Battling Burnout - Redefining Success
Taking Care of Yourself
TS, HS, Peer

• Easy Concept - Transitioning people from a nursing home back to the community

• Tough Reality - Can be very challenging, complicated and riddled with barriers
TS Frustrations Statewide

- “Despite all my work and effort they are still in a nursing home”
- The constant need to advocate for what is “right”
- The constant need to train others, in other agencies, how to “do their job”
- Watching people “fall through the cracks”
- Not being able to help participants you’ve worked with for months, or even years
- “The system”-negativity/unresponsiveness/unrealistic
- High caseloads & staff turnover – yours & other providers
What Frustrates You?

Inability to transition because of:

- Participant choice
- No appropriate, available housing
- Repeated referrals on the same person
- Unreliable supports - formal/informal
- Health problems - hospitalization, death
- TS’s personal feelings about success
Constant Advocacy

• For the person, the program, a chance to try, the right to risk, dignity, etc. etc.
• Between nursing homes, Waivers, families, service providers
• Having to advocate with other professionals when “we should all be on the same side”
• “Wow! I can’t believe they don’t get this”.
Ending Relationships

- Closing cases
- Telling people the services they need to transition safely are not available
- Telling people their family members won’t or are not able to assist them
- Telling people their own home isn’t safe or accessible
- Death of a participant
All of these situations and feelings can add up, causing stress, decreased job satisfaction, and can lead to burnout!
Signs of Work Burnout

- Cynical or critical
- Dragging yourself to work
- Irritable or impatient
- Decreased productivity
- Diminished job satisfaction
- Feeling disillusioned about job
- Sleep habits or appetite change
- Unexplained physical symptoms
The Impact on Personal Life

When we are juggling many demands it is important to take time to reflect on our feelings, or we risk becoming frustrated, angry, resentful, and ineffective at work. These toxic attitudes can spill over into personal life.
Preventing Burnout
Addressing Our Frustrations
&
Taking Care of Ourselves
GOAL vs JOB

**Our Shared Goal**

- Transition individuals living in nursing homes back to the community

**Our Job**

- Assist every person referred by exploring the possibilities
- Assess barriers and do our best to resolve them
- View each participant’s situation with fresh eyes to be sure all possibilities are considered
- Offer the ILC philosophy in all we do
Setting Emotional Boundaries

Boundaries with participants & their family members

• The challenge is to remain compassionate, empathetic, and supportive without becoming overly involved and taking on another’s issues as if they are our own.

• We can maintain a connection while remembering that we have our own lives, families and responsibilities.

Personal & professional lives are separate and distinct.
Coping Strategies for Work

• Support - Share with colleagues who understand
• Journal – List your successes, evaluate your goals, count the small stuff
• Get organized
• Take breaks and lunches as allowed
• Take a vacation
• Leave work at Work
Make Time for Self-Care

- Laugh
- Take a tech break
- Regular exercise
- Healthy eating
- Good sleep routine
- Honor your own emotional needs

http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/resources/self-care-starter-kit.html
Do You Personalize Things?

– “I’ll never get this right.”
– “I goofed it up again.”
– “Why do I even bother to try?”
Positive Self-Talk

• “I have gotten it right many times and any mistakes have helped me to get better at what I do.”

• “Oops. I can learn something from this.”

• “It is time for me to list some of the things that have gone well to show myself that more things have gone right than wrong!”

• Keep an ongoing self-reminder list of all the things you’re good at, all your successes, big and small.
Those who dare to FALL miserably can ACHIEVE greatly.

JOHN F. KENNEDY
When to Seek Professional Help

• Depression
• Anxiety
• Work is only one aspect of your life
• Knowing when it’s a work issue & when you might benefit from counseling, medical or mental health supports.
General Questions?

Laurie Carter LMSW
(518)465-4650
lcarter@ilny.org

Laura Bingell RN
(607)962-8225
lbingell@ilny.org
Resources

- www.psychologytoday.com
- www.mayoclinic.org
- www.bing.com/images
- Your dedicated Social Worker and Nurse