefully. Some tips may sound very simple, but from my experience with my physician clients, they find that shifting their mindset and behaviors is initially challenging. Why? Because many of my doctor clients find that they have fallen into a default pattern of responding to what life throws their way. It’s a pattern that doesn’t benefit them emotionally or physically (at least not any more), however, it’s what they know. It’s their “norm”. Does this sound familiar?

I am here to teach you a new way to respond to the stressors of your profession so that you are on the path of Physician Wellness, not Physician burnout.

You will find a common theme in each of my 7 tips. And that is that they are all correlated with your mindset. Your overall health and well-being depends on that. Matter of fact, your success as a doctor and your patients’ health depends on your emotional health being in tip-top shape!

So, let’s get started and give you that Prescription for reducing the stress and feeling better so that “burnout” is not part of your future!
for Physician Burnout
The Top 7 Tips that You Can Use Right Now!
Tip #1: Examine the "state of health" of your thoughts and feelings!

That's right ... the nature of your thoughts and what you choose to feel on a daily basis will significantly impact your emotional and physical health. So, first thing you need to do is to pay closer attention to what you tell yourself each day about your profession and your life.

Awareness is the first step to changing your situation and your overall well-being.

Your thoughts and feelings CREATE your reality.
Tip #2: Catch yourself in the act of stinkin’ thinkin’ and make a deliberate choice to pivot to a better feeling place!

So, in Tip #1 you examined your thoughts and feelings and have probably noticed that there are many things you think and feel that don’t feel so good. Here are just a few examples that some of my clients tell me:

“I never have enough time to be a great mother and wife.”

“I work too much and have no control of my schedule.”

“I feel guilty all the time.”

“It’s never enough ... I’m not enough.”
(lack of confidence)

“There’s not enough time in the day; my needs always come last.”

“This lawsuit is going to be the death of my life as I know it.”
Tip #2 (cont’d): Catch yourself in the act of stinkin’ thinkin’ and pivot!

This is your chance to take action. When you find yourself focusing on something that doesn’t make you feel good about your current situation or your future, you need to shift your focus to something that feels better. How do you do this? There are many ways. Here are just a few:

1)   Pivot the story you are telling yourself to a more empowering one.

2)   Take a moment to focus on what you are grateful for. It doesn’t take that long to appreciate what you have.

3)   Establish a healthy “outlet” that will help you to center and feel more at peace… at least one self-care item (e.g., some form of exercise, read something inspiring, do yoga, go for a brief walk, one of my doctor clients writes some poetry … anything that makes you feel better!)
Tip #3: Shift the paradigm of what perfectionism means to you. Shoot for EXCELLENCE, not “PERFECT”.

This is a big one! Perfectionism is the root of a lot of the stress you feel. Yes, your drive for perfectionism is part of what has made you an outstanding physician in the first place. Having high standards is part of who you are. Perfectionism does have its merits. After all, a patient is not going to want a surgeon who doesn’t strive for “perfect”!

However, it becomes detrimental when the act of shooting for perfectionism is actually making you feel worse, not better. When that feeling of “not enough” creeps up often, it will not serve you in any way. Shoot for “excellence” instead!

“Have no fear of Perfectionism – you’ll never reach it.” ~ Salvador Dali
Tip #4: Stop beating up on yourself. It’s a “show stopper” and it will definitely wear you down.

Beating up on yourself is only going to make you feel worse and will attract more of what you don’t want into your professional and personal life. It NEVER gets you the results you are looking for. I know … my clients tell me that it pushes them to do even better. Does it? Really?

If you feel good when you are “beating up on yourself” and you are energized and motivated by that self-talk, then keep on doing it. However, I find that all of my physician clients are de-motivated and feel discouraged when they beat up on themselves. Many physicians fall into this trap of judging themselves, where nothing is good enough. Is that you?

* Learn how to love yourself more.
* Focus on your positive qualities, not the negative.
* Notice the compliments you get. Celebrate them.
Tip #5: Accept “what is” with a clear intention of the way you want it to be. Acceptance doesn’t mean “defeat”, “giving up” or “settling for less”. Quite the contrary!

It’s about being OK with what is, no matter what is going on around you. It’s sounds illogical, but it is not. If you are not OK with “what is” and can’t make peace with it on some level, then you will never be able to move forward from where you are standing right now. You are actually “resisting” what is.

“What you resist ... persists!”

I have a doctor client who is going through a lawsuit right now. Initially it was devastating to her. However, once she learned how to make peace with it and focus more on the way she wants it to turn out, she has been able to move forward and feel better about the entire process. Instead of allowing it to drain her, it’s strengthening her! How’s that for a positive shift?!
Tip #6: Stop that broken record that keeps on playing over and over again in your mind, which keeps you up at night.

As you know, sleep is a critical component to repairing and rebuilding the cells of your body. And it sure plays a role in how productive and alert you are during the course of your day. But too often my doctor clients tell me that they lay awake at night reliving their stressful days. They tell me: “I can’t turn off my brain”. But you can wind it down!

You can choose to focus on something else that makes you feel better and more at peace (See Tip #2 for examples). Also, there are special techniques that I teach my physician clients to use at night so that their mind quiets down with ease, which paves the way for a good night’s sleep!
Tip #7: Take a moment to Breathe.

Initially, this tip may seem silly. After all, you are alive, so you must be breathing! But I mean a different type of breathing here ... a deliberate “time out” to just breathe. An actual regimen of taking a nice deep breath in and then letting it out with a big sigh. Then, repeating this process 3 times.

As you breathe in, imagine allowing in all the positive feelings that you want to feel. And as you breathe out, imagine letting go of every thought, feeling, emotion that doesn’t serve you. Breathe it out!

I do this occasionally with my clients on the phone so that they can really take a moment to center and re-connect with that feeling that “All is Well”.

Breathe in ...
Breathe out ...
Now ... count to “Zen”. 😊
It is my intention that after reading this report, you have gained great value from the tips I have shared and will implement a few of them today!

I am passionate about helping Physicians, like you, to prevent burnout and live happy and healthy lives. When that happens, it’s a win-win for all. You continue to make the significant impact that you have on the overall health of society, while still being able to “have a life” and enjoy the journey.

I would be happy to offer you a complimentary consultation to find out more about my Physician coaching services. Feel free to contact my office today to schedule this consultation.

To your health and happiness,
Maria C. Lesetz
541-913-3469