



Self-Care Case Studies- Participant

Learning Objectives

1. Describe benefits of self-care to the individual health practitioner
2. Describe benefits of self-care to the patient and health system in general
3. Outline strategies for self-care at individual level (including boundary creation and self-compassion)
4. Outline strategies for self-care at a system level
5. Outline individual barriers to self-care, and strategies to overcome them
6. Outline system-level barriers to self-care, and strategies to overcome them

Case Study 1

Sam has been an intern for three months. During this time he also moved out of home. He likes work- it's busy, challenging and fun most of the time. The hours are long, and but he is getting paid for the time he works so the money is pretty good. His next term is surgery which sounds exciting according to the resident he is taking over from. "Yeah, it's great. You get to scrub in all the time, and you get to know the team really well because you're always at work. Make sure you get on the nurses' good side as you often don't get time for lunch and they'll sometimes share their food with you!" Sam laughs, and wonders if he should warn his touch footy team he might not be able to make many games again this term...

Questions:

1. What are the red flags that pop up when you hear Sam's story?
2. What are the positive aspects to Sam's story?
3. What suggestions could you make to Sam?

Case Study 2

Raj has just started working as a registrar in the ICU. He was offered this position partway through the year, and although he was looking forward to his year as a PGY3 resident this seemed like an offer that was too good to refuse. He has found the work interesting but a lot more stressful than he was expecting. The nurses seem to have very high expectations and want answers and action immediately, but the consultants want to know every detail before they let Raj do anything. He doesn't feel like he can do anything right. To make matters worse, he has just found out that his father who lives interstate has been admitted to CCU following a STEMI. Raj really knows he should go and visit his dad, but he's only just started in the ICU and he doesn't feel like he can ask for leave already. "Maybe I can swap into some more nights and then go and visit on my days off?" he muses...

Questions:

1. Why is Raj having trouble finding his feet?
2. What could he do to make his transition into this role smoother?
3. How should he manage the additional stress of his father's illness?

Case Study 3

Jess is an emergency medicine fellow, completing her training at a tertiary trauma centre. As part of this role, she takes first on-call. It is 7am and she has just had to call the time of death on a young man who was brought in after a high-speed motor bike accident. The team are gutted, and the nurses have started to disperse for handover. One of the residents is walking around the trauma room picking up rubbish and tidying up. Jess overhears the night registrar telling the resident, "Don't worry about doing any of that- the nurses fix all that up!" She wanders out into the office to start the paperwork for the coroner, and decides that from now on, she will stay at the hospital when she is on call as the 10 minutes it took to come in probably made the difference for this patient...

Questions:

1. Who is at risk of being negatively impacted following this case and why?
2. What system factors could be implemented to limit these negative outcomes?
3. If you were one of Jess' mentors, what advice would you give her?

Case study 4

Kerry is an emergency physician in her late 40's. She works fulltime in a busy regional ED and has recently taken on the Director role, which involves a lot more work out of hours than she originally anticipated. She has been trying to juggle family (2 kids in high school) and work but has been finding that she is getting increasingly tired and wonders if she is anaemic (although come to think of it, it's been a while since her last period). She requests a FBC and iron studies at work and discovers she is iron deficient. She starts iron supplements and makes a mental note to start eating more meat...

Questions:

1. What are the challenges that Kerry is faced with in terms of her health?
2. What strategies could she put in place to help manage these challenges?
3. How could the system be changed to help overcome the challenges?