



# SELF-CARE: Not a luxury... a necessity!

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# Objectives

- Define secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, and burnout.
- Identify symptoms of secondary trauma, compassion fatigue, and burnout.
- Describe self-care strategies.



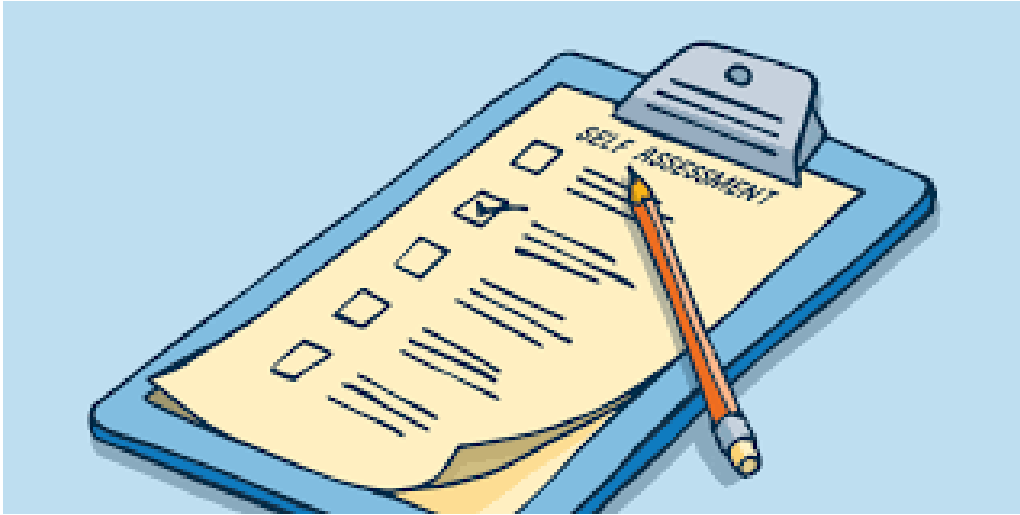
“Care providers are unique people. We have the gift of being able to connect with others in ways that are difficult to explain and even more difficult for others to understand. Our unique ability to emotionally join with our clients that allows us a near first-hand experience of their inner world is perhaps our greatest gift; it is also our greatest challenge.”

- --Karl La Rowe

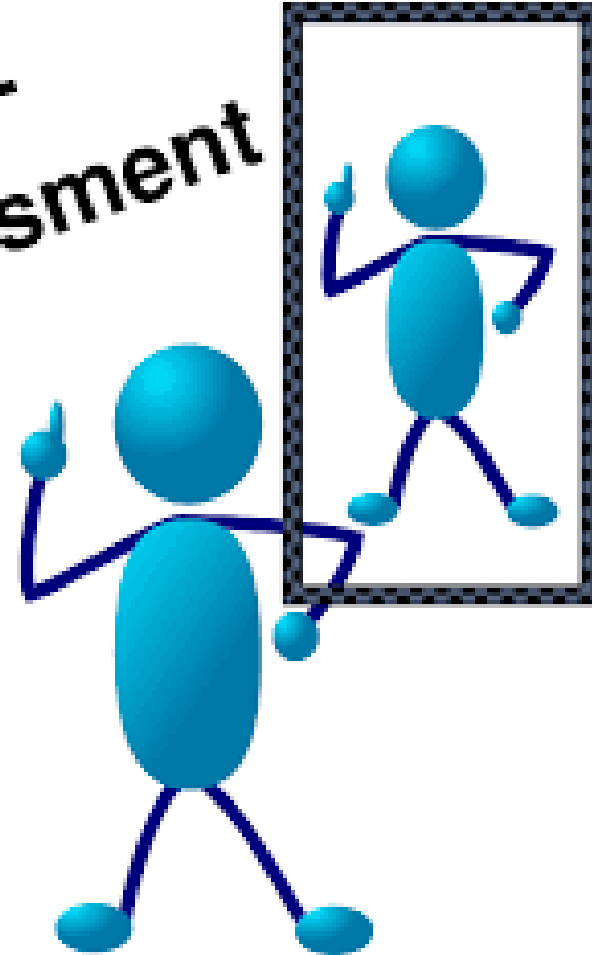


# Self Assessment

# ACTIVITY



Self-  
Assessment



Score	Comment
15-18	No sign of burnout here.
19-32	Little sign of burnout here, unless some factors are particularly severe.
33-49	Be careful – you may be at risk of burnout, particularly if several scores are high.
50-59	You are at severe risk of burnout – do something about this urgently.
60-75	You are at very severe risk of burnout – do something about this urgently



# Secondary Traumatic Stress and Related Conditions: Sorting One from Another



These terms are complementary and yet different from one another.

- Secondary Traumatic Stress
- Compassion Fatigue
- Vicarious Trauma
- Burnout







# Secondary Traumatic Stress

- Secondary traumatic stress is the emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the firsthand trauma experiences of another.
- Its symptoms mimic those of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- Accordingly, individuals affected by secondary stress may find themselves re-experiencing personal trauma or notice an increase in arousal and avoidance reactions related to the indirect trauma exposure.

# Secondary Traumatic Stress



Refers to the presence of post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms caused by at least one indirect exposure to traumatic material.



# Compassion Fatigue



A less stigmatizing way to describe secondary traumatic stress, has been used interchangeably with this term.



# Vicarious Trauma



- Refers to changes in the inner experience of the helper resulting from empathic engagement with a traumatized client.
- It is a theoretical term that focuses less on trauma symptoms and more on the covert cognitive changes that occur following cumulative exposure to another person's traumatic material.

# Burnout



- Characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced feeling of personal accomplishment.
- While it is also work-related, burnout develops as a result of general occupational stress.
- The term is not used to describe the effects of indirect trauma exposure specifically.



# Humor Break!



[Hhttps://youtu.be/WF8o48JPY\\_4](https://youtu.be/WF8o48JPY_4)

# When you are stressed/burned out you may find yourself.....



- Sharing too much personal information with clients and coworkers
- Sharing information about other staff members
- Complaining about your agency or workload
- Developing dual relationships
- Wanting to develop a personal relationship with a client
- Downplaying other team members or disciplines
- Upstaging their problems/issues with your own



# Symptoms of Secondary Trauma, Compassion Fatigue, Vicarious Trauma and Burnout



- Distraction
- Sensitivity
- Hypervigilance
- Hopelessness
- Guilt
- Avoidance
- Exhaustion
- Intrusive Images





# Symptoms of Secondary Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Burnout



- Social Withdrawal
- Anger and Cynicism
- Sleeplessness
- Minimizing
- Anxiety
- Increased self-criticism
- Illness/Physical Ailments
- Fear

# Symptoms of Secondary Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Burnout



- Disconnection
- Poor Boundaries
- Loss of Creativity
- Reduced tolerance for what are perceived as “petty problems”
- Insensitivity to Violence
- Loss of the ability to believe the world is a safe, just, controllable and meaningful place

# The Cost of Caring

- Job Performance declines
- Mistakes increase
- Morale drops
- Personal Relationships are affected
- Personality changes
- Overall decline of health



# **Silver Lining...**

Burnout is the  
opportunity to  
rediscover what  
makes you  
happy.






Put on your own  
oxygen mask  
before helping  
those around you.

# What is a buffer?









Self-Care is a  
priority and necessity  
- not a luxury -  
in the work that we do.



# ABC's of Self Care



- Awareness
- Balance
- Connection

Jamboard link: [https://jamboard.google.com/d/1-aIVygzKPo5sOwbUFW\\_RzAp4Ow2crDIknCtscaY4J0g/viewer?f=0](https://jamboard.google.com/d/1-aIVygzKPo5sOwbUFW_RzAp4Ow2crDIknCtscaY4J0g/viewer?f=0)




Employers and supervisors can create a supportive work environment that promotes employee productivity



# Strategies organizations can use to reduce high rates of employee burnout



- Develop a culture of care
- Implement well being strategies
- Acknowledge and reward skillsets and talent
- Provide opportunities to grow
- Embrace flexibility



YOU CAN'T POUR  
FROM AN  
Empty  
Cup.

TAKE CARE  
OF YOURSELF  
FIRST.



# Self Care is different for all of us.





Realize that we  
are energy.

Some people take  
energy, and some  
people give  
energy.

## Taker

- After a phone conversation you feel drained.
- Argumentative, verbally abusive, rude, and insulting this person as a smart remark for everything.
- You can't wait to get away from this person.
- You feel anxiety when talking to this person.
- You feel nauseous, funny feeling in the pit of your stomach, or sick to your stomach, when engaging with this person.
- You were feeling happy during the day, but then you engaged with this person and you feel low, down in the dumps.

## Giver

- You feel support and encouragement in their presence.
- They are kind and willing to lend a helping hand.
- They are peaceful, friendly, cordial, polite, and respectful.
- They tend to give more of themselves in time and energy.
- You feel good and happy when you talk to this person.
- You feel stimulated and inspired when you listen or talk to this person.
- You feel love and support around this person.



# Energy Givers and Energy Takers



## Givers

- Fresh air
- Movement
- Whole foods
- Music
- Sunlight
- Decluttering
- Resting

## Takers

- Negativity
- Screens
- Junk Food
- Alcohol
- Messiness
- Inconsistent sleep/lack of rest
- Sitting still for too long



# Self Care Tips for Helpers



# Take stock of what's on your plate

- Inventory
  - Demands of time and energy
  - Stressors
  - Positive attributes of your life





## Start of Self-Care Idea Collection

- Ask friends, family and co-workers for self-care strategies
  - Keep in a notebook
  - At work, incorporate into staff meetings





- Find time for yourself every day – rebalance your workload
  - Mini-breaks throughout the workday
  - Find 20 minutes to yourself
  - One nourishing activity each day



## Delegate



- Learn to ask for help at home and at work
- Training takes time but pays off in the long run.
- If you become unable to do the work, who would look after things?

*Be smart enough to know when  
you need help and brave enough  
to ask for it.*



# Have a transition from work to home.

- Worry Tree
- Transition activity
- Switch gears





# Learn to say no (or yes) more often



- Helpers attracted to the field because they naturally are givers.
- Set limits for yourself.
- Have you stopped saying yes to positive, fun opportunities?



# Assess your trauma inputs



Take a trauma input survey – a day in the life of you...

- Watching news?
- Listen to the radio?
- Reading the paper?
- Disturbing images
- Difficult stories
- How much trauma information do you unconsciously absorb?





# Learn about Secondary Trauma, Compassion Fatigue, Vicarious Trauma and Burnout

- Read an article
- Attend a workshop
- Staff meeting topic



# Consider joining a supervision/peer support group



- Debrief
- Support one another



# Attend workshops/professional training regularly



- Stay renewed and healthy
- Connect with peers
- Time out from regular work routine
- Skill building



# Consider working part-time – take time off



- Less exposure to trauma
- Re-energize



# Psychological Benefits of Exercise

- Works as positive coping mechanism in dealing with stress.
- Boost happy chemicals.
- Alleviate symptoms of depression.
- Improve self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Improve self-image.
- Self-worth.
- Improves creativity.



# Also...



- Create a work environment that encourages self care.
- Make self care a routine, not an infrequent occurrence.



# Action Plan





- Signs I'm starting to get burnt out:
- Ways I can relieve stress:
- People I can depend on for support:
- Sources of professional support (e.g., a counselor or healthcare provider):
- Music I can listen to and relax:
- Places I can go to feel happy and calm:
- Positive affirmations to remind myself of my value:



**Remember...**

**If your compassion does not include  
yourself, it is incomplete.**

**-Buddha**

Video:

<https://youtu.be/91IJhEzMaH4>



# Questions



# Resources



- Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project  
<http://www.compassionfatigue.org/>
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network  
<http://www.nctsn.org/resources/topics/secondary-traumatic-stress>
- Dr. Judith E. Pearson, Psychologist  
[http://dhss.delaware.gov/dsamh/files/si09\\_1314\\_vicarioustrauma\\_selfcare.pdf](http://dhss.delaware.gov/dsamh/files/si09_1314_vicarioustrauma_selfcare.pdf)
- North Dakota Department of Human Services  
[https://reach4resiliencend.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Reach-for-Resilience-Burnout-Toolkit\\_.pdf](https://reach4resiliencend.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Reach-for-Resilience-Burnout-Toolkit_.pdf)