



6 ways to improve resiliency in a demanding practice environment



It's no wonder physicians are feeling crushed under stress. The daily demands of practice, from managing regulatory burdens to navigating medical liability issues, are stacked on top of actually caring for patients. And then there are the responsibilities of life outside of the office. Learn strategies for boosting your resiliency in the face of stress and reducing your risk for burnout.

Resiliency for physicians is the ability to adapt and bounce back from the stress of the clinical environment. Physicians who are resilient are better equipped to handle the many challenges presented by patient care and less likely to experience burnout. [A free online module](#) in the AMA's [STEPS Forward](#) collection shows you how to increase your resiliency one small step at a time:

1. Take stock of your desires, feelings and actions that may be contributing to stress or burnout.

Take a “moral inventory”—an assessment of your own role in any problematic areas of your life. This can help you examine how you may be contributing to your own stress and understand how these factors influence your happiness and well-being. Read some examples and strategies in the module.

2. Write your individual mission statement.

What do you stand for? Write it down. Each time you consider doing something, ask yourself whether it's consistent with your mission statement to help you decide whether to do it or not.

3. Start a gratitude journal.

Write down three items you are grateful for each day. This easy practice has been shown to increase self-reported happiness and prevent burnout. Read some examples in the module.

4. Enlist your peers for support.

As a physician, you're probably often involved in unsettling events and may be involved in adverse outcomes. To cope, consider joining a peer support group or talking over issues with your fellow physicians. The module includes a success story from Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

5. Learn something new.

In general, people who choose a career in medicine have a thirst for knowledge. But after many years in practice, the problems that were initially challenging may become routine. Consider quenching your thirst by signing up to learn something new, whether it's medicine- or career-related or not.

6. Write down inspiring patient stories.

Capturing patient stories as narratives, rather than for medical records, is a powerful way to connect with your emotions and can help you remember why you chose medicine. The module includes information about a formal program in narrative medicine if you choose to share your stories.

There are many other ways to boost your resiliency and put joy back into your practice of medicine—the module includes 12 more ideas and also offers continuing education credit.

Here's how to learn more:

- Visit the STEPS Forward website to see the [current modules](#).
- Check out upcoming [live STEPS Forward events](#).
- [Sign up](#) to be notified when new modules and events are available.

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