

Dr. Marie H  l  ne Pelletier - Protect Your Resilience: How to Reduce Anxiety and Lower Burnout in the Workplace

Chiraz: Hello and welcome to CDA Oasis, my name is Chiraz Guessaier. The CDA and the College of Dental surgeons of Saskatchewan's joint convention is fast approaching and speakers like my guests today are busy preparing their talks and presentations. So today we have invited Dr Marie H  l  ne Pelletier. She's practicing psychologist and experienced senior leader with over 20 years of experience in clinical, counseling, and workplace psychology. She has kindly accepted to speak with me today and tell us a little bit more about her session during the convention. Dr. Pelletier thank you very much for taking the time to speak with me today and welcome to this Oasis conversation.

Dr. Pelletier: Pleasure to be here, Chiraz.

Chiraz: So, can you briefly tell us what's your presentation will be about and why is this an important topic for dentists and Dentistry in general?

Dr. Pelletier: Yes, yes. So, the presentation I will give is about protecting our resilience, in protecting therefore I'm decreasing our risk of burnout basically. And it is particularly important for the dentistry profession in general because it is a profession where expectations are extremely high. The standards are extremely high, both in the profession and the people in it and all of this together, at some point, everyone has limits, can get to us and challenge our resilience.

Chiraz: So, I want to dig deep into your presentation if you don't mind, and I know we're not going to reveal everything because we want people to attend your session. What is resilience? Can you define the concept for us? Is that an innate skill or is that something that we can learn?

Dr. Pelletier: Yeah, no, that's a great question. That's a very important place to start there. So, resilience, different definitions exist, but in a nutshell, really it refers to our ability to go through adversity and come out even stronger. Okay? And by adversity challenges, these can be certainly more acute, so singular events, but it can also be just more chronic levels of demands that are consistently requiring us to go through. And, to the other part of your question in terms of is this something that is innate we're either resilient or we're not. Of course, as you'll guess perhaps given that I'm talking about increasing it, we can all increase it. That being said, there is research that shows that, some personality types will be associated with higher resilience, for example, people who are naturally more optimistic. But even then, where, whether we are on more on the optimistic side or more on the pessimist side, we can all shift our resilience and increase it. And we know this based on research.

Chiraz: So, can you give us a one small example of how one can build resilience?

Dr. Pelletier: Yes. Yeah. And one of the key things is that most of us do things, behaviors that we know from brain science, neuroscience, will increase our resilience and we do some of these things in good times, for example, exercising, you know, it is something we all need to do and we do in good times. But if you took a moment now to think, have I exercised five times, half an hour in the past week? Yes or no in your head? Well, maybe we have, maybe we haven't. Right. So, it's all about execution. So, there are some things that most people know like exercise, we're not necessarily executing. So, how do we get to executing better? And there are some things that people don't know as much, which yes, we'll talk more about that talk.

Chiraz: Perfect. And exercise is a great example. So, ultimately what do you hope are the takeaways that will stay with your attendees?

Dr. Pelletier: Yeah, absolutely. And that I very much value this. All My, you know, my talks, I always only bring information that's research based. So, we know it's solid and it's going to bring results but always translate it so that we, each of us, including me, leave with concrete takeaways. And, I have these conversations with the audience, with the groups such that literally if they wish, each individual can leave knowing what their next action is. So, I do cover a fair bit of territory because number one, there are a few actions that we know from research will make a difference on resilience. And we do need a variety, but at the same time it's built such that everyone leaves with an action. So, the take away is each individual can identify one action that they will implement, and I usually say in the next 48 hours. So, we're really moving into execution because that's what's gonna make a difference. Just hearing the information and thinking it's a good idea is not going to make any difference. Action will.

Chiraz: So, for those who are attending the convention and your session, that's all great. But for those who may not be able to do that are there any resources that they can go and check for themselves?

Dr. Pelletier: Yes, yes. And in the presentation now I'll cover a broad range of very specific things that we know, again from research, make a difference. And these are, I split them between behavioral strategies and cognitive strategies. Things we do, things we can change and how we think. On the thinking side, there is a book, it is a world's best seller. It is very solidly anchored in research, but also very practical. It's a workbook actually. So, the book is called Mind Over Mood, and the authors are Greenberger and Padeski. It's very easy to find, if anyone googles that, you'll see it. It's a 20, \$30 book, but a book that it's also nice because you don't have to read the whole book. You can just pick a few sections, get something out of it, keep going for the next few months, and then pick something else from it. So, that's a book I would recommend.



Keeping Canadian Dentists Informed

Chiraz:

Perfect. Thank you so much Dr. Pelletier for taking the time to speak with me today. I wish you all the best during the convention and in everything else you do, and I hope to host you again on a Oasis.

Dr. Pelletier:

That sounds good. Looking forward to seeing everyone there.