



Self-care for Managers: The Hardest Person to Supervise May Be Yourself

A recent Health Canada study found that the imbalance between home and work is increasing: people were working longer while at the same time facing the personal and family challenges of the 'baby boomer' generation. This may not be surprising, however what was unexpected for many was the finding that the sectors of the workforce who were facing this most acutely were managers, particularly if they worked in the public sector. This may well be a result of the fact that are often the individuals who have loyally worked in large organizations and have been recognized for their talents and contribution by earning positions of greater supervisory responsibility. This career path has its rewards but this can be at a cost if managers lose sight of their own physical, spiritual and psychological values and health.

There are several reasons why managers and supervisors should be attentive to managing their own resiliency:

- **The world is watching.** Irrespective of what anybody says, what is noticed is what we do. Our behaviour is the best indicator of what we truly value and believe. If we are professing that we are truly concerned about the well being and healthy balance of those who we are responsible for but are neglecting ourselves, it is noticed. And not just by our direct reports, but also by our management peers and those that we report to. If we believe that our adherence to the job at the risk of personal health is viewed as dedication, ask yourself: is what you think when you see when you see such behaviours in others?
- **Healthy managers are better managers.** Leaders who have a sense of vision and are able to inspire and challenge others while recognizing and respecting individual needs and values are considered to transformational leaders. Such individuals are invaluable within any organization, as they inspire engagement, productivity and commitment amongst those around them. And it is impossible to bring these qualities to a workplace without applying them to oneself. Thus, the best managers are those that are able to be clear about their own values, deal with personal challenges directly and attend to their own personal, family and community needs.
- **Because it is the right thing to do for you and your career.** For many of us, work provides a source of personal meaning, an opportunity to interact with others and give something to our community and is an important aspect of our identity. Not to mention, it usually provides an income, which is in itself a significant contributor to our well being. If this is true, then we presumably want to keep doing until we choose not do it anymore. This is not a sprint; it is more like a marathon ...or at least a good 10K run. And even the amateur jogger knows the importance of preparing for the run: stretching, warming up, staying hydrated and pacing yourself. If we want to finish the race on our own terms, and make it more likely we will enjoy it, then we need to care for ourselves.

If you have completed the personal resiliency builder, go back and review the findings to see if there are any areas where you need to pay more attention to caring for yourself. (If you haven't taken the survey, check it out!). Take a look at some of the other topics on this tab and see what may be of interest or relevance to you.