My Balanced Journey

Abraham Lincoln Elementary

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Background Leading to this Inquiry

Being a 2nd year principal in a new school district is difficult. There are so many procedures to learn while developing relationships with students, parents, and staff. Last year, I was always doing school work during the day, evening and weekends. I knew that I could not keep up this pace and needed to make changes this year.

Purpose of This Inquiry

I did not want to continue to feel stressed out this year with school and work. So I thought of things that I could do to create a balance between my school work and personal life. I kept it simple and focused on 2 thingswalking(exercise) and finding hobbies that I could do daily.

My Wondering

With this purpose, I wondered:

- What if I tracked my stress levels every month? What if I walk during my lunch break around my school campus and intentionally leave my office?
- What if I explore hobbies that are simple but add joy and creativity to my day?

My Actions

- Take a stress test every month and compare levels
- Track walking(exercise) per week- frequency only not intensity
- Explore hobbies- something that I would look forward to doing every day

Data Collection

Stress test were taken every month using the ProQQL- Professional Quality of Life Survey
This survey has a series of questions and then a self score sheet. There are 3 categories:
0-20- Compassion Satisfaction
20-40- Burnout
41+ - Secondary Traumatic Stress

Data Collection

ProQQL Questions:

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PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL) COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION FATIGUE (PROQOL) VERSION 5 40000

Data Collection

WHAT IS MY SCORE AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

In this section, you will score your test so you understand the interpretation for you. To find your score on **each section**, total the questions listed on the left and then find your score in the table on the right of the section.

Compassion Satisfaction Scale



Burnout Scale

You

Wrote

3

4

5

ProQQL Scale:

> On the burnout scale you will need to take an extra step. Starred items are "reverse scored." If you scored the item 1, write a 5 beside it. The reason we ask you to reverse the scores is because scientifically the measure works better when these questions are asked in a positive way though they can tell us more about their negative form. For example, question 1. "I am happy" tells us more about

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My Data

Monthly Stress Levels



My Data

Monthly Walking Records- I kept a calendar and circled the day that I walked. I started in November and some months were better than others. Number of walks per month:

- November- 15
- December-10
- January-20 February-12
- March-8

My Data

Walking Frequency:

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My Discoveries

- I discovered that my stress levels never reached traumatic levels
- I discovered that walking helped me clear my mind and gave me energy
- I discovered that I am interested in hobbies
 - that give me something fun and creative to do and I look forward to doing them in the evenings and weekends.

My Discoveries

Gardening:



Where Am I Heading Next

I learned that being a leader requires me to "model" behavior and expectations. I want my teachers and students to come to school happy and do their best everyday. In order for them to be successful I have to be ready to help them. I need to be happy, rested and creative.

- I also learned that I need to stop working so much so I can enjoy my hobbies. This will give me a good balance between work and my personal life.
- I wonder if I could create an informal(simple) walking crew or gardening group at school for fun and enjoyment that our school community would like to be a part of this next school year.

Bibliography

B. Hudnall Stamm, 2009-2012. Professional Quality of Life: Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Version 5 (ProQOL). <u>www.proqol.org</u>

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