

## **LIFE OUTSIDE RESIDENCY 3/7/06**

- I. Isn't this an oxymoron?**
- II. Residency can be all-consuming**
  - A. Too much to do, not enough time to do it**
  - B. No sleep**
  - C. Challenging relationships with peers**
  - D. Concerns about knowledge base and skills**
  - E. Dealing with difficult patients**
  - F. Dealing with paperwork and the bureaucracy of medicine**
- III. Don't panic completely**
  - A. Internship only last 365 days**
  - B. But it's not a good coping strategy to just grit your teeth and try to hang on (me: "How's it going?" Resident: "Only 358 days to go")**
- IV. How can you hold on to the most important part of who you are?**
- V. Spheres of personal life**
  - A. Physical health:**
    - 1. You're going to be asking a lot of your body**
    - 2. Do something nice for it (working out, massage, jogging, healthy eating)**
    - 3. Don't set all-or-nothing goals (commit 10 -15 minutes)**
    - 4. Anticipate the ways you'll sabotage yourself**
  - B. Relational: Spouse, significant other, family**
    - 1. You see them as your support system, and they are**
    - 2. Give them some support – no matter how tired you are, remember to tell them you love them and appreciate them**
  - C. Emotional/spiritual health:**
    - 1. Watch out for signs of burn-out, compassion fatigue**
      - a. Begin to compromise your work**
      - b. Blame the system or your patients**
      - c. Abandon your humanistic ideals**
      - d. Whine and complain**
      - e. Become detached from patients**
      - f. Become isolated and withdrawn from everyone**
    - 2. Since you must spend so much time at work, learn how to cultivate a positive involvement with everyday clinical practice**
      - a. At the end of each day, remind yourself of one thing you did that you're proud of**
      - b. Focus on patients, not on self**
      - c. Accept patients' "gifts" (both positive and negative)**
      - d. Rediscover medicine as a calling**
      - e. Look for examples of awe and wonder**
      - f. Don't whine, but be open about your feelings and share stories with colleagues**

- 3. Here are some general strategies, to consider either inside or outside of residency**
- 4. Practice gratitude – it's easy to find things to complain about; what makes you grateful to be alive each day?**
- 5. Practice forgiveness –**
  - a. learn to let go of grudges, resentment, and anger**
  - b. Ask forgiveness of yourself and others; and extend forgiveness toward yourself and others**
  - c. Remember what's really important to you**
    - 1. Learn how to shift perspective – glance at the sky, listen to a child laughing**
    - 2. Focus on your values – flash cards of wise sayings**
- 6. Find places of refuge and sanctuary**
  - a. Traditionally might be church or place of worship**
  - b. Might be nature, might be a place in your mind or heart**
- 7. Practice centering, connecting with your core**
  - a. Meditation, prayer, relaxation techniques**
- 8. Take time for self-reflection**
  - a. Keep a journal**
  - b. Write a poem**
  - c. Talk to a trusted friend**