Sensitivity to stress is a common concern for individuals in various fields. Dentistry, in particular, can be fraught with stressors due to the nature of the profession. Dentists are prone to professional burnout, as highlighted by the American Dental Association: “Dentists encounter numerous sources of professional stress, beginning in dental school.” A seemingly obvious statement, and yet one that carries significant implications for the profession. The stress that dentists experience can result in a wide range of challenges, from everyday stressors like managing patient expectations to the long-term effects of emotional and mental pressures.

One way to manage stress is through physical exercise. Activities such as running, dancing, or yoga can help reduce stress and improve overall well-being. Additionally, engaging in activities that provide a sense of accomplishment, such as gardening, can be beneficial. Eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep, and managing time effectively are also important strategies for stress management. Professional burnout is a real concern, and it’s essential for dentists to prioritize their mental and emotional health.

As students, we must be aware of the stressors that can impact our well-being and take proactive steps to manage them. This might include setting realistic goals, seeking support from peers or mentors, and practicing self-care activities. The importance of positive self-esteem and self-determination in minimizing stress cannot be overstated. People who are more self-reliant and decisive tend to have better coping mechanisms to handle stress.

In summary, stress management is crucial for dentists to maintain their well-being and provide the best care possible to their patients. By acknowledging the challenges of the profession and implementing strategies to cope with stress, dentists can continue to provide quality care while also preserving their own health and happiness.
Breakling out of the Routine: Spring is the season

Carefully crafted thoughts by Treagan White, guest contributor, aid us in escaping the stresses of dental school.

Spring = Renewal

Reneval = Renewal. Rebirth, resurrection, regeneration, recharge, refresh, revival. The idea alone fills my mind with visions of butterflies and songbirds fluttering about in a springtime mountain meadow as the sun shines its resurrecting ultraviolet beauty upon wildflowers and uncut green grass. But after a moment of consideration and introspection, I realize that Renewal is not simply a simple topic to address. Any one who has read the Bible knows that Nicodemus couldn’t quite grasp the concept, though he was considered wise. Though I openly consider myself to be a nervy intellectual (like most individuals who have read the Bible), I realize after a moment of consideration and introspection, I realize that Renewal is not simply a simple topic to address. Any one who has read the Bible knows that Nicodemus couldn’t quite grasp the concept, though he was considered wise. 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Famous landmarks lies London and its or pop culture. Of course there exists is much more to London than what was Christmas Break, I found out that there Traveling freely throughout London over cell phones and traditional Bangladeshi from fresh produce and frozen fish to 'cloudy' (as a 'shine' rarely shone) there Over time, London evolved, expanded, as my own two feet, I arrived in Whitechapel, a borough of London, and the location of The Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel is at the heart of London, in location of The Royal London Hospital, and the Whitechapel, a borough of London, and the Bartholomew “Barts” School of Dentistry. I didn’t realize it at the time, but Whitestreet is the heart of London in one of the city’s oldest areas. In Whitechapel, it’s rare that a building be taller than 3 stories, many of the streets are still cobbledstone, and the architecture is some of the oldest standing. In 1888, Jack the Ripper left his last sprinkle on the streets of Whitestreet. It’s a 10-minute walk to the Tower of London, a castle whose first structure was built on London’s River Thames in 1078. Over time, London evolved, expanded, and diversified. Today, the Bangladeshi community makes up 52% of the popula- tion of Whitestreet and, rain, or shine, ‘cloudy’ (as a ‘shine’ rarely shone) there exists a street market selling anything from fresh produce and frozen fish to cell phones and traditional Bangladeshi food. The first morning I arrived was taken attack this bustling market and the strange realization that I have the “ethnic minority” in this community. Traveling freely throughout London over Christmas Break, I found out that there is much more to London than what was depicted to us through American history or pop culture. Of course there exists Westminster Abbey, Big Ben, and Bucking- ham Palace, but in between these famous landmarks lies London and its people. For me, the most surprising aspect of my trip was the diversity of the people.

Times are tough, the economy has not been friendly, and the finances needed to pay for oral health needs have taken a back seat for many people, even those living here in Iowa City. The pain and dental problems how- ever, do not take a back seat. Many people are living with dental pain each day. Even Johnson County, according to a 2005 Iowa Department of Public Health study (http://www.ime.state.ia.us/docs/DentalJPSAs/1-10.pdf), was found to be a dental shortage area for people with Medicaid. The need for treatment still ex- ists even to those who cannot afford it, and that is where the Iowa City Free Care Clinic can be a major help. To find out more about this clinic, I asked Dr. Caplan a few questions. KW: How did the free clinic ini- tiative get started? Dr. Caplan: The free dental clinic as established in 1995 under the guidance of a group of local dentists and is a part of the Iowa City Free Medical Clinic. KW: What is the clinic initiative? Dr. Caplan: Funding for the clinic is obtained through the continuing support of the John- son County Health Department. Additional funding is received from the Cities of Iowa City and Coralville, fund raisers, grants, as well as patient and private donations.

Iowa City Free Dental Clinic

An interview with Dr. Dan Kaplan.

KW: Is this clinic in any way simi- lar to IMOM? Dr. Caplan: Same idea, just on a much smaller scale.

KW: What are the days and hours of operation for the clinic? Dr. Caplan: The dental clinic is open from 6:30 to about 9:00 on most Mondays, most Thurs- days, and some Wednesdays.

KW: What is the structure of an appointment in the free care clinic? Dr. Caplan: Patients are appoint- ed starting at 6:15, and there are generally from 2-4 patients seen per night, depending on the den- tist. Patients call in for appoint- ments at the beginning of the month, on a first come first served basis. Each patient can only have two visits in a calen- dar year, since it is not intended as a comprehensive care site.

KW: What kind of care could a D1, D2, D3 or D4 provide? Dr. Caplan: Only D3 and D4 students should be delivering care there, although D1 and 2 students could observe and po- tentially even assist. D3 and D4 students can provide any care they have been trained to do at the College of Dentistry – it’s primarily restorations or extrac- tions, or sometimes prophies.

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graphs to order, develop a plan for the evening, receive a starting check, receive a prep check (if warranted), and a final check. Other than that, I guess different faculty have different amounts of supervision they’re comfortable with, just like the dental school.

KW: What are some of the re- wards and benefits of volunteering for the clinic? Dr. Caplan: Patients are very ap- preciative of our providing them with care, and it feels good to be able to help people out who need help and have limited options for care elsewhere.

KW: What are some examples of rewards and benefits for our stu- dents have experienced with volun- teering with the clinic? Dr. Caplan: Mostly just receiving thanks and appreciation from the patients, that’s always the most rewarding part of it. Students tend to enjoy the experience also, and it’s fun to show them how they might be able to participate in the activities after they graduate.

KW: Is there need for more vol- unteer, and how would you go about getting involved with the free clinic? Dr. Caplan: There’s a sign up sheet on my office door (N339) that shows the availability for appoint- ments needs?

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