

# Online Well-Being Group Coaching Program for Women Physician Trainees: A Randomized Clinical Trial



Adnan Syed; Adrienne Mann, MD; Ami N. Shah, MD; Pari Shah Thibodeau, PhD, MSW, LCSW; Liselotte Dyrbye, MD, MHPE; Maria A. Woodward, MD, MSc; Kerri Thurmon, MD, MPH; Christine D. Jones, MD, MS; Kimiko S. Dunbar, MD; Tyra Fainstad, MD  
Department of Internal Medicine, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, Aurora, Colorado

## BACKGROUND

Physician burnout disproportionately affects women physicians and begins in training.

Professional coaching may improve well-being, but generalizable evidence is lacking.

We aimed to assess the generalizability of a coaching program (Better Together Physician Coaching) in a national sample of women physician trainees.

## DESIGN

A randomized clinical trial involving trainees in 26 graduate medical education institutions in 19 states was conducted between September 1, 2022, and December 31, 2022.

Eligible participants included physician trainees at included sites who self-identified as a woman (i.e., self-reported their gender identity as woman, including those who reported woman if multiple genders were reported).

## INTERVENTION & METHODS

Our intervention was a 4-month, web-based, group coaching program.

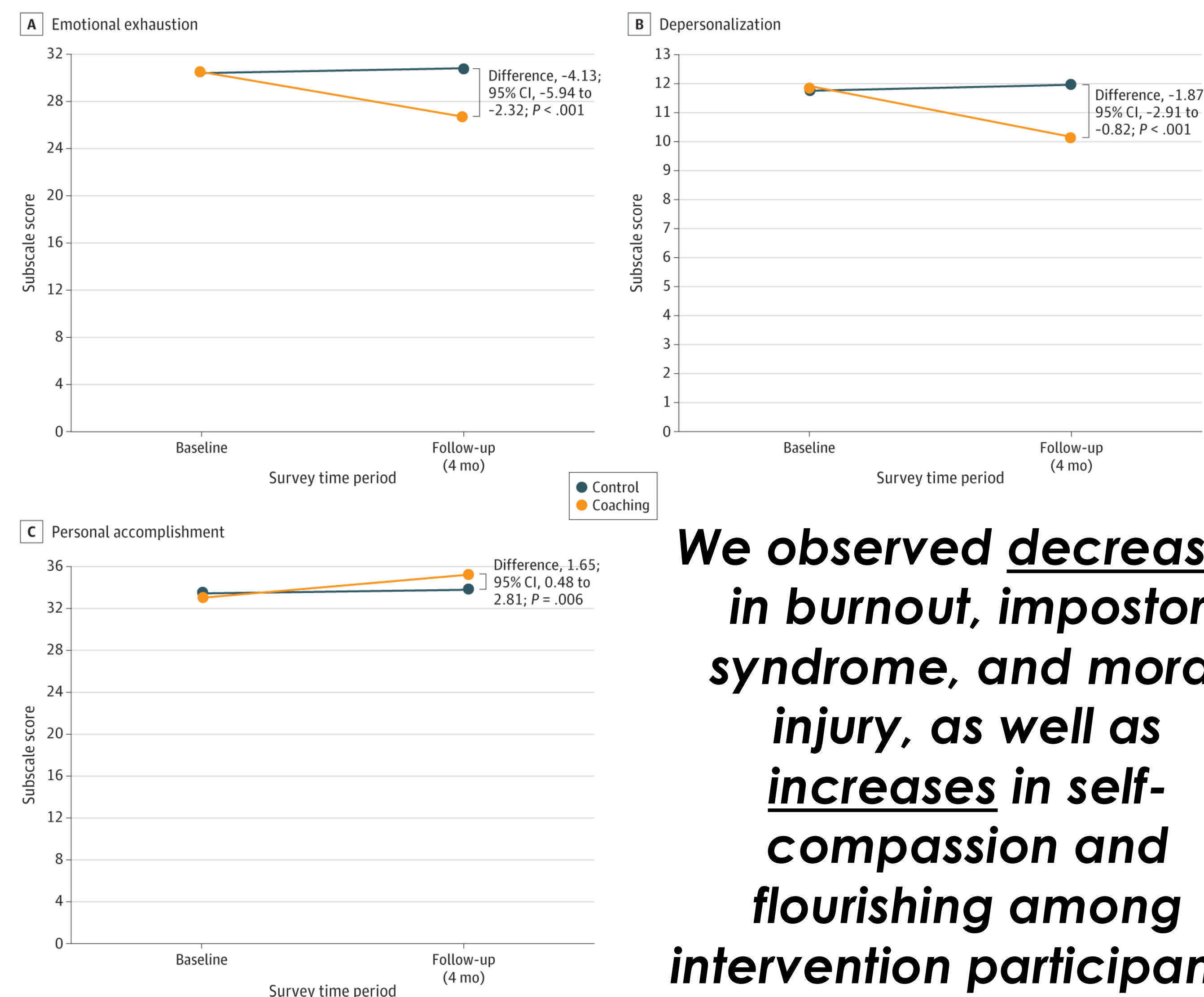
The primary outcomes were change in burnout (measured using subscales for emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal achievement from the Maslach Burnout Inventory).

Secondary outcomes included changes in impostor syndrome, moral injury, self-compassion, and flourishing, which were assessed using standardized measures.

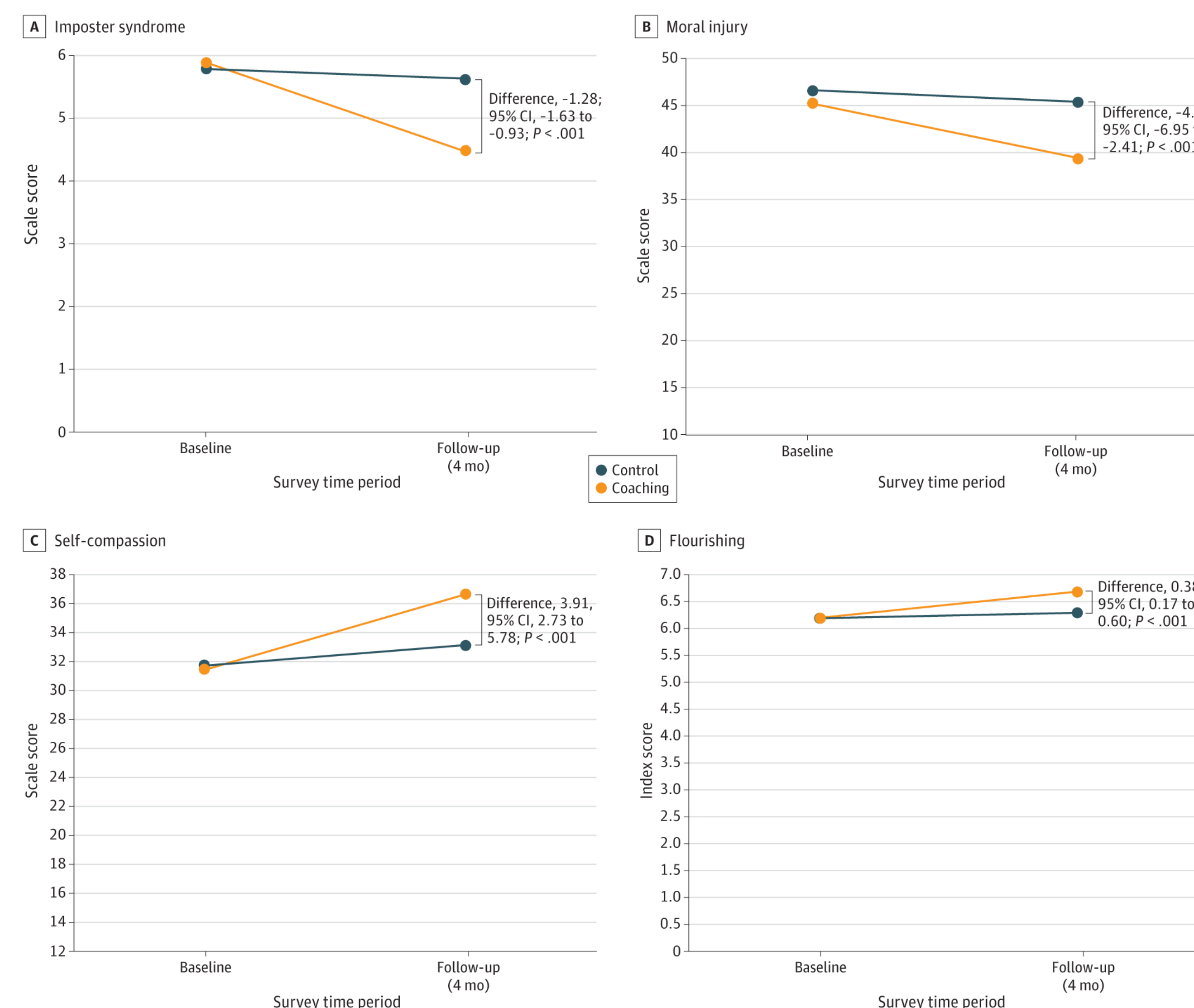
A linear mixed model analysis was performed on an intent-to-treat basis. A sensitivity analysis was performed to account for the missing outcomes.

## RESULTS

**Figure 1.** Mean Change in Burnout Response From Baseline Visit, Estimated From Linear Mixed-Effects Models



**Figure 2.** Mean Change in Secondary Outcome Response From Baseline Visit, Estimated From Linear Mixed Effects Models



## DISCUSSION

In this large, national RCT, women physician trainees who received online group coaching over 4 months had substantial reductions in multiple dimensions of professional distress (burnout, moral injury, and impostor syndrome) and improvements in well-being (self-compassion and flourishing).

Online group coaching is an example of an institutionally provided, individually harnessed tool to build a culture of connection necessary to heal physician burnout.

Limitations of our study included possible selection bias due to voluntary participation and substantial loss-to-follow-up

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this randomized clinical trial suggest that web-based professional group-coaching can improve outcomes of well-being and mitigate symptoms of burnout for women physician trainees.

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