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ONCOLOGY ISSUES

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FROM THE EDITOR

Health is Wealth

BY MARK LIU, MHA



This summer has flown by, and I cannot believe it is winding down! I hope everyone was able to take some time for themselves to spend with friends and family or at least enjoy some scheduled rest and relaxation. Time does fly

and we often are so quick to step up and offer to help that it can be easy to forget about self-care. For me, I took a week off to relax and disconnect by the beach and set some fitness goals to work towards this Fall. Between getting COVID-19 (the second time) and some other health challenges, it was a good reminder of the saying, "Health is wealth." These experiences drove home the importance of taking time for myself—both scheduled time and unexpected time to rest and recover.

Self-care is a term we hear more often now in the workplace and most leaders encourage this behavior, but it's also a concept that looks different for everyone. Self-care does not always have to be a big splurge or a massage (although there's nothing wrong with that type of activity). Self-care can be a group effort or even a team-based event at the workplace. For example, a colleague of mine makes a wellness Bingo card for different activities, such as carving out time to take a 15-minute walk to break up the workday, taking a moment to share appreciation for a colleague, or drinking 3 liters of water a day. I encourage you all to think about and take inventory of what has brought you joy and healthy habits, how often you do those activities, and if that is the right frequency for you.

And ACCC has resources to help. In her blog, [Healthcare Leadership Strategies: Taking Time Off for Yourself](#), ACCCBuzz contributor Barbara Schmidtman, PhD, shares a bit about her recent self-reflection, which led to the realization that she was on a path leading to burnout, and the steps she took to course correct.

For those looking for a deeper dive and resources to support an entire team, this 2020 *Oncology Issues* article, [Caring for the Caregiver](#), is a model for developing a self-care and resiliency

program for oncology professionals. Among the "pearls of wisdom," this ACCC member shares to help others develop a similar program: 1) collaboration between spiritual services, psychosocial staff, and clinical staff is vital; 2) it is important to offer a wide range of activities from in-person events to digital communication, like apps; and 3) self-care education should be optional for staff; some will need these resources, others may already have robust support systems in place.

Finally, while the word "culture" has become a bit of a buzz word for organizations, we all know that the culture of our workplace has a huge influence on how we feel when we are there. Healthy and supportive work cultures tend to lead to workers who *feel* healthier and supported. In this 2022 *Oncology Issues* article, Cancer Centers of Colorado at SCL Health St. Mary's Medical Center shared how it transformed the workplace culture by implementing a [Daily Improvement Program](#). Nothing that I could say would be more powerful than the author's words, "The positive impact the Daily Improvement Program had on the culture of the cancer center is in some ways immeasurable. For the many staff who experienced the cultural transformation firsthand, the impact reverberates throughout the entire building."