

Leadership Fortitude for Changemakers

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Introductions

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See bio for more information

It takes some time...



Assessing the Experience

- o 1 year or less
- o 2-5 years
- o 5-10 years
- o 11-15 years
- o 16-20 years
- o 21-25 years
- o 26-30 years
- o More?

Burnout in Child Welfare

- o Turnover in child welfare ranges from 20%-90% per year, depending on the jurisdiction, averaging 30% per year.
- o Some studies suggest that over 40% of the workforce is suffering from Secondary Traumatic Stress, Compassion Fatigue or burnout.

**Why would you let them
have that part of you?**



**You can't walk through
water...**

...without getting wet.

The work *will* affect you:

- Burnout
- Compassion Fatigue
- Secondary Traumatic Stress
- Vicarious Traumatization

The Importance of this Topic

This is a critical discussion because:

- ❑ It's a marathon, not a sprint.
- ❑ Before you are experienced enough to be any good at this, you don't want to be too burned out to do it well.
- ❑ We do not build “widgets”; rather, we are the tool, if we are not healthy, we do harm.
- ❑ The outcomes of those we serve depend, in large part, on our ability to deliver the service in a reliable, healthy manner.

Integrity Issue

- ❑ You can't sustain taking care of others, if you are not taking care of yourself.
- ❑ It's wrong for us to ask you to take care of other people's families, if we don't let you take care of your own family.
- ❑ We believe in the parallel process of systems where each layer of the system must have their needs met to meet the needs of others.
- ❑ Self-care is NOT a luxury, it is an ethical imperative.
- ❑ We are obligated to ensure that our colleagues are also well enough to do the work.

Signs to look for:

- fatigue
- illness
- cynicism
- irritability
- reduced productivity
- feelings of hopelessness
- anger
- despair/depression
- sadness
- feelings of re-experiencing the event
- nightmares
- anxiety
- avoidance of people and/or activities
- persistent anger and sadness
- Basic notions of safety, trust, esteem, intimacy & control are challenged
- Worker's view of self, others and world are disrupted
- Too little or too much sleep

Vicarious and Secondary Trauma

- o These symptoms have **cumulative effects** that accrue over time
- o They are **normal in short term**, but **harmful in long term**

Personal Risk Factors

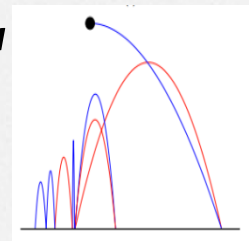
- ❑ History of personal trauma
- ❑ Personally identify with the victim
- ❑ Negative personal circumstances (e.g., grief due to recent loss)
- ❑ Low levels of social support
- ❑ Low sense of control over life
- ❑ Lack of meaningful personal relationships

Organizational Risk Factors...

- ❑ Extraordinary high caseloads
- ❑ Conflicts with co-workers or supervisors
- ❑ Climate of pervasive, ongoing change
- ❑ Excessive emphasis on efficiency, cost-effectiveness and competition
- ❑ Unforgiving environment
- ❑ “If you can’t handle it, get out!”

Resilience

Resilience is the ability to bounce back or return to normal functioning after adversity.



Building Resilience

*Developing the capacity to
bend, but not break.*

We can intentionally build
resilience in order to offset
the effects of
long term stress exposure
on the brain and body.

The good news

Leadership
Fortitude can be
intentionally
cultivated &
learned..

So how do you protect yourself?



Be Proactive



**If you wait until you need help,
it may be too late**



Building Fortitude

1. Wellbeing Practices
2. Mental Framing Practices
3. Contemplative Practice
4. Supportive Practices
5. Protective Practices

Wellbeing Practices

Take care of
your body and
your spirit.

Ensure your care and wellbeing *or nobody else will*

- ❑ Resilience relies on your primary needs being met.
- ❑ The 3-legged stool:
 - ❑ **EAT:** Good nutrition
 - ❑ **MOVE:** Adequate exercise
 - ❑ **SLEEP:** At least 7 hours of good sleep each night



**Reference: Tom Rath: Eat, Move, Sleep*

Instill expectations of rest

Find time each day and week to be “totally away” from work, take e-breaks and e-vacations, be compassionate about your humanness and need for rest.

Spend time in nature



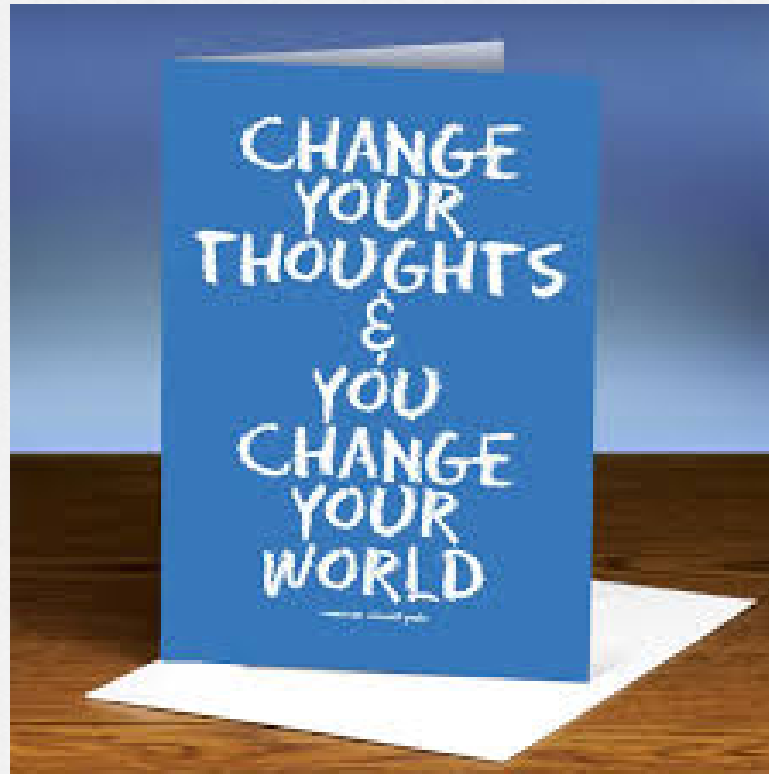
Keep your medical appointments

- o Annual physicals, tests and screens
- o Dental exams twice per year
- o Go to the doctor when you are sick, and be your own best advocate
- o Blood work such as screenings for: high Cholesterol, diabetes, low Vitamin D, thyroid levels, etc.

Consider Integrative Healing Practices

- o Acupuncture
- o Massage
- o EMDR
- o Martial Arts
- o Naturopathic medicine evaluation
- o And more!

Mental Framing Practices



The only thing you can control is you.

You choose...

Your response.

Your attitude.

What you give meaning to.

What you give attention to.

What you give energy to, and therefore,
your wellbeing.

It's not the end of the story...



Expect and learn from mistakes



Mistakes are inevitable; they make you human.
No shame.
No blame.
Only learning, fortifying, and correcting course.

Resilience-building thoughts

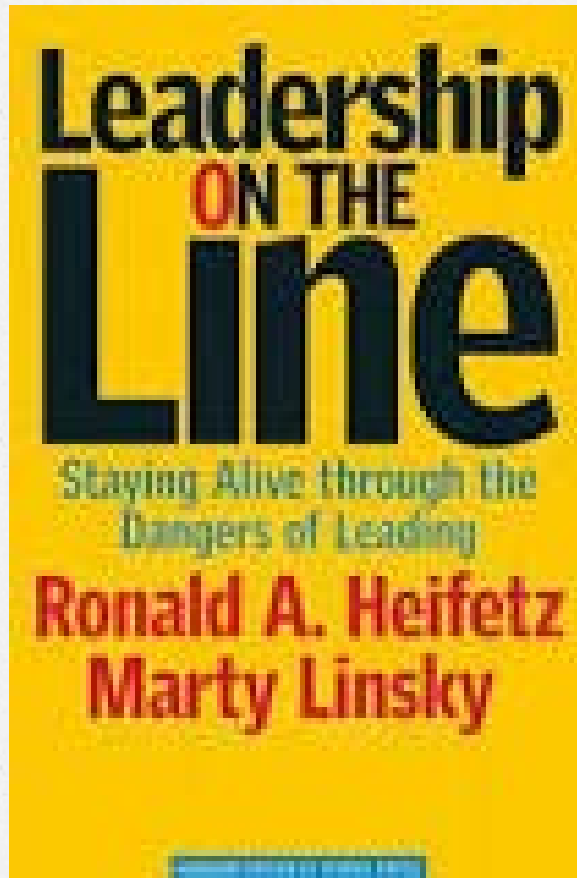
**Although challenges in life are a reality,
so is pleasure.**

**When challenges come,
and the stress of life seems
overwhelming,
we can still experience strength and
purpose.**

Eventually, pleasure will return.

Dr. Galen Buckwalter

Prepare for a backlash...



...if you are a
disruptive
innovator or
change maker
& stay on the
balcony!

Nurture positivity

**Believe that something wonderful
is always about to happen.**



Nurture positivity



3 to 1 Ratio

Dr. Barbara Fredrickson, Positivity

Nurture positivity



Cultivate gratitude

IT IS NOT HAPPY
PEOPLE WHO ARE
THANKFUL. IT IS
THANKFUL
PEOPLE WHO ARE
HAPPY.

Half full?



Create your life

Personal mastery goes beyond
competence and skills...

it means **approaching one's life as a
creative work, living life from a creative,
as opposed to a reactive, viewpoint.**



-Brendan Baker



Internalize a sense of mastery and control

*The best way to
predict your future
is to create it.*

-Abraham Lincoln

Be clear on your own life's purpose.

Why are you on the planet?

What is the special gift you bring
(e.g., what is your superpower)?

How can you best use this gift to create
good in the world?

Contemplative Practices

“What we plant
in the soil of
contemplation,
we shall reap
in the harvest
of action.”

Meister Eckhart

Each day...

- o Engage in a contemplative practice that allows you time to reflect, think, and create.
- o Examples are:
 - o Meditation
 - o journaling
 - o Drawing
 - o Downloading to your partner
 - o Praying

We get so busy that we don't have time to think!

Contemplative Practices

pulling back to move forward

- o Allows you to:
 - o Think more deeply
 - o Be strategic
 - o See patterns
 - o Sort through volume and complexity
 - o Come up with innovative ideas
 - o Be more efficient
 - o Be more productive

-Adapted from Charles Duhigg

What makes a good Contemplative Practice

- o Feels boring
- o Feels a bit hard
- o Is uncomfortable; shouldn't feel like, "Oh, this is nice."
- o Should be asking questions that make yourself think
- o Should change when they begin to get comfortable; experiment with various practices

-Adapted from Charles Duhigg

Cultivate gratitude

Create a daily practice
Of reflection, feeling
grateful for
benefits, pleasures,
and love
you experience
everyday.

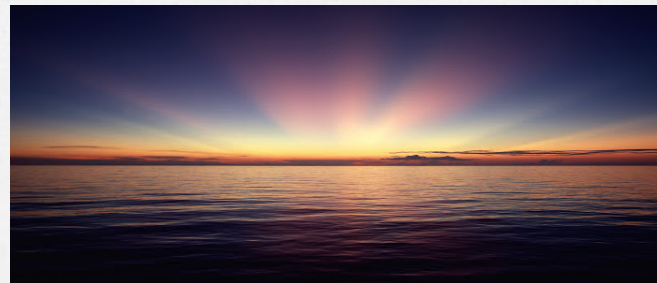


Supportive Practices



Support your spirit

Seek activities that instill beauty, comfort and joy.



Seek outside support, coaching, or therapy



Practice compassion

Compassion is made up of gestures or words of caring, kindness, and support expressed towards self or others intended to relieve suffering.

-Leigh Tremain

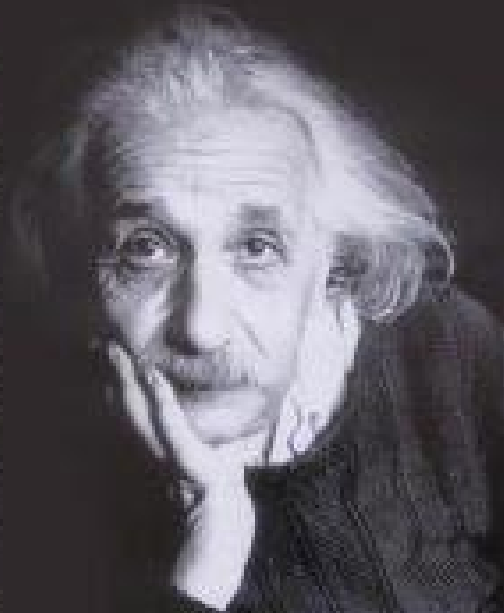
Self-compassion

Self-compassion
is giving ourselves
the same kindness and
care
we'd give to a good friend.

-Kristin Neff

Protective Practices

THE WORLD
WILL NOT BE
DESTROYED BY
THOSE WHO DO
EVIL, BUT BY THOSE
WHO WATCH THEM
WITHOUT DOING
ANYTHING



Albert Einstein

Self-Protect

it's what grown-ups do

Know how to self-protect to keep yourself well and happy and have a balanced life outside of work.



**Teach people
how to treat you.**



Protect Yourself

Modulate your intake of traumatic material and stress in other areas of your life.



Build supportive relationships



We are built and hard wired to belong to tribe.

Our brains need and crave connection.

Connections buffer the inevitable negative impacts of stress to our brains and bodies.

Hands down

The greatest thing you can do to foster fortitude, resilience and build protective factors is to:

**nurture, strengthen and
deepen your bonds and
relationships
with others.**

For yourself, and for others

- o There are clear connections in wellbeing levels among team members and between managers and those they manage
- o Individuals are influenced by the shared culture of their team
- o The healthier your supervisor is, the healthier the supervisees are!

-Jim Harter, PhD and Gallup Organization Study

A moment of pause

- o What is the primary threat to your sustainability as a leader?
- o What would you have to do to eliminate or reduce that threat?

The Fatal Flaw of Changemakers

You are not Atlas
carrying the world
on your shoulder.
It is good to remember
that the planet is
carrying you.

-Vandana Shiva-



Fill your bucket



Wrap Up and Questions

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TEDx Talk
**“The Human Need for
Belonging”**
available on YouTube

