

## **Example #1 – Peer to Peer**

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**Presentation Title:** From Stress to Strength: Improving Emotional Resilience and Decreasing Burnout in Athletic Trainers

**Abstract Body:** Athletic trainers (ATs) encounter a range of work-related stressors that contribute to workaholism and burnout, and some of these stressors may also lead to individuals leaving the profession. Emotional resilience has been proposed as a mitigating factor to workaholism and burnout. Defined as the ability to manage adversity, stress, or trauma, emotional resilience has been shown to improve health professionals' ability to adapt to stressful situations. On an individual level, completing the stress cycle has been shown to decrease burnout. Within athletic training specifically, including organizational support and supervisors modeling and promoting work-life balance have been identified as strategies to lessen role strain and thereby help decrease burnout.

**Presentation Structure:** Activity-based.

**Level of Difficulty:** Advanced

**Domain(s):** Domain 5: Healthcare Administration and Professional Responsibility

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Describe emotional resiliency, burnout, the stress cycle & workaholism.
2. Discuss supportive strategies to improve emotional resilience and identify barriers to implementation.
3. Practice strategies to complete the stress cycle and decrease feelings of burnout.

**Clinical Bottom Line:** Athletic trainers (ATs) experience significant occupational stressors that contribute to high rates of burnout and workaholism. These stressors can contribute to an individual's overall stress and stress response. Emotional resilience may play a crucial role in mitigating the effects of job stress, as it has been linked to lower rates of burnout. Older, more experienced athletic trainers also exhibit higher rates of emotional resilience, which may suggest that they are better equipped to adapt to occupational stressors over time. Implementing peer support programs and fostering work-life balance may help new professionals better navigate occupational stressors. By prioritizing emotional resilience, ATs can work toward improving job satisfaction and overall well-being. Improving emotional resilience aims to reduce burnout rates, enhance the ability to cope with occupational stress, and enable ATs to better adapt to the demands of their job.

**Identify the professional practice gap and/or educational need the content addresses:** Several studies have examined the athletic trainers (ATs) role and the risk of burnout. Burnout can be defined as the psychological state of mental distress that can occur when work stresses become too much. Workaholism can be defined as the preoccupation and overindulgence with work, often to the detriment of the individual. Collectively, workaholism and burnout lead to individuals leaving the profession.

Emotional resilience has been proposed as a mitigating factor to workaholism and burnout and is defined as the ability to manage or adapt to adversity, stress, or trauma. Emotional resilience has been examined in nurses, social workers, psychologists, physicians, secondary school athletic trainers, and ATs new to the profession. These studies have shown that those with higher emotional resilience exhibit more positive outlooks and benefits in stressful situations. Research indicates that individuals with greater

emotional resilience cope better with stress, feel more confident in their ability to respond to crises, and promote overall well-being.

While there is support that emotional resilience may be a mitigating factor to workaholism and burnout, younger, newer professionals tend to score lower than older more experienced peers. It is thought that one develops the emotional resilience needed for the job overtime. One strategy for improving emotional resilience is peer-support opportunities. Additionally, those with lower rates of burnout also have higher rates of emotional resilience. Providing strategies to ATs to improve peer-support, stress management and overall well-being may lead to lower rates of burnout.

While many athletic trainers recognize that burnout can negatively impact their patient care, focus on mitigation strategies within professional and continuing education settings has varied. This workshop aims to provide participants with language around these topics and strategies to employ in their own lives.

### **3 Peer-Reviewed References:**

1. Henert S, Pitney W, Wood B, Grahovec NE, Wood TA. An Examination of Emotional Resilience among Athletic Trainers Working in the Secondary School Setting. *Internet J Allied Health Sci Pract.* 2022;20(4):12.
2. Eason CM, Gilgallon TJ, Singe SM. Work-Addiction Risk in Athletic Trainers and Its Relationship to Work-Family Conflict and Burnout. *J Athl Train.* 2022;57(3):225-233. doi:10.4085/JAT0348-20
3. Handlos JL, Ludwig G. Leadership Proficiency: Perspectives of Athletic Trainers New to Practice. *Athl Train Educ J.* 2019;14(3):191-197. doi:10.4085/11403191

### **Special Requests:**