



Wellness: The Coordinator Matters, Too

McGaw's Annual Coordinators' Retreat

March 23, 2017

Leslie McSpadden, General Surgery Housestaff Coordinator

What I'd like to share with you today

- Who I am and what I do
- Why it's so important to make time to take care of your own needs as well as meeting the ones of those you serve.
- What I've learned from my personal experience.

The Role of the Coordinator

- The “Christopher Robin” of residency/fellowship programs
 - The glue that holds everything together
 - Often means putting everyone else’s needs above your own
 - The person that your residents and faculty depend on
- Being a coordinator is a lot of work and can be incredibly stressful, and your own personal well-being is important, too
- If you aren’t taking care of yourself and your needs, eventually it’s going to have a negative affect on your work/your program/your residents

Why is this Important?

- To be your best in your job, you need to take care of yourself first
- The tricky part is that because *you're* the caretaker for everyone in your program, *your* needs might be overlooked
- The importance of taking care of yourself and making your own personal wellness a priority became really clear to me about this time last year and I realized it was up to me to take ownership of the situation

So What Do You Do?

- Important lessons I learned from my experience last spring
 - Setting boundaries is crucial
 - You need to become your own advocate
 - Important to make time for things outside of work that you enjoy, even if it seems like you don't have the time

Setting Boundaries

- When you're the go-to, dependable person for your program, it's easy for people to continue to request you do work or responsibilities that might not really be essential
- Think about the things that cause you a lot of stress or are logistical nightmares, and ask yourself if your involvement is critical. If not, is there an alternate solution?
- You want to make sure that your time is being maximized and that you're spending time working on the things that are most important

Becoming Your Own Advocate

- When you're the person who takes care of everyone else, there might not be anyone looking out for your needs so you need to learn to ask for what you need
- Make a list of the things that could help alleviate some stress or help you to be happier at work
- Meet with your boss/manager/Program Director and explain what you need and how it will help you to perform even better at your job

Make Time for the Things You Love

- Important to make sure you dedicate time outside of work to activities or hobbies that bring you joy
- It might sound counter-intuitive to add more to your plate when you're stressed out but it actually helps
 - Gives you something to look forward to
 - If it's something like walking with friends or training for a marathon or walking your dog, it can help improve your health
 - Brings balance to your life
- Get creative to figure out how to fit in the things you love doing

In Conclusion

- Remember that you are an enormous asset to your program and your department, and your wellness matters
- Just like you want to take care of your residents/fellows so they can be their best at work, you also have to take care of yourself so you can be *your* best
- There is no harm in asking for what you need, and you'll probably find that the people you report to are very receptive to helping you

Questions?

Thank You

