



**Podcast:** One Thing – New Professional

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**Summary:** We chat with Tony Williams, an Area Coordinator at Baldwin Wallace University

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**Stuart Brown:** Welcome to the Student Affairs One Thing – New Professional, a podcast that asks a simple question of new professionals in the field: what is one thing you have learned you feel will help you as you move forward in your career. I'm your host Stuart Brown, the developer of StudentAffairs.com, one of the most accessed websites by student affairs professionals. On our pages, we have the most cost effective job posting board, listing hundreds of open student services positions and a wide range of webinars. I'd like to thank our sponsor, Alcohol101+, a cost free digital alcohol education program developed by Responsibility.org. Designed to be used by colleges and universities, the course includes interactive and quick paced programming, covering core alcohol education topics. Through an administrative dashboard, the program contains tools, for institutions to easily roster students, track progress and analyze student metrics. To learn more about Alcohol101+, visit <https://www.alcohol101.plus>.

On today's episode, I am very pleased to have Tony Williams, an Area Coordinator at Baldwin Wallace University. Welcome to the program, Tony.

**Tony Williams:** Thank you for having me.

**Stuart Brown:** So Tony, What is your one thing?

**Tony Williams:** My one thing for me that I want to share with you all is the most important person is yourself. Why is that? As an undergrad, so I work in residence life. This is my going into my second year in residence life. In undergrad, I was an R. A. and to take care of other people, to put other people first. I make sure that we address the needs/wants of our residents to make sure they have the best experience that they can. And, I guess their college career. As an R. A. there's programming on Monday and then programming on Tuesday and then meeting Greeks on Thursdays. I found myself after a while being burnt out, tired because I wasn't addressing myself. I had nothing to give. At the end of the week, I was more so having a mask on instead of expressing how I really felt. Let's say being positive, actually being positive instead of faking to be positive because I was tired and burnt out and worn out. I believe it is important to assess and address your own wellness in order to make sure your residents are good to go, you are good to go.

**Stuart Brown:** So when you were experiencing this as an undergraduate R.A., did you ever express this to your residence hall director or was that ever a part of, let's say. the policy of the residents life office or was this something that maybe you weren't getting what you needed and sort of, you had this epiphany on your own.

**Tony Williams:** I believe we were told make sure we take care of ourselves or to perform the best that we could. But on the other end it's like always be positive. Always be happy, show happy face, be positive when you meet other people. Show the best part of college and by doing that it had the, I guess, illusion that we had to be positive and where we had to show positivity all the time, no matter how we felt. And so after a while it was like burnt out more easily than it would have been if I would have been settled down and addressed my own personal emotions, feelings and listened or watched the signs my body gave off.

**Stuart Brown:** Well also, one thing that you left out, is when you're an R. A. you're not always on duty, but you're always on duty, everything you're talking about. And then when you're in that residence hall you are on.

**Tony Williams:** And it's like a 24/7 365 thing. Yes, we should have boundaries. I didn't do my best when I was in R. A. With boundaries again, I wanted to make sure my residents were taken care of. But on the flip side of that I wasn't taken care of as a result of that. I'd have residents who at three a.m., two a.m. would contact me

on my door and be like, just, hey, I need to talk to you instead of being now I'm learning in my second year as a professional, hey, uh if it can wait, we'll talk when I get up in the morning. If it can't wait, like you said, I'm not on duty, please contact the person on duty if this is an emergency situation.

**Stuart Brown:** So as an area coordinator, do you have a residence hall directors and R.A.s under you or just professional staff?

**Tony Williams:** In my role, I oversee two freshmen buildings and I oversee a staff of 20 R.A.s. And so it's definitely important overseeing a staff of 20 R.A.s and be like, hey I cannot meet with you all or chat about stuff. I'm not on duty at one a.m. Because, again, I need to make sure each one of you, I give my best to all the time.

**Stuart Brown:** Do you now practice in a sense what you were preaching when you were an R.A., though, and tell the R.A.s. and really tell them, you need to be mindful of yourself. Yes, you're on duty. Yes, these are the requirements of the position but you need to make sure that you don't burn out and maybe even say to them look I'm here if you need to talk about balance of life and work and academics, let's do that.

**Tony Williams:** Yeah, 100% One of my first expectations that I give up to my R. A.s is that you are a person/slash human first. What do I mean by that? I mean that. again, make sure that you address your feelings, make sure that you take your feelings, make sure you have time off for a time away from campus to rejuvenate, recover and refresh

**Stuart Brown:** Tony, I want to thank you for sharing your one thing. I think that is so important especially in residence life because, like you said, when you're in that building you are on and we always talk about the balance in student affairs. And I think sometimes we talk about it, we don't always practice it as much. So I think that's great as a new professional that you recognize it and that you can share that with the staff and even with the other professionals on your campus.

**Tony Williams:** We can't give out to them to the best of our ability if we have nothing to give. You can't go for a car if the car is on E. You can't give, if you're on E. You have to make sure to rejuvenate and fill up again before you do the next thing.

**Stuart Brown:** You have been listening to the One Thing – New Professional, a podcast that asks a simple question of new professionals in the field: what is one thing you have learned you feel will help you as you move forward in your career? I've been your host, Stuart Brown, the developer of StudentAffairs.com. I want to thank my guest today, Tony Williams an Area Coordinator at Baldwin Wallace University. I hope you'll join us next time for another episode of our podcast.

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