



Case Stem and Questions Facilitator Guide

Resilience

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Case Stem

An intern attempts to place a central line under general anesthesia for a morbidly obese patient undergoing a partial liver resection, but the catheter kinks. After thirty minutes pass with multiple attempts at placement, a CA-3 comes to offer a break, and instead helps the intern, and rescues the line placement easily and without complication. After extubating the patient, the intern transports the patient to the ICU, without any vasoactive drips. The intern has a quick break and is then assigned to start a short outpatient case and “blows the IV” in holding. The nurse assists and places the IV and the case ensues uneventfully. The patient is discharged from PACU without incident. When the intern is relieved of clinical obligations, a buddy asks them to join them for a drink at their local hangout. The intern, feeling down on themselves, decides to head home and texts their partner to tell them that they are just going to go to sleep early because of a rough day. The intern lays in bed questioning if they have made the right decision to pursue anesthesia and wondering if a less hands-on specialty would have been a better fit.

What is resilience? In the scenario above, how is the intern’s resilience challenged?

What are the elements of Greg Eel’s SAVES model to support and strengthen resilience and foster learned optimism?¹

When considering the “S” of social connection, how could the intern have tapped into their social connections for support?

The Harvard Business Review² article discusses “compartmentalizing your cognitive load.” What does that mean? What is “serial monotasking?” How might that be applied in the OR? How might that be used to strengthen resiliency?

When considering the “A” for attitude, how might permanence, pervasiveness and personalization play out in this scenario?

Reframing Technique Exercise: After discussing the 3 P’s in relationship to the case, now using the prelearning worksheet have the participants share their professional/personal experience and how they reframed the uncomfortable situation they experienced.

- Break off group into pairs.
- Have the participants access their worksheet for discussion
- Instructions for participants:
 - Based on your completed prelearning reframing technique worksheet, please share with your partner your situation experience and possible reframed responses
- Following the exercise, groups should share their insights about this experience with the group.

Discussion points for facilitators:

- How was the exercise experience?
- Was it challenging to consider reframing of the 3 P’s, was there a specific P that more difficult than the others?
- Could you see how this may apply in situations?

Return the participants to the case and close out this section with discussion of attitude of learned optimism versus hopelessness.

How could the intern have used *curiosity* about the events in his day in a way that would have fostered an attitude of learned optimism versus hopelessness?

Can you remember a time when you might have responded to a similar instance of “failure” How did you explain that to yourself? How might you incorporate the concept of Growth Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset in this scenario?

How does shame play into the intern’s emotional state? What self-directed approaches could the intern employ to face his challenge and emotions in a more accepting way?

Self-Compassion Break Exercise⁵

1. Think of situation in life that is causing stress, not too much stress, and not something that is charged or extremely difficult. In this instance, the intern can think of their difficulty with the line placement. Visualize the problem.
2. Mindfulness – acknowledge the suffering and pain “this is stressful”.

3. Common humanity- “everyone experiences suffering, just like me”.
4. Offer a gesture of soothing touch: “may I be kind to myself.”

How can this resident cultivate optimism and positivity?

How can you bring gratitude into your workday and life to increase your resilience? What are you grateful for?

Facilitator: Introduce the concept of “three good things” to the group and consider having them share one good thing with the group.

Three Good Things⁶: Martin Seligman, a prominent psychologist and one of the founders of positive psychology, developed a gratitude practice known as "Three Good Things." This exercise is designed to enhance well-being and cultivate a positive outlook by focusing on the positive aspects of one's life.

The Exercise:

- At the end of each day, take a few moments to reflect on the positive experiences or things that occurred during the day. Choose three specific good things from your day that stood out to you. These can be simple or significant events, achievements, moments of joy, acts of kindness, or anything else that brought you some level of happiness or satisfaction.
- Consider writing down your three good things and reflecting on the causes or factors that contributed to each positive experience. Consider the actions you took, the people involved, or the circumstances that led to these positive outcomes.
- Finally, take a moment to savor and appreciate the positive aspects of your day. Express gratitude for these experiences, recognizing their value and impact on your well-being. You can do this silently or verbally, acknowledging the people or circumstances that brought about these positive moments.

By practicing "Three Good Things" regularly, you train your mind to focus on the positive aspects of your life, fostering a sense of gratitude and well-being. This exercise helps shift your attention away from negative thoughts or experiences, leading to a more optimistic and appreciative outlook. Over time, it can contribute to increased happiness and overall life satisfaction.

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