All Work and No Play: New Reference Librarians and Stress

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By Anne Larrivee
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Job Relocation

Self-Expectation

- Self-doubt to fulfill expectations
- Under-educated fear (Sare, Bales, & Neville, 2012)
- Burnout from self-pressure (emotional exhaustion) (Shupe & Pung, 2011)
- Juggling pressures of keeping up with emerging trends

New Work Culture

- Occupational Stress:
  - Interpersonal conflict
  - Work overload
  - Situational/organizational constraints (Mazzola, Schonfeld, & Spector, 2011)
- Defining Professional Role
  - Ambiguity, overload or conflict (Shupe & Pung, 2011)

Crossover

- Crossover happens when situational strains are transmitted to other people who are closely related to the person dealing with the strain (Bakkar, Westman, & Emmerik, 2009)
- Over-empathizing is a risk
  - Many reference librarians tend to have an empathetic type of personality; this personality type is drawn to this type of service profession. (Bronstein, 2011)

Overall Coping

- Take care of yourself first
- Think about why you chose librarianship
- Exercise and eat well
- Figure out the root

Coping

- Job Relocation
  - Revive enjoyable activities from the past
  - Allow time to prepare for the move/setting
  - Become involved in the community & network
  - Find a purpose outside of work
- New Work Culture
  - Connect with a mentor
  - Avoid focusing on negative
  - Break up tedious tasks
  - Take time to build familiarity
- Self Expectation
  - Be patient
  - Reframe failures into learning opps
  - Form a new professionals group
  - Find a leadership role to establish confidence
- Crossover
  - Establish self-awareness
  - Learn when to say ‘I don’t know’ & don’t become obsessed
  - Ask others for help

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Theory of Motivation, 1943)

- Physiological
- Safety
- Belonging/Love
- Esteem
- Self-Actualization

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