

# Surgeon in Crisis

One Surgeon's Journey through Depression and Recovery

# Disclosure

- I have no disclosures

# Outline

- Burnout
- Depression
- My experience with Burnout and Depression
- Lessons Learned

# Definition of Burnout

- WHO says it is a syndrome resulting from unmanaged workplace stress, characterized by three dimensions: exhaustion, increased mental distance from one's job, and reduced professional efficacy.
- Mayo Clinic defines it as a state of physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion caused by prolonged and excessive stress. It includes feeling of exhaustion, cynicism about one's job and **a sense of reduced professional efficacy** along with self-doubt
- **Exhaustion, irritability and cynicism**, potentially self-blame

# Stanford Burnout Model

- Work
  - Volume of work, but also the joy of the work
  - A few more hours in the OR vs. a few hours on a peer-to-peer call getting pre-authorization
- Personal Resilience
- Culture at work and away from work

# Recommended Reading

- Resilience – Steve Southwick and Dennis Charney
- Man’s Search for Meaning – Victor Frankl
- The Antidote – Oliver Burkeman
- Courage Under Fire – James Stockdale
- Enchiridion - Epictetus
- Meditations – Marcus Aurelius

# Culture Changes

- Work Hours
- Surgery M+M's
- Change Culture Intentionally

# Not a New Problem

- Confronting Depression and Suicide in Physicians: A Consensus Statement  
JAMA:289;(23):3161-3166. 2003
- Center C., Davis, M., Detre T., **Hansbrough** W, et. al.
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- Dr. Hansbrough: “One of the older physicians was sitting there and he said, ‘Well, he was obviously flawed.’ she said. ‘I will never forget sitting there listening to that, that he was ‘flawed’. And I thought ‘wow, that’s a problem,’” she said.
- “...my husband didn’t die from suicide, my husband died from untreated chronic depression that the culture of the medical community refused to acknowledge exists.”

# My Journey

- Let those of you who struggle with mental health know you are not alone. You are not flawed. You should get help
- For those of you who never struggle with mental illness, it's a chance to hear how some people with depression experience it
- Change the culture







# What went wrong

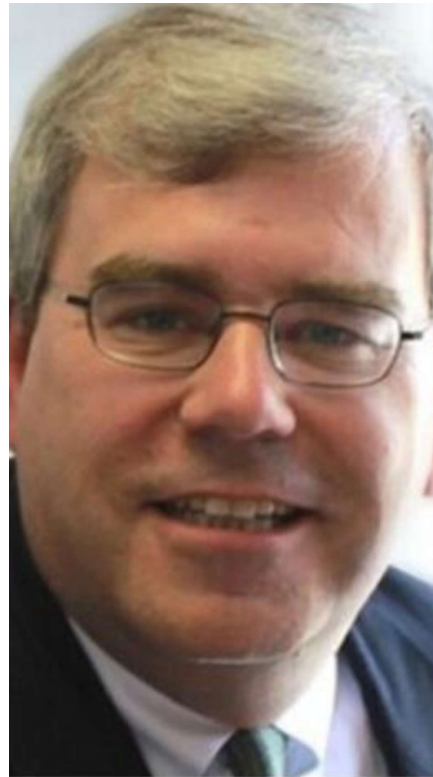
- Family History
- Chronic disease - (AS, Uveitis) Sometimes you have to change your plans
- Stress at Home - Child with chronic health issues

# It's hard to get help

- Recognize you are ill
- Admit you need and deserve help
- Talk to a friend or trusted colleague
- Find a psychiatrist
- Make an appt or go to the ED
- Keep the appt, may help to have a friend bring you
- Open Up
- Take your meds and continue therapy
- Can be chronic, commonly relapsing

# Take Care of Yourself

- Exercise
- Sleep
- Nutrition



Gratitude



Nature

# Self-Compassion Not Rumination

- Most of us are not good at self-compassion
- Stop ruminating
- Be in the moment



# Loved Ones



# Collegiality and Camaraderie

What we do is unique

You should be able to talk  
about it

Be intentional about this



# Be There For Each Other

- Empathy
- Contact someone who can help navigate the current landscape



Reach  
Out

