Healthcare can be a very stressful area regardless of one’s position in the field across varying careers and workplace environments. As nurses, we are excellent caregivers towards others with disregard for our own health, leading to stress, sleep deprivation (Niu, et al., 2017) and fatigue (Steege, Pasupathy, & Drake, D. A., 2017). The lack of healthy behaviors and personal self-care can lead to physical illness and emotional distress. In the clinical and academic environment, healthcare providers have constant pressure to produce manuscripts, grants, educational programs, reports, clinical ladder documents for promotion, dossiers, etc. Unfortunately, these necessary “projects” are interrupted by daily activities that occur in the workplace leading to longer work days and/or weekends. This continuous work pressure, and stress may lead to unhealthy behaviors leading many to search for a work-life balance (Pagnan, Seidel, Wadsworth, 2017). It is important for healthcare providers to have a guide that provides effective adaptive stress management techniques to help with healthy work-life balance.

In 2014, a University-based faculty development program, called the Faculty Achievement Program (FAP), was developed as the initial step towards creating work-life balance. With permission from the National Center for Faculty development and Diversity (NCFDD) (Roquemore, n.d.), faculty developed a smaller version of the program as guide for work-life balance and productivity. The university-based FAP focuses on skills to increase faculty productivity, create healthy work-life balance, and build supportive communities on campus. These skills align with Dr. Beth Tigges’ Presidential Call to Action to connect, collaborate, and catalyze (Tigges, 2017). Originally, the University-based FAP included mostly tenure-track and tenured faculty, but has expanded to include continuing track faculty, students, and clinical partners. Sponsored through the Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity, this program has national and locally focused programs. On a national level, actively engaged faculty are supported with online resources and weekly motivational emails. University and clinical institution support for these programs provides strategies and tools to improve research productivity and propel work-life balance.

At the local level, the University-based FAP has three components: Small Group mentoring, Write-On-Site, and weekly meetings (in person and virtually). The centerpiece of this University-based FAP is the “Small Group” component. Each group is comprised of four faculty (all levels and tracks) with a mentor who has participated in the NCFDD “Faculty Success Program”. The University-based FAP small group members set weekly productivity goals, track daily efforts on these goals, and share strategies for maintaining focus on goals and progress. As Beth Tigges Presidential Call to Action states, “Collaborate: …By expanding our collaborative work with other nurses.
and partners outside of nursing” (Tigges, 2017). This small group is strategically assembled to increase collaboration outside of individual departments such as Nursing. This is an excellent opportunity to understand other departments and move the mission and work of the university or institution forward.

The “Write-On-Site” groups, with designated times and locations every week, provide a time to come together and write in a group. This program has increased productivity among those involved, while providing accountability and a collective writing energy. This also fosters a collaborative and supportive community among faculty, students, and clinical partners to grow and improve. Individuals involved in the “Write-On-Site” are “catalysts for action” as they produce the fundamental change of writing alone without accountability to writing in a group with accountability.

Finally, the “Weekly Planning Meeting”, provides an opportunity to assess the demands of the upcoming week, schedule and prioritize writing goals, and ensure that the individual is meeting the highest priority tasks. Originally, this meeting only occurred face-to-face late Friday afternoons. However, a faculty member in nursing wanted to reach beyond the walls of a university conference room and created a Zoom meeting for those who cannot be on campus. The use of technology increased participation beyond nursing while also facilitating the work-life balance, which speaks to the “Connect” and “Collaborate” components of the Presidential Call to Action (Tigges, 2017). The participants are from a variety of areas. The faculty member who began the virtual Weekly Planning Meeting noted that,

"Attending the weekly meeting has many rewards and helps keep me grounded with expectations and improves my work life and family life balance. When I do not attend the weekly meeting, my productivity the following week decreases and I cannot explain why....you just have to join us and see for yourself. Also, this is a 30-minute block of time once a week that I know others in our community are there (virtually) going through the same struggles I am with trying to fit everything we do into a calendar."

Stress is a major factor in the nursing profession today as the hospital population and nursing students are more complicated and stress related to job overload and burnout has increased (Kovner, Brewer, Fatehi, & Jun, J., 2014; Michalec, Diefenbeck, & Mahoney, 2013). Everyone experiences stress in some form causing physical, emotional, and behavioral problems. Disregard for our own health leads to stress, sleep deprivation (Niu, et al., 2017) and fatigue (Steege, Pasupathy, & Drake, D. A., 2017). Healthy lifestyle behaviors, including proper sleep and nutrition, are a crucial part of effective stress management and relaxation. Work-life balance is vital to a healthy lifestyle and healthcare providers need to shut down occasionally with consistent time off from work (Boamah, & Laschinger, 2016). Effective stress management techniques are vital to a healthy lifestyle. However, individuals need to find the “right fit” for their personal stress reducers and plan of action for relaxation and stress management. Incorporating behavioral change is easier said than done with psychology behind breaking bad habits and creating new ones. The Science of Behavioral Change (SOBC) method identifies the main reasons behind successful health behavioral changes (Berglund, 2017). The SOBC research suggests that the main areas to identify the impetus of the health behavioral change are self-regulation, stress reactivity and
resilience, and interpersonal and social processes (Nielsen, L., Riddle, M., King, J., Aklin, W., Chen, W., Clark, D.,… Weber, W., 2018). In order to effectively manage stress and incorporate healthy lifestyle behaviors, one must first understand their personal adaptability and reactions in stressful situations. Incorporating these skills into your current practice and/or institution is a process, can be successful with the right guidance. This University-based FAP is universal and beneficial to all career levels, clinical/academic areas, and years of experience. Having a consistent group with common goals can improve work-life balance, propel career development, decrease stress, and improve sleep. However, it is important to have effective adaptive stress management techniques in your personal guide for self-care. While the University-based FAP begin with a narrow focus, this program has many possibilities that may expanded to include clinical nurses on a clinical ladder who are moving towards to the next promotion or educational level.

Title:
A Guide to Career Development and Work-Life Balance

Keywords:
career development, stress management and work-life balance

References:
Abstract Summary:
The purpose of this presentation is to provide a guide for all Sigma members describing ways to improve work-life balance while engaged in career development. This guide addresses stress management and healthy lifestyle behaviors.

Content Outline:
Introduction
• Objectives:
  o 1. The learner will be able to describe three components of an institutional-based achievement program for career development and improved work-life balance.
  2. The learner will be able to incorporate aspects of the guide into their own practice to improve work-life balance, career advancement, and engage in stress reduction and healthy lifestyle behaviors.
  3. The learner will be able to discuss ways to incorporate a similar guide in his/her institution to connect, collaborate, and catalyze career development and work-life balance.
• Healthcare Stress and Unhealthy Lifestyle Behaviors
• Career Development
• Work-life Balance
• Stress Management
  Guide to Career Development and Work-life Balance
• Purpose
• Faculty Achievement Program (Guide for all Sigma Members)
  o Small Groups
  o Write on Site
  o Weekly Meeting
• Presidential Call to Action Alignment
  Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors (sleep and stress)
• Work-Life Balance (shutting down and weekends off)
• Science of Behavioral Change
• Stress Management Techniques
  o What is stress?
  o Effects of stress on the body
  o Sources of stress
  o What is relaxation?
  o Stress Reduction
- Guided imagery
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Mindfulness meditation
- Life priorities/goals
- Time management
- Work-life balance
- Saying “no” to others and “yes” to yourself
- Stress reducers – give list of 100 stress reducers, have participants circle ones they have used successfully, cross out ones that do not work, and star ones they would like to try - small group discussion
- Conclusion
  - Incorporating Work-Life Balance skills into your current Practice and/or Institution

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**Author Summary:** Dr. Graber is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Delaware. She is a Board Certified Psychiatric Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist and has her doctorate in Educational Leadership. Jennifer has worked for over seventeen years as a psychiatric nurse in many roles including teaching. She has been actively involved in the Beta Xi chapter of STTI, holding numerous positions and serving on several committees.
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**Author Summary:** Dr. Johnson has dedicated twenty years of her career at the University of Delaware developing sustainable global programs for nursing students. These programs may have a service learning component or research activities, but all examine nursing and healthcare from a global perspective.

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