

# Mental Health Wellness In the Workplace

Turning A Mess into a Message

Heather Remo & April Jewell

# Non-Financial Disclosure

## Disclosure Statement



- We have no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose related to the content of this presentation.

## Purpose & Sources



- This presentation is provided for educational purposes to support workplace mental health awareness and best practices.



- Content is informed by current research, professional experience, and publicly available guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute of Mental Health.



- No endorsement of specific products, services, therapies, or organizations is intended or implied.

# Your Partners in Peace

**Heather J Remo, MA, CCC-SLP**  
Healthcare Leadership and Wellness Trainer  
Reiki Master



Licensed speech-language pathologist for 30+ years, with 26 years at Powerback Rehabilitation in various roles. Passionate about alternative healing, a certified Reiki master with advanced certifications in energy, chakra, crystal, and aromatherapy healing.

Lives in New Jersey, married for 28 years, mother of a 24-year-old son and 22-year-old daughter. She enjoys camping with her husband and spending time outdoors.

**April Jewell, SPHR, CSM**  
Human Resource Business Partner  
Mental Health Advocate



Healthcare HR Business Partner with 20+ years experience, supporting multi-state therapy operations. Advocate for mental health, addressing burnout and operational pressures with practical solutions.

Lives in Michigan, married for 29 years, mother of a 19 year old daughter who is a collegiate athlete. Stained glass artist and enjoys the Great Lakes with family, friends, and her famously "mean" cat.

# Overview



Personal Story

# The MASK

“Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren’t always comfortable, but they’re never weakness.”

Brene Brown



# 5 MASKS PEOPLE WEAR TO HIDE THEIR DEPRESSION



## The Overachiever Mask

Staying busy to avoid feeling empty.



## The Happy Face Mask

Acting positive so no one sees the pain.



## The Joker Mask

Using humor to cover emotional struggles.



## The "I Don't Care" Mask

Pretending to be indifferent to protect themselves.



## The Caretaker Mask

Helping others but ignoring their own needs.

Mental Health Wellness In the Workplace

# Strategies to Improve Mental Health Wellness



## Mindful Morning

- Morning routine
- Positive affirmations
- Journaling
- Practice Gratitude
- Sit in silence/Meditate/Focus on present



## Uplifting Activities

- Watching uplifting videos or listening to music
- Visualization
- Reading uplifting material/podcasts



## Physical Well-being

- Breath work (e.g., 4-7-8, box breathing, diaphragmatic breathing)
- Physical exercise/recreational sports/yoga/stretching











## Connection & Grounding

- Prayer/spirituality practice
- Grounding/centering/"earthing"
- Spend time in nature/"forest bathing"
- Spend time with your pet




*"Either you run the day or the day runs you." – Jim Rohn*

# Reducing the Stigma of Mental Health Issues in the Workplace

## Creating a Supportive Environment

-  Open lines of communication
-  No shame in discussing mental health issues
-  Creating a “safe” environment for sharing (i.e. psychological safety)
-  Active listening
-  Sharing of strategies
-  Discussing company resources to assist:
  -  Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
  -  Health Advocate resources

## Checking In: Key Questions

-  **How are you doing personally?**
-  **How can I support you better?**
-  **Is there anything I can help you with?**

# Our Commitment to Your Holistic Wellbeing

## PHYSICAL HEALTH

Wellness programs, ergonomic support, healthy snacks, gym subsidies.



## Employee Wellbeing



## PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Skill development, mentorship programs, clear career paths, training resources.



## MENTAL & EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Confidential counseling, EAP services, stress management tools, mental health days.



## WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Flexible scheduling, remote work options, generous paid leave, right to disconnect.



## FINANCIAL WELLNESS

Retirement planning, competitive benefits, financial education, salary transparency.

# Combating Healthcare Provider Burnout: Strategies for Action

## Action you can take today



**Prioritize Self-Care & Set Boundaries:** Protect personal time, ensure adequate rest, and learn to say “no” to prevent exhaustion.



**Practice Mindfulness & Stress Reduction:** Use techniques like meditation and deep breathing to manage daily stress.



**Leverage Peer Support:** Connect with colleagues to share experiences and combat feelings of isolation.



**Utilize Mental Health Resources:** Proactively seek confidential counseling or therapy when needed.

## Actions for Leadership



**Foster a Culture of Support:** Promote open communication about mental health and reduce stigma.



**Optimize Workflows & Ensure Work-Life Balance:** Manage workloads, provide flexible scheduling, and ensure safe provider-to-patient ratios.

## National Support & Resources for Provider Well-being

Find tools, research, and support from these leading organizations.



**National Academy of Medicine (NAM)**  
Offers a national roadmap and resources from the Action Collaborative on Clinician Well-Being.

[nam.edu/initiatives/clinician-resilience-and-well-being/](http://nam.edu/initiatives/clinician-resilience-and-well-being/)



**American Medical Association (AMA)**  
Provides actionable toolkits and resources through its STEPS Forward® program to improve practice environments.

[ama-assn.org/practice-management/physician-health](http://ama-assn.org/practice-management/physician-health)



**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**  
Features the Frontline Wellness initiative with tools and support for healthcare professionals' mental health.

[nami.org/Year-Journey/Frontline-Wellness](http://nami.org/Year-Journey/Frontline-Wellness)



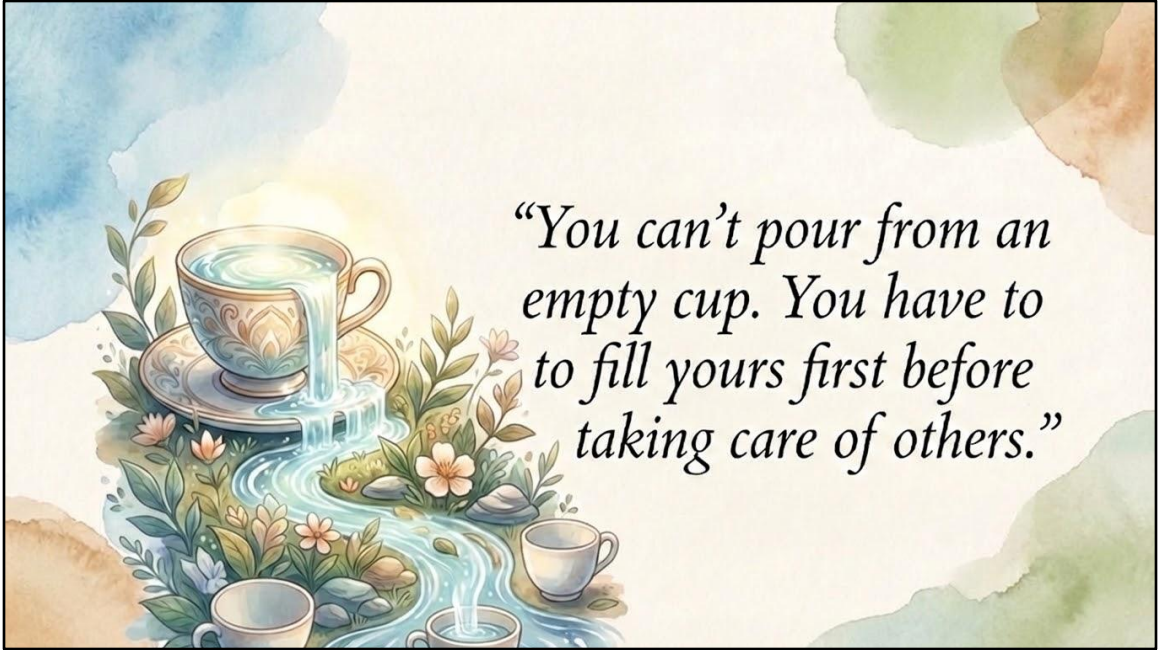
**Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ)**  
Publishes research and evidence-based strategies for organizations to measure and reduce clinician burnout.

[ahrq.gov/prevention/clinicianburnout/index.html](http://ahrq.gov/prevention/clinicianburnout/index.html)



**The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare**  
Offers the Schwartz Rounds® program, a structured forum for providers to discuss the emotional impact of their work.

[theschwartzcenter.org](http://theschwartzcenter.org)



*“You can’t pour from an empty cup. You have to fill yours first before taking care of others.”*

## Intentional Ways to Fill Your Own Cup



Close your eyes



Set an intention



Make a gratitude list



Walk in Nature



Learn something new



Take 5 deep breaths



Remind yourself you deserve rest



Take a bubble bath



Put your phone down



Say with each breath  
"I Am"

# The Ivy Lee Story

## The Challenge (1918)



Charles M. Schwab, President of Bethlehem Steel, sought to increase team efficiency. He challenged consultant Ivy Lee: **"Show me a way to get more things done."**



## The Proposal

Schwab: "How much will it cost?"



Lee: "Nothing, unless it works. After three months, pay what you feel it's worth."



## The Outcome



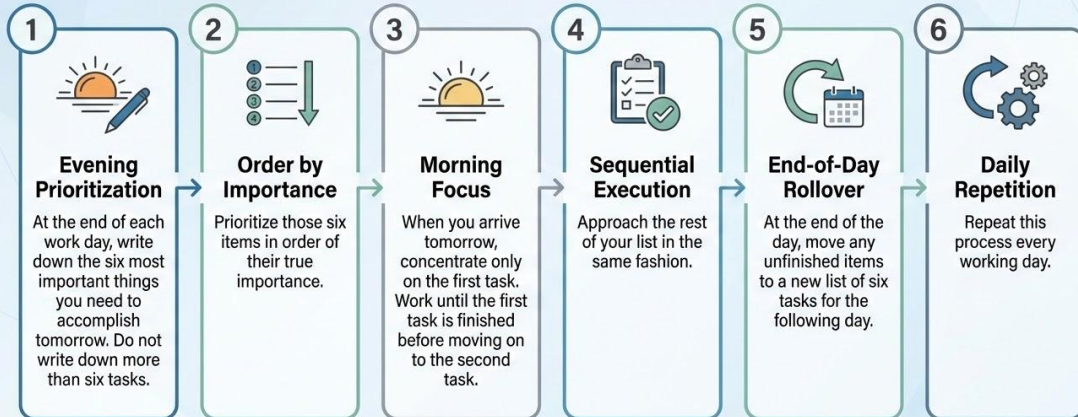
After three months of success, a delighted Schwab wrote Lee a check for \$25,000.



\$25,000 (1918)      ~\$575,922 (2025 equivalent)

\*A \$25,000 check in 1918 is equivalent to approximately \$575,922 in 2025.

# The Ivy Lee Method



# The 20-20-20 Eye Exercise

A simple technique to reduce eye strain, particularly for those who spend long periods **looking at screens**. Helps relax eye muscles and prevent fatigue from prolonged near vision focus.

according to Eduardo Besser, MD.



## The Rule

Every 20 minutes, look at an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds.



## Why it Works

When we focus on close-up objects for extended periods, our eye muscles are constantly working. The 20-20-20 rule allows these muscles to relax and refocus.



## Benefits

This exercise can help alleviate symptoms of digital eye strain, such as:

- Eye strain
- Blurred vision
- Dry eyes
- Headaches
- Neck and shoulder pain

according to Clarkson Eyecare.

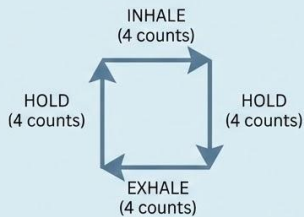


## When to Use

The 20-20-20 rule is especially helpful for people who work with computers, tablets, or other digital devices for long hours.

# BOX BREATHING: TECHNIQUE & BENEFITS

## HOW TO PRACTICE BOX BREATHING

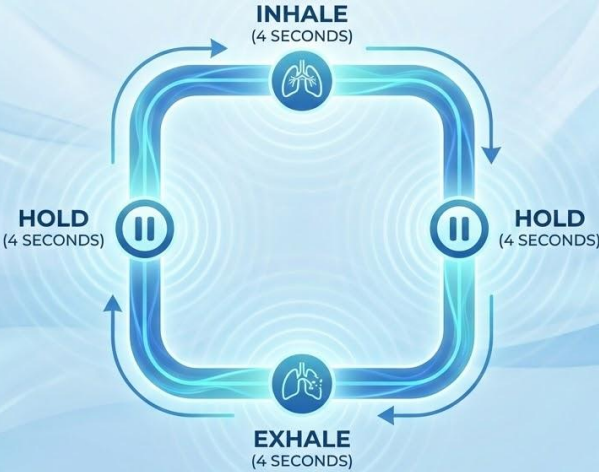


- Slowly inhale through nose, expanding belly & ribs.
- Hold breath for a count of four.
- Slowly exhale through mouth, emptying lungs.
- Hold breath out for a count of four.
- Repeat cycle for a few minutes or as needed.
- Focus on rhythm and sensation of breath.

## BENEFITS OF BOX BREATHING

- **Stress Reduction:** Activates parasympathetic nervous system, promoting relaxation.
- **Anxiety Management:** Helps regulate nervous system, alleviating symptoms.
- **Improved Focus:** Enhances concentration and mental clarity through focused breathwork.
- **Mood Enhancement:** May have a positive impact on mood and emotional regulation.
- **Better Sleep:** Helpful tool for calming the mind and preparing the body for sleep.

# Box Breathing Exercise



## 4-7-8 Breathing Technique

### How to Practice 4-7-8 Breathing Technique

1. **Find a comfortable position:** Sit with your back straight or lie down in a comfortable position.
2. **Exhale completely:** Empty your lungs by exhaling fully through your mouth, making a whooshing sound.
3. **Inhale through your nose:** Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose for a count of 4.
4. **Hold your breath:** Hold your breath for a count of 7.
5. **Exhale through your mouth:** Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whooshing sound, for a count of 8.
6. **Repeat:** Repeat the cycle for a total of four breaths.

### Benefits

- **Reduces stress and anxiety:** By activating the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for relaxation, the 4-7-8 technique can help calm the body and mind, according to Verywell Mind.
- **Promotes relaxation:** The technique can help reduce the physical symptoms of stress, such as a racing heart or rapid breathing.
- **May aid in sleep:** Some individuals find that practicing 4-7-8 breathing before bed can help them fall asleep more easily, says WebMD.
- **Can be practiced anywhere:** The 4-7-8 technique doesn't require any special equipment or setting and can be done in various situations.

# Thank You for Your Time and Attention



“Breathe in peace, breathe  
out love.”  
- Maitreya Rudrabhayananda



“Leadership is not about being in  
charge. It is about taking care of  
those in your charge.”  
- Simon Sinek



## Thoughts/Questions/Comments

How do you/will you take care of yourself so you can better  
take care of others? Inquiring minds want to know...