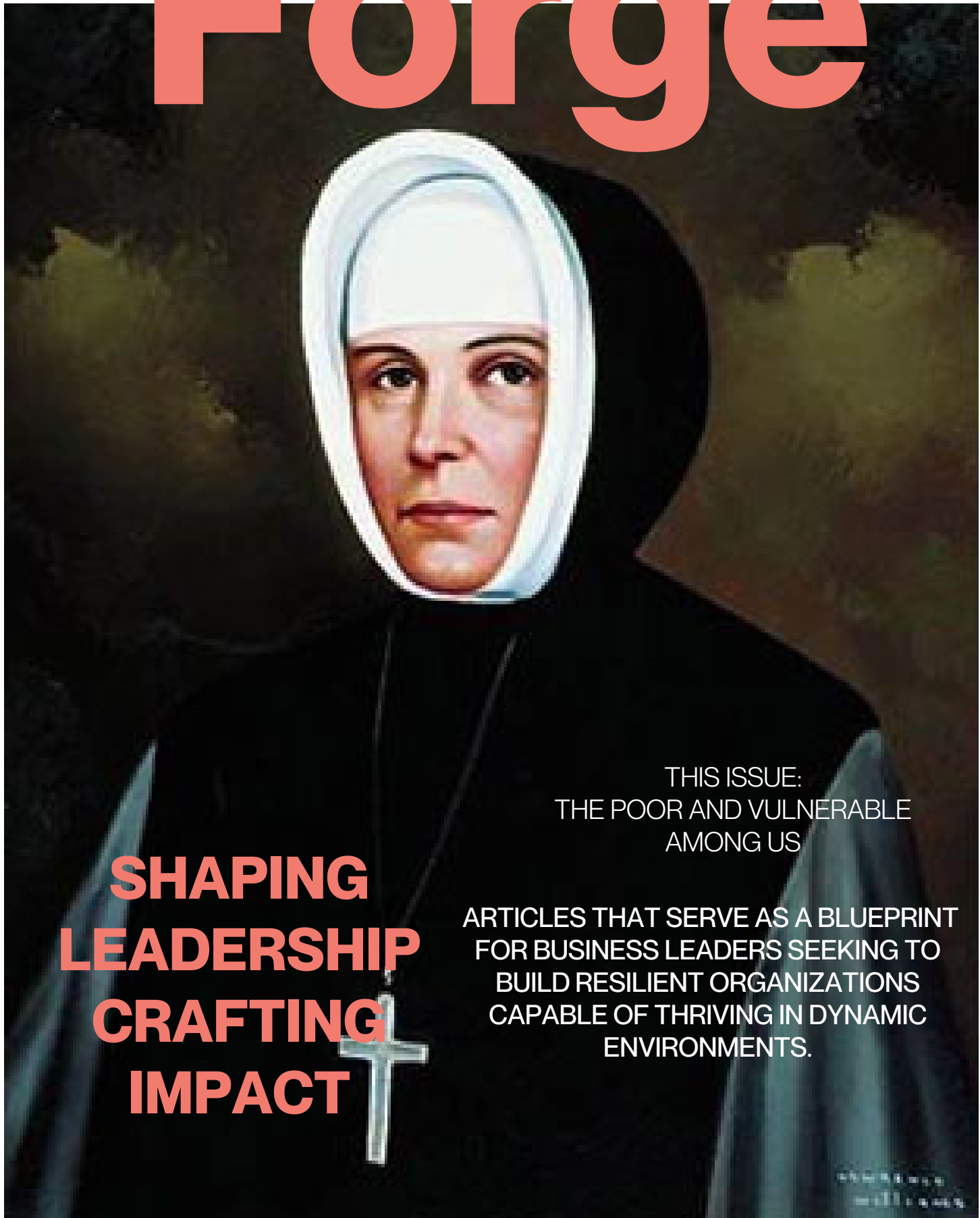


# Forge



**SHAPING  
LEADERSHIP  
CRAFTING  
IMPACT**



THIS ISSUE:  
THE POOR AND VULNERABLE  
AMONG US

ARTICLES THAT SERVE AS A BLUEPRINT  
FOR BUSINESS LEADERS SEEKING TO  
BUILD RESILIENT ORGANIZATIONS  
CAPABLE OF THRIVING IN DYNAMIC  
ENVIRONMENTS.

# Editors Notes

## WHAT OUR METRICS MISS - BEYOND THE DASHBOARD

*Shaping leadership.*

*Crafting impact.*



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Leadership, Engagement, Learning,  
Recovery.



Danielle Lord, PhD | Principal  
Archetype Learning Solutions

Blessed Émilie Gamelin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence in Montréal, spent her life among those the world preferred not to see: the poor, the sick, the elderly, prisoners, orphans, and people living with mental illness. She asked her community to remember three words, “humility, simplicity, and charity, above all, charity,” trusting that as long as they were “*surrounded by the poor & vulnerable, Providence would provide.*”

Leaders today inherit a different landscape, but the same tension. Our calendars pull us toward rooms with power and influence, while the deepest truth about our communities is still found at the edges, where our employees are often housing- and food-insecure, unseen, or exhausted by systems that do not work for them. When we allow ourselves to be surrounded by the poor and vulnerable in our own context, not as a project but as neighbors and teachers, we begin to see our “strategic priorities” differently.

This issue of Forge is an invitation to let those edges speak. You will read stories and questions that refuse easy fixes and the dashboards, which has become our standard of measurement. Humans however exist beyond the ROI. My hope is that these pages nudge us, from wherever we sit in the system, closer to the people whose flourishing is the real measure of our leadership.

The poor & vulnerable show up in many ways within our work - dive into this edition to learn how to help.

# Table Of Contents



## On the March cover:

The Blessed Emelie Gamelin, Foundress of the Sisters of Providence.

Emelie lost her husband and three children all in one year, then dedicated the remainder of life to serving the poor & vulnerable.

Forge Magazine, part of Archetype Learning Solutions

## 03 This shouldn't be normal

Chief Philanthropy Officer at United Way of Pierce County, Annie Frisbie, addresses the poor & vulnerable around us

## 06 Neurocognitive Decline and the Driving Conversation

Tracy Cram-Perkins, author of Dementia Home Care provides words of wisdom for those challenging conversations: when to give up driving

## 08 Anika's monthly Mindfulness message

Caring for yourself so you can care for others: using Anika's GENTLE framework for a Spring reset

## 09 Introducing the HelixMD Coaches!

One of the most compelling theme's from our research (Lord, Kodama, & Granzotti 2025) was the challenges physician leaders faced as they transition into leadership roles. Our coaches provide a critical element to the HelixMD program!

## 11 When trauma shows up at work

Do organizations have a role in supporting the poor and vulnerable in the workplace? You should. Aside from the human element and ethics of caring for people, its impacting your strategies.

## 15 Complimenting Corporate/HR Workforce Retention Programs?

Douglas Brown shares important insights on the important role everyone plays in retention: Don't over look the role of your managers!

## 19 The March Engagement strategy

Reminding your team of their value: Re-recruit!

# This shouldn't be normal...

*Annie Frisbie is the Chief Philanthropist Officer for United Way Pierce County. Her tireless work in helping communities understand what poverty looks like, and feels like, is the perfect addition for this months Forge edition.*

*Annie also brings a unique perspective - and shares what poverty looks like from two sides of the world.*



**When I think about poverty, a lot comes to mind. Some of it is rooted in where I grew up, Nairobi, Kenya. And some of it lives right here, in my second home in Washington.**

**Back home, poverty is visible. You don't have to look for it.  
It looks like rows of corrugated metal in the slums,  
tight, crowded, heat trapped between walls that were never meant to hold families.**

**It looks like water that isn't clean,  
or no water at all.**

**Buckets carried for miles.  
Children learning early that survival is a daily task.**

**It looks like pit latrines. Open drainage.  
The smell of it hanging in the air.  
It looks like girls missing school because they don't have basic hygiene products.**

**Families stretching a dollar across days.  
Walking kilometers to get to work, and then doing it again to get home.  
It looks like hands stretched out on the street,  
children and their parents side by side.**

**It looks like someone living with a disability,  
not just navigating the condition itself,  
but being shut out of opportunity, dignity, and access altogether.**

**It looks like systems that don't catch you.  
No safety net. No buffer.  
No second chance if things fall apart.**

*“Poverty, whether visible or hidden, should never be something we get used to”*

# This shouldn't be normal...

And then there is poverty here. Quieter. But just as real. Here, it can happen overnight.

- A divorce.
- A medical emergency.
- A job loss.

And suddenly, everything unravels.

Here, poverty can look like someone working 60, 70, 80 hours a week, and still not being able to afford rent, childcare, or groceries without doing mental math at the register.

It looks like a car in the driveway that feels like stability from the outside, but inside it is a burden. A high interest loan. Gas prices that don't make sense anymore. A payment that keeps you up at night.

It looks like choosing which bill to pay this month, and which one will have to wait. It looks like families who don't qualify for help, but also can't make it on their own.

It is hidden. Behind clean clothes. Behind a job title. Behind a smile. But it is there. And what I have come to understand is this: poverty is not just about what you see. It is about instability. It is about how close someone is to everything falling apart.

## **Different places. Different faces. Same weight.**

And that's why I am so passionate about advocating for systems change, by mobilizing our community to not only give, but to open their hearts... and their eyes... and their ears. To really see people. To hear what's not being said out loud. To notice the gaps we've learned to normalize. I love what I do every day.

...I really do.

But at night...when it's quiet...I can't help but wonder...how is it we have so much, yet so little?

*How is it we can work 40, 50, 60 hours a week...and still not afford the basics?*

*How is it we can live in systems that were meant to support people...and still watch people fall through them every single day?*

*How is it that help exists...but somehow doesn't reach the people who need it most?*

*How is it that survival has become something people have to earn...over and over again?*

# This shouldn't be normal...

I think about the mother doing everything right. Working. Showing up. Holding it together. And still lying awake at night trying to figure out how to make it stretch.

I think about the father, quietly carrying the weight of not being able to provide in the way he wants to even though he's giving everything he has.

I think about the young person full of potential, but already learning what it feels like to be limited by circumstances they didn't choose.

And I sit with that tension. Because this work it's not just about programs, or funding or metrics.

It's about dignity. It's about asking ourselves what kind of community are we really building if people are still this close to the edge?

And it's about choosing, every single day, to not look away. To lean in. To give. To advocate. To shift what we've accepted for far too long.

*Because poverty, whether visible or hidden, should never be something we get used to.*

**If this speaks to you, if something in you is stirred even a little reach out to me.**

It's going to take all of us. Not just to give but to see differently, to listen more closely, to show up with intention.



**If you would like to be part of this work, part of this movement, part of building something better for families in our community, I would love to connect.**



**Annie Frisbie | Chief Philanthropy Officer  
United Way Pierce County | [AnnieF@uwpc.org](mailto:AnnieF@uwpc.org)**

*This article represents the thoughts and opinions of the author, not necessarily the United Way of Pierce County*

# Neurocognitive Decline and the Driving Conversation

*One of the most important tenants of the Sisters of Providence was the idea that the poor & vulnerable are all around us. In this important consideration are the most vulnerable among us: our aging family members. In this article, contributor and dementia care expert, Tracy Cram Perkins offers valuable insights on entering into important conversations and caring for everyone involved.*



This is a conversation most of us never imagined having until it lands in our lap. In my family, it happened when my father got into three successive accidents. No one wants to get side swiped.

## **Planning the *driving* discussion can make it a bit easier.**

When you start noticing issues, no matter how small, it may be time to contact an occupational therapist to evaluate their driving every six months to ensure everyone is safe. There are plenty of programs available.

The potential benefit could be lower insurance premiums.

### **The Talk:**

- Do be curious and not confrontational. Please don't cite facts and figures, they do not address your loved one's emotional needs.
- Ask questions like what does their car mean to them? What is their motivation for holding onto the car? More importantly, what is in it for them if they give up the car?
- For those who don't want to give up driving, gently reinforce the medical diagnosis. Ask their doctor for a written prescription and make extra copies.
- Let your loved one know that you value them for who they are. Perhaps you can invite them to be your co-pilot so "you can get more driving time in."
- Be mindful of their feelings about the loss of independence and be supportive.
- Stress the positive side of not driving, such as carpooling, rideshare, public transportation and taxis for example. Can you start integrating these options into their routine now so it will cause less fear and anxiety later?
- If you have grandchildren, coach them so they mention that they would like to have a car like "their car" someday. Encourage the grandchildren to ask questions which may help identify the reason for not letting go.
- After their driver's license has been revoked, remove triggers such as keys lying around and the car parked where they can see it.

# Neurocognitive Decline and the Driving Conversation

The States of California, Delaware, Nevada, New Jersey, Oregon, and Pennsylvania have laws that mandate medical professionals notify the DMV about medical conditions that could affect someone's ability to drive. All DMVs investigate complaints about dangerous drivers and limit or pull drivers licenses when necessary.

It is easier if you rehearse The Talk ahead of time and brace yourself for surprises and pack patience. Repeat that you value them for who they are. When you prepare, it becomes easier to support safety over independence.

Will it go perfectly? Maybe, maybe not. Some will voluntarily stop driving, others won't.

Six out of ten adults with Alzheimer's Disease will wander. For those that won't stop driving, prepare to share the discussion many times. Additionally, create back-up plans for tracking the car and disabling the car to reduce elopements.



**Convenient, dementia caregiving solutions at your fingertips.**

Available everywhere books are sold in audio, eBook, and paperback.



**Tracy Cram Perkins, author of *Dementia Home Care, How to Prepare Before, During, and After.***

**Connect with Tracy:**

**<https://tracycramperkins.com>**

**Watch Tracy live monthly on USA Global TV & Radio!**



## COMPASSION

At times, we recognize that we ourselves are the poor and vulnerable. If you're searching for a way to ensure care for yourself, so you can better care for others, the GENTLE Reset method may be what you are needing.

The Reset Journal was created for exactly this season. This journal isn't about productivity. It's about presence. It guides you through intentional reflection using the G.E.N.T.L.E. framework™:

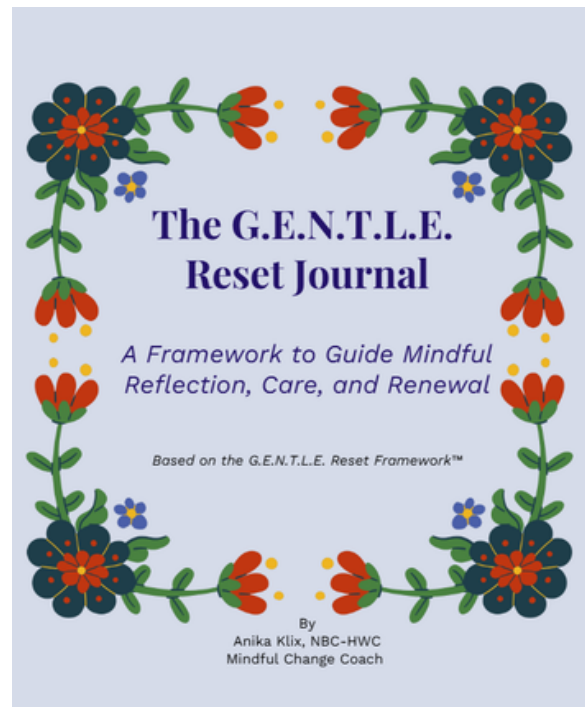
- G – Ground yourself, arrive in the present moment
- E – Ease, soften, and create space for rest
- N – Notice what needs care, observe thoughts
- T – Tend to your body and mind
- L – Let go of what no longer serves or feels heavy
- E – Embody and integrate what you are learning into daily life.

*Mindfully yours,*

*~Anika*



Our COMPASS Mindfulness coach: Anika Kilx



**Connect with Anika:**

**<https://www.halsacoaching.com/book-online>**

# Introducing the HelixMD coaches

HelixMD was built on a simple observation: most physician leaders are overextended, under-supported, and expected to “power through” exhaustion in roles they were never truly prepared for. Behind the titles and metrics are people who care deeply about their teams and patients, and who are quietly running on fumes. HelixMD coaches step into that gap.

Our coaching bench brings together two groups:

- Physician coaches who know, from the inside, what it means to carry a panel, a service line, and a leadership portfolio at the same time.
- Leadership Recovery coaches who have spent years walking alongside physicians and health-care leaders through change, conflict, and organizational distress.

They are not here to “fix” you. They are here to listen, to name patterns you have been living inside for years, and to help you experiment with different ways of leading that are more sustainable, for you and for the people who depend on you.

Why coaches matter for leadership fatigue  
Leadership fatigue in medicine is not just about long hours. It is the slow accumulation of role ambiguity, misaligned expectations, invisible emotional labor, and the moral weight of decisions that affect patients, staff, and communities. Coaching gives physician leaders something the system rarely provides: structured time, skilled accompaniment, and a confidential space to tell the truth about the job.

Evidence from randomized trials and systematic reviews shows that coaching for physicians can:

- Reduce emotional exhaustion and symptoms of burnout.
- Improve professional fulfillment, engagement, and overall quality of life.
- Strengthen goal clarity, self-efficacy, and coping skills in the face of ongoing demands.

Being a physician was a life long dream, you could say its in your DNA. At the intersection of clinician and leader is HelixMD. Preparing future physicians for leadership roles, helping existing physician leaders navigate leadership fatigue. Get back to your roots with our strategies to help you transition from the clinic to the c-suite.

## HelixMD



**Physician is in your DNA: don't let leadership fatigue derail your career evolution**

# Introducing the HelixMD coaches

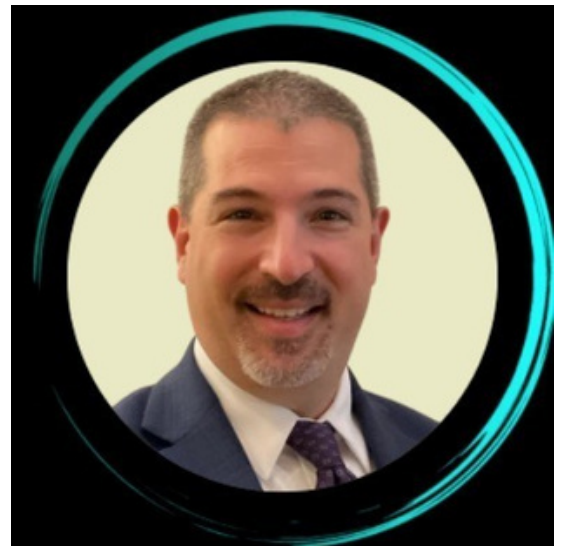
In HelixMD, coaching is not an add-on; it is one of the primary “labs” where new leadership patterns are tested. Coaches help leaders:

- Reclaim a sense of agency in roles that often feel scripted by others.
- Surface and challenge inherited beliefs about perfection, over-functioning, and self-sacrifice.
- Translate insight into small, concrete experiments in how they set boundaries, give feedback, navigate conflict, and ask for support.

The goal is not to make physician leaders more resilient so they can tolerate more dysfunction. It is to walk with them as they recover their clarity, voice, and courage—and as they begin to reshape the conditions of leadership itself.

**We’re thrilled to have Dr. Christopher Colombo, MD, ACC, BCC, CPPC as one of our exclusive physician-peer coaches.**

Christopher J. Colombo, MD is a board-certified critical care physician, retired U.S. Army medical officer, and credentialed executive and positive psychology coach. He founded Functional Mentoring to help physicians and healthcare leaders navigate the real-world demands of leadership: burnout risk, role strain, high-stakes decision-making, and identity transitions. His work blends evidence-based coaching with practical leadership experience from military medicine, academic health systems, and federally funded research programs.



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# When trauma shows up at work...

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The problem with trauma is that we associate it with an event. A fire, an accident, something big. But what if trauma showed up silently?

Across sectors, burnout, stress, and mental health–related leaves have increased dramatically, with one analysis showing mental health leaves up more than 300 percent since 2017. In large workforce studies, over 70 percent of employees report at least some burnout symptoms, and higher burnout is strongly associated with intent to leave. At the same time, trust in managers has plummeted, from 46 percent in 2022 to 29 percent in 2024 in one global leadership report, signaling a steep erosion in the relationships that hold organizations together.

It is not a recruiting problem. It is a human problem.

**In most** of our organizations, trauma doesn't arrive with a diagnosis or a dramatic backstory. It walks in wearing a badge, pours a cup of coffee, and does its best to get through the shift. For many working adults, especially those who are poor or one crisis away from it, what we see as “performance problems” are often the visible edge of long-running, unresolved trauma and financial strain.

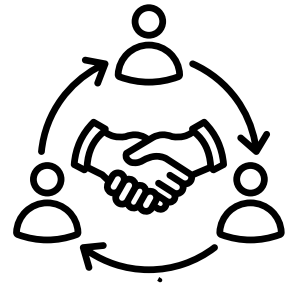
We tend to assume that if people are employed, the worst is behind them. Yet roughly four in ten U.S. households cannot afford the basics for survival even when adults are working, and many are concentrated in our most essential roles: aides, front-line supervisors, customer-facing staff, production workers.

For these workers, one flat tire, one missed child-care payment, or one unexpected medical bill can start a cascade: missed shifts, late rent, shutoff notices, credit damage, deep shame, and a growing sense that they are failing at both work and home. From the leadership table, these stories usually appear as red boxes on a dashboard: unplanned absence, write-up, turnover, safety event. What we almost never see in that room is the kitchen-table calculus that produced those red boxes, the child-care closure at 5:15 a.m., the car that won't start, the rent increase that erased the last bit of slack. When we miss that context, we risk misreading trauma as apathy, poor judgment, or “not a good fit.”

## Did you know...

- 42% of U.S. households live below the ALICE Threshold, 13% in poverty and another 29% who are ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed), unable to meet the minimum cost of living despite working.
- That ALICE group represents about 40 million working households struggling to cover basic needs like housing, food, and transportation.
- Employee financial stress is huge and costly: one survey found 82% of American workers think about personal finances at work, contributing to an estimated \$664 billion in lost productivity annually.
- Financially stressed employees are about twice as likely (or more) to be looking for a new job, directly fueling higher turnover and recruiting costs.
- Nationally, the official poverty rate is about 10.6% (35.9 million people), but ALICE data show a much larger share living above the poverty line and still unable to afford basics, especially in essential, lower-wage roles.

# When trauma shows up



## How Trauma And Poverty Show Up On The Floor

Poverty and chronic financial stress function like a form of Level II trauma: repeated, prolonged, with powerful mental and emotional effects. Research on scarcity and mental health shows that ongoing economic shocks narrow attention, increase vigilance to immediate threats, and impair planning and self-control. In the workplace, that can look like:

- More errors and near-misses because attention is fractured.
- Slower problem-solving and change adoption because cognitive bandwidth is already spent.
- Less capacity for learning new processes and systems, right when we most need transformation.

Financial stress and poor mental health also travel together. Employees under significant financial strain report more anxiety, disrupted sleep, and burnout, and miss far more unplanned days than their more stable peers. They show up tired, distracted, and wary. Engagement models that assume energy, a sense of future, and baseline trust simply don't map onto a life where any misstep could mean losing transportation or housing.

Importantly, this is not limited to “entry-level” roles. The Roys, Marias, Jasmynes, Carloses, and Tanishas in our organizations, trusted supervisors, charge nurses, assistant managers, are often carrying the heaviest operational loads on top of the thinnest personal margins. When work is not enough for them, it isn't enough for your strategy either.



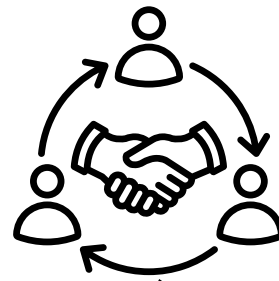
## What Leaders Often Get Wrong

When trauma and poverty show up at work, leaders are under pressure to respond quickly. The most common missteps include:

- Treating it primarily as a motivation or “engagement” problem, solvable with recognition programs and surveys.
- Assuming that people just need to “manage money better,” instead of asking whether the job design itself keeps them in chronic precarity.
- Focusing only on individual resilience (coaching, EAP, self-care) while leaving structurally destabilizing practices, unpredictable schedules, last-minute changes, pay that lags the local cost of living, untouched.

I clearly recall working at the hospital where we were called upon to care for the poor & vulnerable -- often our team members and wondering, how as leaders can we possibly understand their needs when we show up to work in our BMWs?

# When trauma shows up



From an operational and financial perspective, these misreadings are costly. Financially stressed employees are estimated to lose significant productive time each week dealing with money problems, much of it on the job, and stress drives a disproportionate share of voluntary turnover. Replacing a single employee can cost well over their annual salary once you add recruiting, onboarding, and lost expertise. In high-ALICE roles, that churn is often normalized as “just how it is,” but the drag on quality, safety, and strategy execution is real.

The deeper truth is uncomfortable: when our schedules, wage structures, and benefits do not allow working families to reach even basic stability, we are, as employers and systems, participating in and perpetuating trauma. That doesn’t mean every organization can fix everything. It does mean we have to stop acting surprised when people whose lives are built on financial fault lines can’t consistently deliver the engagement our strategies assume.

## Moving From Compassion To Design

If we take seriously that trauma and poverty are showing up in our clinical units, floors, plants, and offices, what should we do?

First, we have to see it clearly. That means shifting our Monday-morning conversations from “Why can’t Maria get it together?” to “How many Marias does our strategy depend on, and what happens to our safety, access, and growth if their lives remain this fragile?” It means asking, for each high-risk role: Where are we seeing chronic turnover, last-minute call-outs, schedule chaos, and early warning signs of burnout?

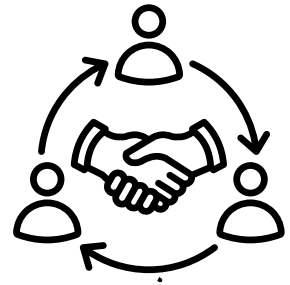
Second, we can begin to treat stability for working families as a design question, not an act of charity. Concrete moves include:

- Job and schedule design: Posting schedules farther in advance, reducing last-minute changes, and aligning shifts as much as possible with real child-care, school, and transportation patterns.
- Targeted wage and benefit adjustments: Focusing limited resources on a few ALICE-heavy roles where the cost of instability is highest, rather than diffuse, symbolic increases.
- Practical supports, not perks: Transportation stipends, emergency micro-grants for car repair or rent gaps, earned-wage access with guardrails, and simple, judgment-free pathways to ask for help.
- Honest use of data: Tracking leading indicators such as schedule stability, same-day call-outs, intent to stay, and coverage strain, alongside lagging indicators like turnover and safety events.

Finally, we need to align these choices with our stated values. If we say “people are our greatest asset,” what does that mean for employees who are doing everything “right” and are still one crisis away from eviction? If we say we are committed to safety and quality, what does that require in roles where chronic financial stress is quietly eroding attention and judgment day after day?

“The opposite of poverty at work is not wealth; it’s enough safety and stability for people to bring their full selves to the job.”

# When trauma shows up



## A Deeper Dive For Leaders

This month's Forge theme, the poor and vulnerable among us, is not just about the communities outside our walls. It is about the people who make our work possible and who are carrying trauma, scarcity, and strain into every shift.

If you're a leader who wants to understand this more deeply, and translate compassion into practical design, the When Working Isn't Enough guide offers a structured way to:

- See where trauma and poverty are already undermining your strategy.
- Put approximate numbers to the cost of financial instability in your workforce.
- Choose a small portfolio of quick wins and structural experiments that make work more compatible with real life, without over-promising what you can't sustain.

If this month's theme stirred something for you, we'd love to keep the conversation going.

Consider one (or more) of these:

**Share what you're already trying:** Email us with one concrete way you've worked to identify or support ALICE team members in your own setting (for example, schedule changes, transportation help, or wage adjustments that made a difference). What surprised you?

**Tell us where you feel stuck:** Where do you see the signs of financial strain or trauma on your team, but aren't sure what levers you can realistically pull? Send a brief story or question—we'll curate themes and address a few in a future Forge issue.

**Spot "invisible policies" on your unit:** For one week, pay attention to small rules or practices that might land hardest on financially strained staff (late schedule posting, parking costs, dress code, attendance rules). Share one example and one idea for testing a different approach.

**Invite a values check-in:** With your local team, pick one of your organization's stated values (e.g., respect, safety, excellence). How well does it hold up for employees who are one crisis away from losing housing or transport? If you're willing, send us a sentence or two about what you discover. You can reach us at: [danielle@archetypelearningsolutions.com](mailto:danielle@archetypelearningsolutions.com) with the subject line "When Working Isn't Enough – Forge."

When trauma shows up at work the Archetype Learning Solutions  
feature article  
Danielle Lord, PhD

# Complimenting Corporate/HR Workforce Retention Programs?

## Don't Overlook the Manager's Crucial Role!

*In today's businesses, we are seeing significant workplace changes and also employees now asking for and demanding more to help them achieve their career goals and a work experience they can enjoy. We are seeing more interest in having balance with work and home life and the opportunity to work from home to avoid lengthy commutes, the desire to have purpose and meaning in work, feel appreciated and valued for their efforts and achievements and have career growth and development opportunities....all of which help support talent retention.*

### **Work Institute Reports**

...What makes this emerging workforce so challenging is that workers behave in very individual ways, and they are very individualistic in the priority they place on these preferences and expectations. In the past, employers sought to drive retention and engagement at an organizational level, but to engage and retain employees now depends on the individual employee.

...So today it is not so much the enterprise or organizations actions (such as compensation or wellness programs) that attract and retain talent but more the personalized experience. Today's emerging employee requires much more. They require to be treated as an individual and they feel empowered to demand certain preferences and expectations based on their priorities. And here is the catch, they can.

People make most major decisions based more on feelings and emotions than on pure logic and reason — and there is a growing body of research in neuroscience, behavioral economics, and psychology to support this.

### **The Research**

Employees Invest Their Best Effort and Remain Loyal When Doing so:

- Meets their needs
- Aligns with their values
- Supports their wellbeing
- Advances their goals
- Generates positive emotions
- Strengthens relationships and trust

This is not selfishness — it is human nature.

# Complimenting Corporate/HR Workforce Retention Programs?

## Don't Overlook the Manager's Crucial Role!

### Why are Emotions and Feelings so Important?

#### 1. Antonio Damasio's Groundbreaking Research (Iowa Gambling Task)

Neurologist Dr. Antonio Damasio demonstrated that emotions are critical to decision-making through his studies of patients with damage to the emotional centers of the brain (the ventromedial prefrontal cortex).

These individuals could reason logically, but they could not make even simple decisions (like where to eat).

Damasio concluded that "emotion is essential to rationality."

His concept of "somatic markers" (bodily emotional responses) shows how feelings guide people toward beneficial choices and away from harmful ones.

Source: Damasio, A. R. (1994). *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*

2. Further when we look at Behavioral Economics: Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky have done significant work in this area Nobel Prize winner Daniel Kahneman, in his book *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, explains that:

We have two systems of thinking:

System 1 (fast, emotional, intuitive)

System 2 (slow, deliberate, logical)

Most decisions — even seemingly rational ones — are made using System 1, driven by intuition, emotions, and mental shortcuts (heuristics).

It is also important to understand that all employees are different and as such there is no one size fits all for employees

Personal, individual needs and expectations are unique, different and distinct to every individual employee. So, it becomes more about tailoring and customizing the employee experience to support employee needs and pursuits. This is difficult to achieve from a corporate or HR strategy as they don't have the direct interaction with employees.

This is where corporate programs and HR driven programs can struggle to meet individual needs.

The reality is that everyone has a role to play – for example owners and senior executives make the commitment to progressive talent management strategies, set priorities and identify goals, provide the resources and budgets required for retention programs.

Human Resources helps design programs, monitor talent trends, arrange training, conduct surveys... yet Managers are the heart of employee retention. Through strong relationships, clear communication, meaningful work, and proactive support, they create an environment where employees feel valued, engaged, and motivated to stay.

# Complimenting Corporate/HR Workforce Retention Programs?

## Don't Overlook the Manager's Crucial Role!

**Empowering managers to lead effectively not only reduces turnover but also fosters a culture of trust, collaboration, and growth.**

By investing in managerial excellence, organizations can reduce turnover, save costs, and build a thriving workforce that drives long-term success. Retention starts with the manager, and their impact cannot be overstated.

Turnover, absenteeism, disengagement, stress, and burnout all increase when employee needs are unmet. When people feel:

• Undervalued → they disengage • Unsupported → they withdraw • Overworked → they burn out • Unrecognized → they stop caring • Unclear → they slow down • Unheard → they look elsewhere • Stagnant → they leave.

**These are human responses, not “performance” problems**

### Examples of the Managers Influence and Control

#### 1. *Managers Directly Impact Employee Engagement*

- Engaged employees are more **motivated, productive, and committed** to their organization.
- A great manager **inspires, recognizes, and challenges** employees, making work more meaningful.
- Poor management leads to **disengagement, burnout, and increased turnover**.

#### 2. *Managers Control Workplace Culture & Psychological Safety*

- Employees thrive in an environment where they **feel safe to speak up, ask questions, and contribute ideas**.

#### 3. *Managers Influence Career Growth & Development*

- Employees **stay longer** when they see opportunities for growth and learning.
- Great managers invest in **mentorship, skill-building, and career pathing**.
- If employees feel stuck, unchallenged, or unsupported, they will **seek career growth elsewhere**.

#### 4. *Managers Shape Work-Life Balance & Well-Being*

- Burnout is a leading cause of turnover, and managers play a big role in **setting realistic expectations**.
- Supportive managers respect **work-life balance, encourage flexibility, and prevent employee overload**.
- Employees who feel constantly stressed and overworked are **far more likely to leave**.

#### 5. *Managers Control Employee Recognition & Motivation*

- Employees want to feel **valued and appreciated** for their hard work.
- When managers **recognize achievements, celebrate wins, and provide positive feedback**, employees feel **motivated to stay**.
- A lack of recognition leads to **disengagement and turnover**.

# Complimenting Corporate/HR Workforce Retention Programs?

## Don't Overlook the Manager's Crucial Role!

Organizations that prioritize training and development for managers see tangible improvements in employee retention. Gallup data shows that organizations with highly engaged teams experience 59% lower turnover.

Managers are in the strongest position to influence, impact, understand, and support the unique personal needs, interests, and goals of employees because they interact with their teams on a day-to-day basis, giving them unparalleled insight into individual strengths, challenges, and aspirations. Unlike executives or HR departments, managers have direct visibility into employees' work habits, interpersonal dynamics, and areas for growth.

This close proximity allows managers to build trust and rapport, creating an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing their personal needs and career aspirations. Through regular communication, managers can tailor support to each individual, ensuring that employees feel valued and understood.

Managers are also in the strongest position to build positive emotions about the employee work experience through support 1:1 interactions, recognizing and appreciating employees, providing regular performance feedback and guidance versus negative feedback from lack of feedback, poor communication, misunderstanding or roles and responsibilities. Criticism, lack of support...

Organizations that support leader's development can reap the rewards and improve leadership effectiveness with engagement and talent retention as well as performance, productivity, teamwork and more. Additionally, managers have the authority and flexibility to implement changes and provide opportunities that directly address employees' unique circumstances. For example, they can adjust workloads to align with personal goals, recommend relevant training programs, or provide flexible scheduling to support work-life balance. Managers are also uniquely positioned to connect employees' individual interests and career goals with organizational objectives, demonstrating how their contributions align with the company's mission.

This alignment not only motivates employees but also fosters loyalty, engagement, and productivity. By understanding and addressing individual needs, managers play a critical role in creating a supportive and inclusive workplace where employees can thrive.



Douglas Brown - Manage to Retain

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## ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES



### *Want more ways to retain? ...best of all, its free!*

Our Archetype Engagement Blueprint is a powerful toolkit that has all 12 strategies in one complete package. You'll find strategy templates, tools, and a variety of resources to address all 12 of our strategies:

1. Create a sense of community
2. "About Me" posters
3. Becoming VAP: Vulnerable, Authentic, & Present
4. **Re-recruit!**
5. The daily DOSE
6. Recognition Recipe Cards
7. Perspective taking
8. Gratitude
9. Rounding
10. One to ones
11. Thank you notes
12. Meetings

These are not in any order, but we recognize that some, like becoming VAP, can feel more challenging than others. If vulnerability, authenticity, and presence are more considered a challenge, starting with and perfecting some of the others, will automatically build your VAP muscles!

### **Our March strategy (strategy #4) re-recruit!**

Let's dispel the myth that kindness and business are mutually exclusive. Being vulnerable, authentic, and present as a leader is essential-not only for building trust, but also for driving engagement, innovation, and sustained performance. While traditional business culture has often equated leadership with unwavering confidence and emotional distance, research and real-world experience show that the opposite is true: vulnerability, authenticity, and presence are powerful leadership assets.

In March, we focus on strategy #4 Re-Recruit. This is a powerful tool. To be told you matter, to be told "I'm so glad you're part of our team, to be told your contributions are valued..."

To the poor and vulnerable among your team, these could be the exact words that some needs to hear to feel valued, to be seen, to feel heard.

***Re-recruiting...simple, effective, and it costs nothing yet has a tremendous advantage!***

*Never underestimate the creativity of a disengaged team member!  
Check out the complete toolkit at [archetypelearningsolutions.com](http://archetypelearningsolutions.com)!*

# Forge contributors



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Douglas sets his sights on helping managers and executives understand the benefits of employee retention through the lens that comes with excessive turnover and loss of employee engagement.

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## **Tracy Cram Perkins**

Tracy has one of the most read books including practical advice through the lived experience of caring for her father as he battled dementia and the long term care environment. You can find her book and live show at: USA Global TV & Radio

**MasterHERmind:  
CEO support for  
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## **Annie Frisbie**

Philanthropist, leader, and overall amazing individual. Annie serves as the Chief Philanthropy Officer for United Way of Piere County, bringing awareness to poverty around us and ways forward.

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