



Well-Being Program

Guide to Communication

A Well-Being Support Guide Created for You

The ACR® is committed to supporting your well-being. Guides like these, created by fellow radiologists, are designed to help identify activities that can enhance your well-being and mitigate burnout.

About Communication

Although it has been well established that patients benefit from increased or improved communication with physicians, it has more recently been suggested that there are unique benefits radiologists can gain from regular communication with patients. Furthermore, enhancing communication skills can improve radiologist interactions with departmental staff, radiology peers and referring colleagues. It has further been demonstrated that increasing patient and professional interactions can lead to improved job satisfaction with a simultaneous decrease in the rate of burnout.

Objectives

This guide will take you through selected literature, activities and other resources to provide you with knowledge and tools to enhance interpersonal communication skills and help reduce symptoms of burnout. You will:

- Learn how effective interpersonal communication skills and increased communication can lead to a decrease in burnout.
- Enhance interpersonal communication skills.
- Establish habits/practices to increase opportunities for interpersonal communication.

This guide is meant to serve as an introduction to radiologists who hope to learn more about why communication is important, as well as effective and appropriate interactions. The resources in this guide will also help enhance skills for radiologists who routinely communicate with patients.

Resources

[How Radiologists Can Benefit From Direct Communication With Patients — Article](#)

The article explores the unique benefits radiologists can derive from communicating with patients. This article will help the reader understand the positive impact of regular patient interaction, not only on patient satisfaction, but also on many aspects of their job as a radiologist.

■ Activity Time

20 minutes

[Doctor, Shut Up and Listen — Article](#)

This New York Times op-ed article highlights some statistics and trends regarding poor physician communication with patients, the consequences of flawed communication and how a hospital developed a program to improve doctors' communication with their patients.

This will help you better understand the potential negative impact that poor communication can have on patient care and how training can lead to better communication and improved patient outcomes/satisfaction.

■ **Activity Time**

20 minutes

[AMA STEPS Forward Online Learning Module — Empathetic Listening](#)

This online training module offered through the American Medical Association (AMA) Ed Hub and STEPS Forward focuses on how to enhance the patient experience and interpersonal communication through empathy.

The module highlights the five steps required to listen with empathy, answers questions about empathetic listening and provides tools to help implement empathetic listening in your practice. As an added benefit to completing this activity, the participant is eligible for 0.5 CME credits through the AMA.

■ **Activity Time**

30 minutes to complete. Review of additional resources/references offered in this module will take more time.

Daily Patient Rounds — Activity

This activity will increase communication opportunities with patients and hopefully improve not only their experience and satisfaction, but also yours, all while helping to avoid burnout.

Although “free” time in the world of a busy radiologist is either unheard of or at a premium, even a quick interaction with a patient can go a long way in helping to enhance your day-to-day job. This is something that breast and interventional radiologists do on a daily basis, and all radiologists should do the same. This could be simply meeting a patient before or after their imaging study to introduce yourself as a physician who specializes in reading imaging studies, or a more involved experience, such as detailing the findings of an ultrasound exam. The options and opportunities are endless and require only a small amount of time, and can be performed during a planned break. Make a goal of doing this once a week, with the ultimate goal of doing it once a day.

Regularly participating in activities such as these will aid in fine-tuning communication skills and eventually lead to establishing habits that enhance patient and self-care. These meaningful interactions can help build a sense of purpose and being part of a team, while physically providing a break from the daily grind and hopefully improving job satisfaction.

■ **Activity Time**

The activity will take no more than 5 minutes.



Well-Being Program

Guide to Conflict Resolution

A Well-Being Support Guide Created for You

The ACR® is committed to supporting your well-being. Guides like these, created by fellow radiologists, are designed to help identify activities that may enhance your well-being and mitigate burnout.

About Conflict Resolution

Frustrations in medical practice can come in many forms and from many sources:

- Demands for greater productivity.
- Escalating demands on your time such as electronic health record (EHR) documentation.
- Expectations for greater communication/connection with patients and caregivers.

Many of the conflicts in healthcare are the product of structural issues that seem difficult to address. For example, with whom do you talk to about addressing the conflicts created by the demands of the EHR? Developing good working relationships among the various stakeholders is the foundation upon which the larger structural issues may be successfully approached. Conflicts can also be more personal, such as conflicts with supervisors, peers or those you supervise. Signs of conflicts that require resolution can come in many forms and should not be ignored (conflicts typically don't get better if left unaddressed).

Signs include:

- Difficulty sleeping.
- Changes in eating habits, weight loss or gain.
- Repetitive negative thinking about an issue or a person.
- More general negativity or cynicism.

Like any other skill, conflict resolution requires knowledge and practice. The resources within this guide provide guidance in recognizing conflicts that need attention, and offers skills that can lead to success.

Conflict Resolution and Burnout

Burnout is typically the result of differences between expectations (yours and others) and reality. Many obstacles can create those differences, including absence of time, resources, emotional support, etc. One significant contributor can be conflicts with others. While there may be differences in how each of these types of conflict originate or are resolved, some basic principles of conflict resolution can lead to improvement and/or success wherever conflicts arise.

Objectives

This guide will take you through readings, activities and other resources to provide you with tools you can use to reduce symptoms of burnout as they relate to conflict resolution:

- Learn how to identify conflicts that need attention.
- Identify techniques for attending to conflict resolution.
- Understand how to implement successful conflict resolution in your workplace.

Resources

[Teaching Conflict Resolution in Medicine: Lessons from Business, Diplomacy, and Theatre](#)

These resources concentrate on the development of effective teams and focus on teaching conflict resolution skills using a hierarchical approach to preserve interpersonal relationships in medicine. This includes:

- Conflict management and conflict resolution styles.
- Small-group negotiations.
- Case-based clinical scenarios.
- Personal reflection.
- Facilitated debriefs.

The tools are all customizable and time-flexible. Note: You must download the appendices to access the exercises and presentations.

■ Activity Time

Flexible

Crucial Conversation Tools

[Crucial Conversations and Conflict Resolution Interprofessional Simulation](#)

This set of exercises and simulations is designed to help understand and improve communication skills, especially as they are needed in difficult interprofessional conversations specific to healthcare. Included is a facilitator guide, a PowerPoint slide deck, simulation and role-play scenarios focusing on specific types of conflict in healthcare, and a summary survey. The use of these simulations should produce more transferable skills and an understanding of conflict resolution in various situations specific to health care. Note: You must download the appendices to access the exercises and presentations.

■ Activity Time

Effective use of the materials should take at about an hour. There are sufficient materials representing multiple situations and types of issues for additional use.

Conflict Resolution Kit – Articles and Exercises

[Conflict Resolution Network](#)

This includes a summary of levels of conflict that can be used to see how minor tensions rise to more serious problems (earlier resolution avoids much bigger challenges later).

In this kit, 12 approaches to conflict resolution are discussed with a variety of examples that help you understand how each is applied and where it may be appropriate. The best use of this will be thinking through specific examples where these approaches can be used in your work environment. These materials are general to all varieties of conflict, not just healthcare.

■ Activity Time

30 minutes to an hour depending on how thoughtfully you approach it.

Crucial Conversation Tools

[Crucial Conversations and Conflict Resolution Interprofessional Simulation](#)

This is a brief summary of the interest-based approach to conflict resolution, with specific steps for implementation, shifting the focus from the conflict to the interests of the parties and the search for mutually acceptable solutions.

■ Activity Time

9 minutes

What's Next?

Successful conflict resolution requires practice in context. Take what you learn here and apply it! It's best to start with resolution of smaller disagreements and work up to more complex and difficult conflicts that are harming you, other medical professionals or patients. Some of the most difficult conflicts are those in which there are differences in diversity among those who are having the conflict. Understanding the perspective of those with whom the conflict occurs can be an important first step to successful resolution.



Well-Being Program

Guide to Diversity and Inclusion

A Well-Being Support Guide Created for You

The ACR® is committed to supporting your well-being. Guides like these, created by fellow radiologists, are designed to help identify activities that can enhance your well-being and mitigate burnout.

About Diversity and Inclusion

- A diverse and inclusive workplace supports employee well-being through its positive effects on self-esteem, enhanced career achievements and progression, greater work-life balance, social connectedness and belonging, and reduced discrimination and harassment.
- Diversity and inclusion also leads to enhanced innovation and job satisfaction.
- Diversity and inclusion help with talent retention.

Objectives

This guide offers readings, activities and other resources to provide you with the tools needed to better understand the impact of diversity and inclusion on well-being. Readers can use this guide to:

- Understand the meaning of diversity and inclusion.
- Learn about implicit bias, microaggressions, stereotypes and other issues that affect well-being in a diverse workplace.
- Access workplace surveys about culture, harassment and mentoring aids.
- Identify articles on diversity research and obtain a glossary of diversity-related terms.

Resources

[Increase Inclusion to Decrease Physician Burnout and Increase Wellness — Article](#)

Diversity is a huge asset to businesses and radiology departments alike. However, if there is a lack of inclusion then there is no benefit from diversity due to those diverse employees' burnout. Inclusion is vital to maintain diversity and mitigate burnout.

This article teaches you about inclusion and how to assess inclusion at your institution (with suggested survey questions). You'll also learn how to assess for burnout in the target populations.

■ Activity Time

Less than 1 hour

[A Multicenter Study of Burnout, Depression, and Quality of Life in Minority and Nonminority U.S. Medical Students](#)

This article discusses the causes of depression and burnout in minority and nonminority medical students. The article found that most causes of depression and burnout are similar in minority and nonminority students, however there are some specific stresses that affect minority students more than nonminority students. Attention to these unique stressors in minority students can help mitigate depression and burnout in this population.

■ Activity Time

Less than 1 hour

[Harvard Implicit Association Test](#)

The Implicit Association Test (IAT) measures attitudes and beliefs that people may be unwilling or unable to report. The IAT may be especially interesting if it demonstrates an unknown implicit attitude. Studies have shown that after respondents take the IAT, they are more open to diversity and inclusion because they see that bias exists, even in themselves.

■ Activity Time

Less than 1 hour



Well-Being Program

Guide to Mentorship

A Well-Being Support Guide Created for You

The ACR® is committed to supporting your well-being. Guides like these, created by fellow radiologists, are designed to help identify activities that can enhance your well-being and mitigate burnout.

About Mentorship

- Mentoring relationships are important to career success.
- Differences in race, gender, age, career interest and culture can adversely affect the effectiveness and value of mentoring relationships.
- Given that there are multiple vulnerable groups in radiology (women and other underrepresented groups) due to the predominantly nonminority male makeup of the specialty, there may not be enough mentors of similar race, gender, etc., for all mentees. Thus, it is important to learn how to mentor across these differences so that all members of the radiology community can benefit from effective mentoring.

How to Use This Guide

This guide will take you through readings, activities and other resources to help you learn how mentoring across differences can improve well-being and reduce burnout.

Resources

Mentoring Sessions — Article and Workshop Exercise

[MedEdPORTAL: Mentoring Across Differences](#)

The Mentoring Across Differences (MAD) sessions are designed to address challenges that arise in mentoring relationships due to differences in race, gender, age, career interest and culture. This resource provides the framework and exercise needed to mentor across differences in the mentor-mentee relationship by learning how to facilitate workshops, making the mentor-mentee relationships more valuable and effective.

To access details such as the timelines for sessions, case examples and presentations, download the appendices from the MedEdPORTAL page.

■ Time

Approximately 45 minutes to read the resource. Implementing the curriculum takes two 90-minute interactive sessions.

Establishing Mentor Groups — Article and Exercise

[Tales of Mentoring in Radiology: The Experience of Residents and Mentors at a Single Academic Program](#)

This paper describes how to implement mentoring groups in residency training, though it can also be applicable to practicing radiologists. The article demonstrates how mentoring groups can be a valuable addition to residency training. These mentoring groups serve as support groups, as well, so residents (and practicing radiologists) can ideally reach out to these groups, particularly for help with career advice and work-life balance.

■ Time

45 minutes to 1 hour to read the article and 1 hour, 4 times a year to implement the mentoring groups.



Well-Being Program

Guide to Resilience

A Well-Being Support Guide Created for You

The ACR® is committed to supporting your well-being. Guides like these, created by fellow radiologists, are designed to help identify activities that can enhance your well-being and mitigate burnout.

About Resilience

There are limits to the stress and trauma that an individual can endure before their ability to bounce back is compromised, affecting the health of the individual. Therefore, level of resilience can be a contributing factor to burnout.

Individual strategies, such as those described below, can support efforts to reduce stress and burnout. However, the ultimate source of stress may be beyond your control. Organizational procedures and policies, or even the environment, affect levels of resiliency.

How to Use This Guide

This guide will take you through readings, activities and other resources to provide you with tools you can use to reduce symptoms of burnout and improve resiliency. Although many of the resources may be targeted toward residents, the nature of the resources ensures their applicability to practicing radiologists, radiation oncologists and medical physicists

Resources

[A Curriculum to Foster Resident Resilience](#)

The video explores the unique benefits radiologists can derive from communicating with patients. This video will help the reader understand the positive impact of regular patient interaction, not only on patient satisfaction, but also on many aspects of their job as a radiologist.

■ Activity Time

Approximately 1 hour (start at 4:30).

[Gaining Gratitude — Exercise](#)

Authors Amber Bird, MD, and Amber Pincavage, MD, provide an exercise to gain gratitude. According to the authors, “The aim of this lesson will be to introduce trainees to the concept of gratitude. Trainees will attempt to identify individuals or things that they would like to be more grateful for in their daily lives.” To access the following exercises, you’ll need to click on the link above and download the appendices.

1. Gratitude lists: Provides for the mental subtraction exercise below and asks you to make a list of things for which you would like to express gratitude.
2. Mental subtraction exercise: Identify something you want to be more grateful for and vividly imagine your life without it.

3. Setting goals exercise: Break goals into parts and arrange the easier parts to be completed first.

■ **Activity Time**

Each exercise takes only a few minutes.

[The Resilient Leadership Self-Assessment — Exercise](#)

A 15-question 5-point Likert scale test, which assesses your ability to stay connected with people, manage anxiety and lead with conviction. The questions provide fodder for self-reflection as to what kind of leader you are and what kind you want to become. For each area, select one bad habit you would like to stop doing, as well as one positive habit you would commit to start doing. Write these commitments on three notecards, place the notecards in an envelope, and seal the envelope, to be opened in 1–2 months. To access the self-assessment, click on the link above and download the Resilient Leadership Self-Assessment from the appendix.

■ **Activity Time**

The self-assessment takes only a few moments. The complete exercise occurs over 1–2 months.

[Implement a Peer-Led Wellness Curriculum — Article](#)

This article demonstrates how to implement a low-cost, peer-led wellness curriculum. It provides resources to educate residents and radiologists regarding burnout and teaches participants how to foster resilience. Participants will learn the definition of burnout, why it occurs and detailed ways to combat the emotions and effects of burnout to foster resilience. Participants will learn that they are already resilient and learn how to increase their existing resilience through practical exercises.

■ **Activity Time**

10–15 minutes to read through the article and 20–30 minutes to review the appendices. The PowerPoint for the first educational session takes about an hour to present to residents. Subsequent sessions can range from 15 minutes to one hour depending on the needs of the residents and time allowed away from work.

[Optional: The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale — Activity](#)

The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) is a survey that measures resilience, or how well you bounce back after tragedy, trauma or stress. The scale can help predict the outcome to treatment as well as follow the progress of treatment. Depending on the time allowed, you may choose between surveys that contain 2, 5, 10 or 25 questions. Sample statements designed to be scored on a 5-point Likert scale include, “I am able to adapt when change occurs,” and “I can deal with whatever comes my way.” Note: The scale is designed to be accessed by a group of people and there is a cost. To access the CD-RISC, a [request form](#) will need to be submitted and payment provided (cost is dependent on the number of individuals who will use the scale).

■ **Activity Time**

The CD-RISC 25-question test takes about 5–10 minutes.



Well-Being Program

Guide to Self-Care

A Well-Being Support Guide Created for You

The ACR® is committed to supporting your well-being. Guides like these, created by fellow radiologists, are designed to help identify activities that may enhance your well-being and mitigate burnout.

About Self-Care

Self-care has become a popular term that is part of the prescription for successfully preventing burnout and living a life of wellness. But what does this really mean and is it realistically achievable? Self-care is different for everyone, so although it is commonly prescribed, the prescription itself is highly individualized.

As physicians, we entered a unique set of life circumstances when we began medical school. There was an unsaid understanding that we would be conceding time and life opportunities for the noble pursuit of medicine. We became accustomed to giving up time at the gym and with friends and missing life events because we needed to study or be at work. As our training continued, so did these concessions. They persisted even after training ended, when family and career responsibilities replaced other duties.

We know there is a level of self-care we need to subscribe to for a healthy and happy life, though it can be daunting when we look at our schedules and lists of things to do. When going to a yoga class means spending even less time with your family, preventing you from taking care of your house and a stack of bills on your desk, is it really worth the hour of stretching? The pressure of pursuing wellness then becomes a source of unwellness. By not pursuing wellness, you are contributing to your own burnout, and this becomes a vicious circle.

Despite the sometimes cliché nature of how self-care is represented, it is an important component of being healthy and happy that we can control. It is certainly not the cure for burnout, but self-care allows us to take steps that may help mitigate difficult emotions. The purpose of this guide is to simplify self-care into the most achievable components.

How to Use This Guide

This guide consists of two components. The first part includes elements of self-care that are **fundamental** to living a healthy life and are important for everyone. The second part includes suggestions that will be more individualized and nuanced in their effects. If you feel compelled to make changes in your life, try several methods to see what works best.

PART I – The Fundamentals

Sleep

It is a badge of honor to be someone who “doesn’t need sleep” in medicine. This is a terrible misconception that has harmful effects, both short- and long-term. Matthew Walker, PhD, discusses his very important research on sleep and why we need **7–9** hours of rest every night in the following two resources:

1. [TED Talk: Sleep is Your Superpower — 19 minutes](#)
2. [Podcast: Ten Percent Happier With Dan Harris, Episode #221, All of Your Sleep Questions Answered](#)

Nutrition

Nutrition is necessary for health and growth. Healthy nutrition does not need to be overwhelming, nor does it necessitate adhering to a diet. Nutrition is part of the medical school curriculum. We know about the basic tenets of eating healthy, the science behind it and why it is important. Realistic goals are essential with nutrition. Indulgences shouldn't be forbidden, but limited. How we eat can be incredibly difficult to change, but small changes can make big differences.

Here are 10 simple steps:

1. [Article: 10 Simple Ways to Start Eating Healthier This Year](#) — 15 minutes
-

Exercise

As physicians, we also know that exercise is important for a healthy life. Recently, studies have shown that sitting all day (hello, radiologists!), has a significant negative impact on health. Exercise can be difficult to incorporate into an already busy schedule. "It only takes 30 minutes" can often be unrealistic if one needs to drive to the gym or coordinate childcare. Strategic planning to incorporate exercise into your weekly schedule may require some creative maneuvering, so try different methods and see what works best. The most important part is building consistency through small successes.

1. [Article: Physical Activity and Adults](#) — 2 minutes
 2. [Article: Sitting Time and All-Cause Mortality Risk in 222,497 Australian Adults](#) — 20 minutes
-

Relationships

Humans are social beings. We are programmed to need deep and meaningful social interactions and relationships. Work and life can be hard and wonderful — and everything in between. Sharing those moments with someone else you connect with and trust is essential for mental well-being.

1. [Article: 15 Reasons We Need Friends](#) — 5 minutes
 2. [TED Talk: A Hilarious Celebration of Lifelong Female Friendship](#) — 15 minutes
-

Compassion

Give yourself and others a break. Perfectionism is an unattainable goal. Mistakes are unavoidable, so give them space in your life that doesn't involve shame.

1. [TED Talk: Want a Happier Life? Be More Compassionate](#) — 15 minutes
 2. [TED Talk: Our Dangerous Obsession With Perfectionism Is Getting Worse](#) — 15 minutes
 3. [TED Talk: Don't Suffer From Your Depression in Silence](#) — 6 minutes
-

PART II — Personalizing Your Self-Care

Mindfulness

Often used as a therapeutic technique in a variety of fields including the military, mindfulness is about being aware of your current mental and physical state and calmly accepting any feelings or thoughts. Our world is full of concurrent distractions and we can easily forget to focus on the present.

1. [Article: Mechanisms of Mindfulness](#) — 20 minutes
2. [TED Talk: How to Tame Your Wandering Mind](#) — 18 minutes
3. [TED Talk: The Unforeseen Consequences of a Fast-Paced World](#) — 9 minutes
4. [TED Talk: In Praise of Slowness](#) — 19 minutes
5. [Book: Fully Present: The Science, Art, and Practice of Mindfulness](#), by Diana Winston and Susan Smalley

Meditation

Meditation is similar to mindfulness, but not exactly interchangeable. While mindfulness specifically refers to the state of being aware, meditation refers to a specific practice of focusing within. Practicing meditation can increase mindfulness. Meditation can be a hard stop for many western medicine physicians because it sounds too hokey or contrary for our desire to be fast, driven and competitive. We often think that we will be “bad” at meditation because our minds are always racing and impossible to keep still. Dan Harris’ book *10% Happier* describes meditation as an “exercise for the mind” because it is simply recognizing that your thoughts have drifted and to bring them back to the present, even if you have to do it 1,000 times. There is no goal for meditation, but for goal-oriented physicians, perhaps the sight should be set on gaining equanimity.

1. [Audiobook: 10% Happier: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works — A True Story, by Dan Harris](#)
 2. [Book: The Untethered Soul, by Michael A. Singer](#)
 3. [App: Happier](#)
 4. [App: Calm](#) (discount for physicians)
 5. [App: Headspace](#) (discount for AMA members)
-

Gratitude Journal

Multiple studies have shown that practicing gratitude positively impacts mental health and resilience. While journaling may not be for everyone, it can be a way to promote consistency in the practice of gratitude.

1. [Article: Gratitude as a Psychotherapeutic Intervention — 20 minutes](#)
 2. [Article: Greater Good in Action, How to Start a Gratitude Journal — 5 minutes](#)
 3. [TED Talk: Want to Be Happy? Be Grateful — 14 minutes](#)
-

Other Self-Care Suggestions

Multiple studies have shown that practicing gratitude positively impacts mental health and resilience. While journaling may not be for everyone, it can be a way to promote consistency in the practice of gratitude.

1. Reading for joy.
2. Getting outdoors.
3. Finding things you enjoy doing.
4. Finding things that challenge you.
5. Getting therapy.
6. Allowing yourself to completely relax.