INTELLIGENCE IS THE ABILITY TO ADAPT TO CHANGE.

- STEPHEN HAWKING

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What Contributes to Change Fatigue?

• Shifting accreditation requirements
  – High priority shifts – temporary or permanent?
• E.H.R. updates/switching platforms
  – Not only the care I provide, but how I provide the care
• Alterations in payments → value based payments
  – Increased efficiency
  – Quantifying all aspects of my care
• Human resource allocation
  – New team members, new roles, new division of work
• Introduction of new technology
  – How well does it interface with existing technology?
• Continuously increasing complexity
  – Without anything being “taken off my plate”
The Quality Burden

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**KEYWORDS**

- Barriers to quality
- Quality improvement
- Factors affecting quality
- Safe patient care
- Quality reporting
- Barriers to patient safety

**KEY POINTS**

- Achieving quality care is a national priority, and substantial efforts have been made to accomplish this.
Fig. 1. National patient safety efforts. (Reprinted from Minnesota Hospital Association, 2004, with permission.)
• What is Change Fatigue?
• What does Change Fatigue look like on your unit or in your microsystem?
• What is the difference between change fatigue and change resistance?
Change Fatigue

First identified as a phenomenon in business literature in late 1990’s

Characterized by:

• Cynicism
• Disengagement
• Disempowerment
• Feelings of disenfranchisement
• Overwhelming stress
• Exhaustion
The Saturation Effect

- Period of recovery following one change is not allowed, leaving employees seeking a period of stability
- Employees can only manage a set volume of disruption related to change; each individual must successfully adapt to one change stressor before engaging in further change.
Measurement Tool of Change Fatigue
(Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree) (Bernerth et al, 2011)

1. Too many change initiatives are introduced at this organization
2. I am tired of all of the changes at this organization.
3. The amount of change that takes place at this organization is overwhelming.
4. We are asked to change too many things at this organization.
5. It feels like we are always asked to change something around here.
6. I would like to see a period of stability before further changes are introduced
What Contributes to CF?

• Large amount of change ("revolving new initiatives) that is kicked off, but not seen through to realization of intended benefits
• Poor/lack of communication results in employees feeling like change is being “done to them.”
• Achievements going unrecognized
• Unclear goals of the change
Interesting Differences...

Change Fatigue

• Passive acceptance of proposed changes
• Feelings of ambivalence, powerlessness
• Less obvious to leaders
• Characterized by passivity
• Can lead to apathy, which can threaten change success

Change Resistance

• Negative behaviors
• Disruptive behaviors
• More noticeable to leaders because more active
  – Cynical remarks
  – Critical questioning
  – Denying the need for change
• Non-verbals
  – Eyerolling
  – “Knowing” looks
  – Smirks

McMillan & Perron (2013)
Interesting Differences...

Change Fatigue
- May not even rise to leaders’ awareness
- Disengagement, ambivalence
- Show no signs of resistance
- Ambivalence of staff to change slowly erodes change process, rendering them **unsustainable**

Change Resistance
- Directly aimed at those in charge of change initiatives
- May demonstrate behaviors that suddenly and blatantly disrupt/sabotage changes
- Explicit frustration and negativity
  - Increase in grievances
  - Increase in turnover
Similar antecedents....

• Perceived **lack of control** by staff in relation to work activities and the operations of their workplace

McMillan & Perron (2013)
Similar antecedents...

- Perceived unrealistically high expectations combined with past experiences of failure associated with such expectations

McMillan & Perron (2013)
Similar antecedents

• Disillusionment arising from feelings of failure, fueling emotional exhaustion, perceived inequity and burnout

McMillian & Perron (2013)
Ownership of Process

Change Fatigue
• “Blaming game” between management and frontline staff
• Usually a collective phenomenon, so defers locus away from individuals

Change Resistance
• Attributed to individuals
• Not simply “bad apple” cause
• Resistant attitudes and actions are shaped by context of past and present work/disruptions in work associated with change

McMillan & Perron (2013)
We start with the first driver, Clarity, which is a set of four components that provide a framework for the remaining drivers. On the left-hand side, we start with Assess Reality to determine the current state of the organization. Next, we Define the Future state on the right-hand side. Once we know where we are now and...
Jennifer Stagl: Irresistible Change Model

• Assess Reality
  – History of change, current state of morale, urgency around change, willingness for future vision

• Clarify the Change
  – Leadership, Structural Influence, Personal Influence

• Define the Future
  – How will the vision be better for individuals and the collective?
Jennifer Stagl: Irresistible Change Model

• Leadership strategies
  – assign roles/relationships
  – gain leadership support

• Structural strategies
  – specific tools
  – education
  – programs
  – clear accountability systems
  – more clear communication plan

• Personal influence strategies
  – using formal power in your position
  – more informal conversations
  – facilitate meetings
The Change Fatigue of the Reboot

• Sustaining improvement over time is the hardest part of improvement
• Goal = Getting to where the improvement is “how we do things” part of the culture
• What is the leadership response to an unsustained improvement?
  – Abandonment (squandering of change capital)
  – Reboot (same initiative? What is different?)
Sustaining Improvement

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Sustaining improvement over time

- Function of leadership
  - Infrastructure
  - Human Resources
  - Processes

- **Standardization**: Processes exist to help define and disseminate standard work

- **Accountability**: A process is in place to review execution of standard work

- **Visual Management**: Process performance information is continuously available to synchronize staff attention and guide current activities.

- **Problem Solving**: Methods are available for surfacing and addressing problems that are solvable at the front line, and for developing improvement capability

- **Escalation**: Frontline staff scope issues and escalate those that require management action to resolve
Effective Management to Avoid CF

• Carefully plan how to support change
  – Just as in individual resilience balance is a core concept, so too in organizational resilience
    • What is the pace and rhythm of change in your microsystem?
    • Reflection allows employees to make sense of the change.
    • Is your flavor of change fatigue related to unsustained improvement?

• Target efforts on most overwhelmed staff.
  – Change fatigue will likely hit smaller pockets of staff the hardest.
  – Some leaders have used a quick pulse-check survey or a subset of engagement survey questions to isolate the departments and staff struggling the most.
### Key Elements Differentiating a Working Group from a Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working group</th>
<th>Team</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong, clearly focused leader</td>
<td>Shared leadership roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual accountability</td>
<td>Individual and mutual accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The group’s purpose is the same as the broader organizational mission</td>
<td>Specific team purpose that the team itself delivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual work products</td>
<td>Collective work products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runs efficient meetings</td>
<td>Encourages open-ended discussion and active problem-solving meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures its effectiveness indirectly by its influence</td>
<td>Measures performance directly by assessing collective work products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discusses, decides and delegates</td>
<td>Discusses, decides and does real work together</td>
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</tbody>
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Provide the Vision

There must be a sense that the payoff at the end of the change process is greater than the sacrifices that your team members are making.
Consider as a team...

• What elements of the Change Fatigue/Change Resistance content resonates with your team on in your microsystem?

• Are there productive next steps that leadership can take to shift the culture towards more resilience?
  – Measuring change fatigue?
  – Examining the rhythm/pace of change
  – Identify most change fatigued pocket of the team
  – Examine effective sustaining of improvement over time – full integration of the improvement into the culture