



AR Leadership Partners

News You Can Use *to make the world a better place*

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Hey ARLP Nation! Welcome to this month's professional leadership journal. We're exploring the significance of wellness for leaders. In this edition, we delve into how a leader's well-being can positively impact clients and staff. Throughout the year, leaders who actively participate in ARLP's leadership training and methodology have experienced remarkable growth and improved performance. Over 100 individuals have completed ARLP's *Quantum Learning Leadership Institute*, which has sparked innovation across various service sectors. While this transformative work can bring about significant changes in the lives of practitioners and their clients, it can also take a toll on those leading the charge for change.

Here are some stark realities about CEOs and their health and wellness:

1. CEOs face significant health and wellness challenges. They are more prone to depression and burnout, and some even experience loneliness or isolation.
2. Many CEOs report symptoms of clinical depression. Additionally, some feel isolated, which can negatively impact their performance.
3. A substantial number of CEOs experience burnout. Studies suggest that up to 71% have experienced burnout or emotional exhaustion in the past year.
4. There's a stigma surrounding mental health in executive roles. Many individuals perceive vulnerability as weak and struggle to seek help, as highlighted by [McLean Hospital](#).

In this journal, you'll find valuable resources and case studies from wellness experts like Lori Satterfield and practitioners like Chad Sweitzer. These experts have developed systems that enable them to maintain effectiveness in their roles while maintaining a high level of physical, emotional, and mental fitness. After reading their stories and advice, you'll be inspired to create your own wellness system.

Explore ARLP's PMA Life Wellness System Course, available on our website under the "More" tab. Additionally, subscribe to our podcast to listen to the interviews that made these articles possible.

Keep up the excellent work, colleagues! You can find more resources and articles on our website under the “More” tab: [Rise, Lead, Thrive: Wellness and Excellence for Leaders](#). Don’t forget to subscribe to our podcast to access the interviews that inspired these articles.

Keep going, you’re doing great!

Warmly,



Al Rogers, Ed.D., CEO and Co-Founder
AR Leadership Partners

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Staying Well to Lead Well: Executive Wellness as a Foundation for Leadership Excellence

Abstract

*Executives are routinely asked to deliver sustained performance under high cognitive, emotional, and relational loads. Yet many leaders lack a workable system for personal wellness that supports decision quality, judgment under pressure, and healthy organizational climates. This practitioner article distills insights from a recorded 1:1 conversation (Aug 20, 2025) with fitness instructor and nutrition coach Lori Satterfield, mapping her practical strategies to leadership outcomes. We highlight four evidence-aligned propositions: (1) **Systems beat intentions—non-negotiable, morning-anchored routines produce reliable energy and focus;** (2) **Wellness is plural—strength, cardio, outdoor restoration, and social accountability jointly bolster cognitive clarity and patience;** (3) **Support systems scale behavior—family and community norms make consistency easier than willpower alone;** and (4) **Adaptation over time—programs must evolve with age, role demands, and physiology.** We translate these principles into an executive playbook emphasizing small starts, consistency, adaptive load management, and visible modeling. Implications include improved leader stamina, more constructive team climates, and reduced error from stress-induced decision fatigue. We conclude that personal wellness is not ancillary but a core leadership competency that deserves explicit design and governance.*

Keywords: executive wellness; leadership performance; behavior change; routines; resilience; organizational climate; time management; support systems

Have you ever wondered how leaders can boost their team's performance and create a positive work culture? Well, it's not just about what they say or do for the company; it's also about how well they take care of themselves. In this article, we'll explore the importance of "leader wellness" and how it can make a real difference in the workplace.

Meet Lori Satterfield, a fitness professional who's lived through a lot and knows what it takes to stay healthy and focused. In an interview, she shared her journey and some practical tips that can help leaders like us achieve the same results.

Lori's turning point came when her father had a triple bypass in 2013. This experience made her realize that taking care of her health was not just important for her, but for her

family too. She started training with a coach and soon earned certifications in group fitness and nutrition. Now, she teaches six high-intensity classes every week, lifts four days a week, and manages a full-time job and family life.

Lori's story is inspiring, and it shows us that even the most challenging situations can be turned into opportunities for growth. **She learned to use her father's emergency surgery as a catalyst for change**, and she's now a successful fitness professional who inspires others to prioritize their well-being.

- So, what can we learn from Lori's experience? Well, she's discovered that building systems and routines is key to achieving long-term success. She doesn't just follow a schedule; she creates a daily starter set that includes movement, hydration, and a brief moment of self-reflection. She also protects time on her calendar as if it were a board meeting, and she tracks her consistency to reinforce her identity as a leader who takes care of herself.

Lori's advice is simple yet effective: **define a daily starter set, protect time on your calendar, and track your consistency**. By doing so, you can create a system that supports your well-being and helps you achieve your goals.

Let's take a page from Lori's book and prioritize our own wellness. We can't do it all at work and the rest of our lives if we're not taking care of ourselves. By building systems and routines, we can achieve our goals and create a positive impact on our teams and our families

Practice Principles that work

Satterfield finds mental clarity outdoors, like backpacking, kayaking, or swimming in the lake, rather than in formal seated meditation. The main takeaway is that wellness is different for everyone. Leaders should choose practices that help them stay present and see things clearly, whether it's through breathing exercises, spending time in nature, praying, journaling, or taking quiet walks.

Practice Principle 1: Personalize Your Restoration

- Find 1-2 activities that help you relax and feel more clear-headed.
- Do them every week, not just when you have time.

The Multiplier: *Support and Social Norms*

Lori Satterfield has found that, at home, talking about fitness at dinner makes it normal to take care of your health. In classes, friends celebrate their small successes, which creates a positive cycle of support and encouragement. Leaders can create similar conditions: by showing that they participate, setting team challenges, and recognizing consistency (not just appearance) in public.

Practice Principle 2: Design the Social Environment

- Make it easy to see when you're consistent (like having a streak of "movement minutes").
- Use buddy systems or small groups for check-ins.
- Celebrate that you're trying, not just that you "look good".

Obstacles Are the Work: *Adapt and Practice Self-Compassion*

Fatigue, unexpected changes in your schedule, illness, and hormonal shifts are all normal challenges. Satterfield's advice is to start today, start small, and listen to your body. Adjust your workload to your age and job demands; the "perfect plan" is the enemy of sticking with it.

Practice Principle 3: Adaptive Load Management

- On days when you're feeling low on energy, try something small and manageable: a 10-minute mobility session, a brisk walk, or some light sets. Gradually increase the challenge, avoiding sudden spikes in intensity. Regularly review your progress every quarter - what worked well at 25 may not be the best approach at 45.

Leadership Transfer: *Why Wellness Improves Performance*

Satterfield's famous quote, "You can do hard things," perfectly applies to leadership. Consistent training boosts self-confidence, which translates to better strategic risk-taking, challenging conversations, and crisis response. Morning exercise reduces decision fatigue, improves empathy and listening skills, and models healthy behaviors within the team. In essence, "Leader-wellness" practices lead to more effective leadership.

An Executive Playbook (*Ready to Implement*)

1. **Anchor Mornings:** Dedicate 25–40 minutes to movement before your first meeting. Hydrate first, then take 2–3 minutes for intentional breathing.
2. **Codify Minimums:** Establish a weekly template (e.g., 2 strength training sessions, 2 cardio workouts, and 1 mobility/outdoor session).
3. **Scale, Don't Spike:** Progress gradually, and take breaks during peak work periods.
4. **Choose Your Restoration:** Opt for activities like nature, journaling, or breath work - schedule them like important tasks.
5. **Build a Support Network:** Connect with a workout buddy, join a small team challenge, and schedule regular check-ins.

6. **Measure Consistency:** Track your sessions completed; celebrate streaks and recover from setbacks.
7. **Model Your Wellness Publicly:** Attend, share, and praise wellness practices; make wellness a part of the company culture.

Implications for Organizations

- Performance: Better cognitive clarity and emotional regulation reduce errors under stress.
- Culture: Seeing our leaders take care of themselves shows that self-care is important and makes everyone happier and stay with the company longer.
- Equity: Offering flexible and affordable options like walking groups, stretch breaks, and stair prompts lets more people join, even if they don't have gym memberships.

Limitations and Next Steps

This article is based on a single interview with a practitioner and some leadership experience, not a scientific study. In the future, a leader could combine these stories and principles with data from their own company (like burnout, engagement, safety incidents, and how long it takes to make decisions) to measure the impact. This can be the catalyst to inspire “Leader Wellness” culture throughout the company raising the quality of performance for clientele in the process of helping everyone feel better at work.

Conclusion

Wellness is not just a nice-to-have—it's a way of leading. Executives who make sure everyone moves regularly, takes care of themselves individually, adapts to changes, and feels accountable to each other protect the very skills they're paid for: judgment, being present, and staying focused. Start small, start now, and let the benefits add up over time.

Practitioner Sidebar

Micro-Start Menu (10–15 minutes on low-energy days)

- 5 minutes of a brisk walk (or stairs)
- 5 minutes of mobility (hips, thoracic spine, shoulders)
- 2 minutes of box breathing (4-4-4-4)
- 60 seconds of gratitude journaling (3 bullet points)

Leading with Wellness: How Healthy Leaders Elevate Service to Clients and Employees

In today's demanding business landscape, leaders are recognizing that their personal wellness is not a luxury — it is a strategic advantage. The ability to deliver sustained, high-quality service to both clients and employees depends not only on skills, vision, and strategy, but also on the leader's capacity for focus, resilience, and energy. Wellness practices, particularly those centered on physical fitness, play a critical role in enabling leaders to perform at their best for the long haul.

Why Wellness Matters for Leadership Effectiveness

Leadership is an endurance sport. It requires long hours, complex decision-making, and the capacity to inspire and guide teams through uncertainty. Physical well-being directly impacts mental clarity, emotional stability, and the stamina needed to meet these challenges. When leaders model healthy habits, they set a powerful example for their teams, creating a culture where well-being is seen as a foundation for professional excellence rather than an afterthought.

For clients, a well leader can show up consistently with sharp thinking, optimism, and presence. For employees, it signals that the organization values balance, which can boost morale, engagement, and loyalty.

Lessons from High-Profile CEOs Who Prioritize Fitness

Several of the world's most prominent leaders exemplify how integrating wellness into daily routines can enhance professional performance:

- **Tim Cook (Apple):** Known for waking up before dawn, Cook's day begins with an intense workout. This early investment in his health sets the tone for his focus and energy throughout the day.
- **Mark Zuckerberg (Meta):** Zuckerberg maintains a five-day-a-week training regimen, using a personalized program to balance his mental workload with physical activity.

- **Jeff Bezos (Amazon):** Described as a “fitness freak,” Bezos incorporates structured strength and endurance training, including a 30-minute cardio session, to maintain his physical edge.
- **Richard Branson (Virgin Group):** Branson’s active lifestyle spans running, swimming, weightlifting, yoga, and even kitesurfing. He credits these activities with giving him extra productive hours in his day.
- **Satya Nadella (Microsoft):** Nadella’s focus on fitness is intertwined with his leadership philosophy, viewing physical health as essential to sustaining strategic clarity and empathy.

Leader Wellness: CEO Fitness Routines

CEO	Company	Fitness Routine	Key Benefit
Tim Cook	Apple	Early morning gym sessions before work.	Boosts focus and energy for the day.
Mark Zuckerberg	Meta	Works out 5 times/week using a personalized	Balances mental workload with physical health.
Jeff Bezos	Amazon	Structured strength and endurance training, plus a 30-minute cardio session.	Maintains stamina and resilience.
Richard Branson	Virgin Group	Running, swimming, weightlifting, yoga,	Adds productive hours and boosts overall energy.
Satya Nadella	Microsoft	Integrates fitness into daily leadership	Supports strategic clarity, focus, and empathy.

Despite their demanding schedules, these leaders demonstrate that prioritizing physical well-being is not only possible but also essential for long-term effectiveness. Their varied approaches — from intense morning workouts to adventurous outdoor activities — highlight that the “right” routine is the one that fits consistently into a leader’s life.

The Ripple Effect on Organizations

When leaders commit to wellness, they send a clear message: the pursuit of excellence includes taking care of the body and mind. This commitment influences workplace culture in several ways:

- **Inspiration and Modeling:** Employees are more likely to engage in healthy habits when they see leaders making them a priority.
- **Resilience Under Pressure:** Leaders with strong physical health can better manage stress and navigate high-pressure situations without burnout.
- **Sustainable Service Quality:** Energy and focus are essential for consistent, client-centered service delivery — traits that are directly supported by fitness.
- **Innovation and Problem-Solving:** Physical activity is linked to improved cognitive function, which supports creativity and effective decision-making.

Making Wellness a Leadership Imperative

Wellness does not require elite-level athleticism; it requires intentionality. Leaders can start by:

- Scheduling exercise as a non-negotiable calendar event.
- Finding an activity they enjoy to ensure consistency.
- Combining movement with social connection, such as walking meetings.
- Linking wellness goals to professional performance metrics.

In the end, leaders who invest in their health are not just doing something good for themselves — they are making a strategic investment in their ability to lead effectively, inspire their teams, and deliver exceptional service to their clients.

As the examples of Cook, Zuckerberg, Bezos, Branson, and Nadella show, the intersection of leadership and wellness is not a trend — it is a proven path to sustained success.

Wellness as a Strategic Imperative: Lessons from Three Leaders in Education, Healthcare, and Business

Leadership excellence requires more than strategic vision; it relies on physical vitality, emotional resilience, and mental clarity. Executives in education, healthcare, and business face relentless demands, making wellness not a luxury but a strategic lever for success. Recent interviews with Hasan Ali (CEO, AirTutors), Chad Sweitzer (Assistant Superintendent, Elk Grove Unified), and Michelle Woodard (COO, Peach Tree Healthcare) highlight actionable wellness systems leaders can use to thrive.

Hasan Ali: Blocking Out Time for Health and Leading with Clarity

Hasan Ali's leadership journey was shaped by a personal wake-up call: a pre-diabetic diagnosis that led to a 25-pound weight loss and a structured wellness plan. Ali schedules daily workouts from 4–6 PM and communicates this transparency with his team, signaling wellness as non-negotiable. He advocates for tech-free weekends and prioritizes running as a tool for stress management, improved sleep, and mental clarity.

Chad Sweitzer: Family Foundations and Fitness as Leadership Training

Chad Sweitzer leads Elk Grove Unified's secondary education programs, serving over 64,000 students and 6,000 staff. He begins each day with a 5:30 AM workout, connecting fitness discipline to leadership adaptability and focus. Sweitzer emphasizes longevity, adapting his wellness practices with age, and modeling resilience for his team and family.

Michelle Woodard: Leading Through Change While Centered on Well-Being

Michelle Woodard oversees a large healthcare network, balancing staff transitions, patient initiatives, and executive responsibilities. Her leadership system integrates eight hours of nightly rest, morning faith practices, gratitude journaling, and direct recognition of staff. Woodard underscores finding inner peace, trusting intuition, and prioritizing relationships over external validation.

Shared Lessons for Leaders

1. Wellness is Non-Negotiable: Schedule wellness like a key business meeting.
2. Adaptability is a Leadership Skill: Adjust routines with changing demands.
3. Relationships Build Resilience: Build strong personal and professional support networks.
4. Transparency and Trust: Foster cultures of openness to strengthen teams.

Conclusion

Executive wellness is a strategic imperative for thriving organizations. Ali, Sweitzer, and Woodard's systems demonstrate that intentional self-care drives sustainable leadership impact.

How a Hasan Ali's Wellness System Helps Drive Innovation that Makes a Difference

Hasan Ali, the CEO of AirTutors, a pioneering education technology company known for personalized, tech-driven tutoring services, leads a leadership story deeply intertwined with his own health journey. This transformative experience not only reshaped his lifestyle but also profoundly impacted his leadership approach. Hasan's wellness practices revolve around scheduling, setting boundaries, and intentionally recovering as the cornerstones of innovation and executive performance.

As the CEO of a high-growth startup, Hasan manages teams, investors, product innovation, and client relationships globally. The pressure of scaling a company in a competitive market once led him to long hours and unhealthy habits, ultimately resulting in a pre-diabetic diagnosis. This pivotal moment catalyzed a disciplined wellness transformation that now serves as the foundation of his leadership style.

Hasan's wellness transformation was marked by significant weight loss,

achieved through sustainable changes to his diet and exercise routine. His fitness regimen includes daily gym sessions, walks, and, most notably, running. Hasan attributes this practice to reducing anxiety, improving deep sleep, and sharpening decision-making skills. Additionally, his system prioritizes mental well-being through candid conversations with his co-founders, fostering an internal support network that combats the isolation often experienced in executive roles.

Key elements of Hasan's wellness system include:

1. Hasan prioritizes his well-being by allocating specific time slots for exercise daily, ensuring it becomes a non-negotiable commitment.
2. He sets tech boundaries by staying offline on weekends and intentionally refraining from using wearable devices like Apple Watches to reduce constant notifications.
3. Hasan makes time for running and mindful eating even during travel to maintain consistency.
4. He conducts weekly check-ins with his co-founders to gain emotional clarity and prevent burnout, fostering emotional resilience.

Hasan's early career experiences have provided him with invaluable lessons that have shaped his leadership approach and contributed to his success as the CEO of AirTutors.

In his early years as CEO, Hasan endured four grueling years of uninterrupted work, leading to profound depression and burnout. Recognizing the importance of wellness, he now advises other leaders to prioritize it by intentionally scheduling recovery time into their calendars. His approach underscores that wellness is not a luxury but a strategic investment in leadership success.

Hasan's story serves as a powerful testament to the transformative potential of intentional systems. By treating wellness as a core business process, Hasan has witnessed a remarkable improvement in creativity and decision-making. Transparency with his team about his wellness schedule has not only fostered a culture of boundaries but also demonstrated the value of prioritizing personal well-being. Furthermore, his commitment to restorative recovery, including disconnecting from technology and taking full weekends off, has resulted in sustained productivity and long-term success.

Hasan Ali's case study shows how wellness transformation can be achieved and made crucial for leaders in tough industries. His approach is a roadmap for CEOs and executives who want to find a good balance between work and personal well-being, which leads to innovation and sustainable leadership. By focusing on structured wellness, setting boundaries, and building emotional strength, Hasan shows that being healthy is the key to successful leadership.

Case Study: Chad Sweitzer - Leadership Wellness Systems at Scale

Introduction

Chad Sweitzer, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education at Elk Grove Unified School District, leads one of the largest and most intricate school districts in California. With a student enrollment of 64,000 and a workforce exceeding 6,000, this case study explores how Sweitzer integrates structured wellness practices into his leadership. By doing so, he effectively manages stress, cultivates resilience, and establishes a culture of balance and accountability throughout this extensive organization.

Leadership Scope and Responsibilities

Sweitzer's responsibilities encompass 18 comprehensive middle and high schools, charter schools, and a substantial adult education program. His primary objective is to prepare students for higher education and career development. Sweitzer's leadership philosophy is deeply rooted in his early experiences as a counselor, and he is committed to empowering staff members. Managing a district of such magnitude necessitates exceptional organizational skills, adaptability, and a profound commitment to wellness.

Family Foundations

Chad attributes his leadership and wellness discipline to his upbringing, which emphasized nutrition, physical fitness, and familial connections. From a young age, he engaged in various athletic activities, including baseball throughout his college years. Additionally, he coached his children, instilling in them habits of physical activity and goal setting. Sweitzer's wellness journey is closely intertwined with his family values. Shared meals and fitness activities reinforce wellness as a family culture.

Structured Wellness Systems

Sweitzer commences his day with a 5:30 AM workout, utilizing a home gym setup to ensure consistency. His regimen incorporates strength training, cardiovascular exercise, and core exercises, complemented by active rest days dedicated to cycling or walking. This structured morning routine establishes the foundation for productivity and leadership focus throughout the day. Sweitzer's system demonstrates that physical health is intrinsically linked to professional excellence.

Leadership Insights from Wellness

Sweitzer draws parallels between achieving leadership outcomes and fitness goals, emphasizing the significance of patience, planning, and adaptability in both domains. By embodying these practices, he inspires his team to prioritize well-being without compromising organizational performance. His approach encompasses:

- **Proactive Scheduling:** Workout time is treated as a non-negotiable calendar priority, similar to any other executive meeting.
- **Adaptation with Age:** He adjusts workouts by incorporating lighter weights, higher repetitions, and greater emphasis on recovery to prevent injuries.
- **Mental Resilience:** Wellness practices assist him in managing stress and maintaining a present mindset when interacting with staff, students, and families.
- **Team Empowerment:** By modeling discipline, he motivates others to embrace self-care, ultimately enhancing morale and productivity.

Challenges and Solutions

Sweitzer encounters challenges, but he has identified effective solutions to overcome them. Time constraints and weather disruptions are recurring challenges, but he underscores the importance of discipline and flexibility. By scheduling wellness like any other executive responsibility, he demonstrates that leadership effectiveness improves when leaders exemplify balance. His ability to adapt, whether in response to personal health concerns or district-wide challenges, is crucial to his success.

Key Takeaways
1. Lead by Example: Staff are more inclined to prioritize wellness when leaders demonstrate its significance.
2. Sustainable Systems are Essential: Fitness and leadership share the requirement for goal setting, consistency, and adaptability.
3. Family Engagement is Foundational: Wellness is not an individual endeavor; it thrives when integrated with family culture.
4. Adaptation Promotes Longevity: Leadership effectiveness enhances when leaders adjust strategies for long-term sustainability.

Sweitzer's case study effectively demonstrates how intentional wellness practices can substantially improve decision-making, emotional intelligence, and leadership resilience. His disciplined morning routine, unwavering commitment to familial values, and systems-oriented mindset serve as a practical model for leaders overseeing large-scale organizations. By prioritizing wellness as a strategic imperative, Sweitzer emphasizes the crucial role of personal vitality in achieving long-term leadership success. Finally, Sweitzer's unwavering commitment to family values, and systems-based mindset provide a practical model for leaders managing large-scale organizations. By prioritizing wellness as a strategic imperative, Sweitzer underscores the pivotal role of personal vitality in achieving sustainable leadership success.

Wellness-Centered Leadership in Complex Systems: Practices that Work from COO Michelle Woodard (Peach Tree Healthcare)

Abstract

Senior leaders in education, healthcare, and mission-driven enterprises navigate unrelenting complexity: regulatory oversight, staffing transitions, financial pressure, and community expectations. This article distills practical lessons from a recorded interview with Michelle Woodard, Chief Operating Officer of Peach Tree Healthcare (a Federally Qualified Health Center), conducted by Dr. Alan Rogers of AR Leadership Partners. Woodard's 33-year leadership journey offers a grounded, repeatable system for sustaining executive wellness while strengthening team trust, governance, and operational outcomes.

Executive Snapshot

- Role & Context: COO overseeing five clinics, a mobile unit, and multi-disciplinary services (family practice, pediatrics, behavioral health, chiropractic, acupuncture, vision care) serving largely underserved communities.
- Scale: ~243 employees; thousands of patients across multiple locations.
- Governance: FQHC board with federal requirements (e.g., majority patient representation, demographic alignment).
- Current Pressures: Leadership turnover (CMO departure; director-level transition), patient volume variability, mobile unit utilization, policy/training updates, and board composition adjustments.

- **Leadership Signature:** Calm presence, transparent communication, relationship-first decision-making, and a structured personal wellness routine anchored in sleep, faith, reflection, gratitude, movement, and positive affect.

Woodard's system is simple and disciplined, and effective comprising five daily anchors that enhance presence and decision quality:

- Eight hours of sleep: Non-negotiable
- Faith and reflection at dawn
- Gratitude and positive framing
- Movement and micro-exercise
- Learning on the commute

Translating Personal Wellness into Organizational Practice

- Regulate Yourself → Regulate the Room
- When a clinic manager calls to vent, Woodard stays levelheaded, de-escalates, and coaches next actions. **Leaders set the climate.**
- Respect First, *Even in Discipline*
- Employees later thanked her for difficult conversations conducted with dignity. Respect builds long-term trust capital.
- Time is the Scarce Asset—Reinvest It in People
- Micro-touches (texts, notes, two-minute check-ins) compound into loyalty and discretionary effort.
- Keep the Center Still While the Periphery Changes
- Steadiness allowed operations to continue through leadership exits without cascading panic.

Audience	Tactic	Impact
<i>With the Board (FQHC Context)</i>	• Transparent executive briefings and proactive response to HERSA findings	• Keeps governance effective.
<i>With the Executive Team</i>	• Triangulated alignment: CFO transparency on daily volume; COO/CEO balance quality of care with financial sustainability; one shared narrative reduces drift.	• Aligns leadership on priorities and reduces conflicting narratives.
<i>With Managers & Providers</i>	• Local listening sessions surface recurring friction points; for care model changes, physician messengers increase adoption.	• Builds trust at the front lines and accelerates care model adoption.

Trust, Ubuntu, and maintaining balance with colleagues and staff
<i>Surface the Signal:</i> Private reassurance to the affected manager; reaffirm value.
<i>Check the Facts:</i> Trace the communication pattern; identify norm gaps.
<i>Repair & Reinforce:</i> Elevate role and scope where warranted; make trust visible.
<i>Extract the Lesson:</i> Reaffirm trust boundaries, hiring filters, and managers' confidence to address issues directly.

The COO's Playbook	Five Repeatable Moves
• Anchor Yourself Daily	• Sleep, reflection, gratitude, movement, learning. Your people borrow your nervous system.
• Normalize De-Escalation	• Acknowledge Clarify Co-design next step Follow up.
• Institutionalize Respect	• Train the how of hard conversations; script openers/closers; rehearse tone.
• Make the Work Visible	• Charters, shared dashboards, and key messages prevent swirl.
• Guard the Culture	• Reward trust-building behaviors fast and publicly; intervene early on erosive patterns.

What Woodard Would Tell Her Younger Self
• Prioritize mental well-being earlier; care less about external opinions.
• Accept mistakes as tuition—learn fast and don't repeat.
• Keep family and close relationships at the center; work gives purpose, people give meaning.

Editorial Notes & How to Use This Article	Translation into Action
Read this article as an ELT/cabinet and translate into a 90-day wellness + trust plan.	Each leader drafts a personal wellness template (sleep, reflection, movement, learning).
Codify three trust behaviors to reinforce this quarter (e.g., de-escalation standard, one-story messaging, micro-touches).	• Stand up a single project charter for a priority initiative with shared metrics and key messages.



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Warmly,

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