The ongoing pandemic has increased the typical stress and challenges of practicing medicine. Physicians and other health care professionals are experiencing an increasing rate of burn out, depression, PTSD while some decide to quit medicine. I am looking forward to participate in the work of National Academy of Medicine Action Collaborative on Clinician Wellbeing and Resilience.

In our complex health care system, many factors contribute to burn out. Prevention requires the collaboration of multiple organizations addressing burn out in various ways. Studies have shown that peer-to-peer support is an effective strategy to mitigate the emotional toll of practicing medicine.

I created and facilitate the **Listening Room**.

- It is a place to turn to when clinicians feel tired and demoralized and need to connect with their peers.
- Although online self-help resilience and wellness programs are useful and convenient, nothing replaces direct human interaction to counteract isolation.
- The **Listening Room** offers a confidential safe small group setting to discuss the many challenges of practicing medicine. Topics brought up for discussion include for example difficult patients situations, chronic time pressure, end of life care, litigation, the daily stress of witnessing trauma and difficulty balancing work and personal life.

The purpose of the **Listening Room** is to move away

- from our culture of silence towards one of sharing,
- from our customary perfectionism towards acceptance of our humanity
- from blaming ourself towards learning from our mistakes

The **Listening Room** is based on my experience as clinician and meditation practitioner, using meditation techniques and empathetic listening as the foundation. **These techniques are adapted to fit the busy physician schedules and time constraints.**

**Schedule:**
Weekly short meeting: 20-minute guided meditation practice
Monthly one hour meeting: 20-minute guided meditation practice followed by a discussion
**Experiential component:** 20-minute session schedule offered weekly and monthly includes 5-minute practice of breathing exercises. Correct and conscious breathing is easy to learn in few minutes. Slight adjustment to the way we inhale and exhale promotes relaxation by activating the parasympathetic system does not require extra time. We have to breathe. 15-minute practice of easy to learn Mindfulness techniques known to promote well-being, quiet the mind and improve emotion regulation. Mindfulness practice helps to foster an attitude of readiness when facing any challenging clinical situations.

**Confidential sharing and conversation** offered monthly after the 20-minute experiential part

Participants are encouraged to share relevant topics. While a participant is sharing, the group is invited to use empathetic listening to counteract the “fix the problem” default mode. Being heard in a nonjudgmental manner is crucial to the experience of validation, enhances resilience and fosters learning from mistakes rather than blaming. Practical strategies to manage the multifaceted stress of our work are discussed.

Participants are encouraged to return to the [Listening Room](#) as their time permits.

Studies show that regular group participation improves motivation to use the tools learned within the group. The connections built among participants creates a community with an incentive to share the culture of Physician Well-being with colleagues thereby working with renewed compassion, joy and inspiration.

Offered on line via a HIPAA compliant telehealth platform. Video or audio only and in person when feasible.

For any additional information visit [Listening Room](#), and please contact me at dananemd2@comcast.net