

building resiliency
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Introduction to Empathic Strain and Building Resiliency

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The Building Resiliency Project is a collaboration of ND Victim Serving Agencies who came together out of their commitment for the health and wellness of their staff and team members.

This training was developed with resources from TEND.

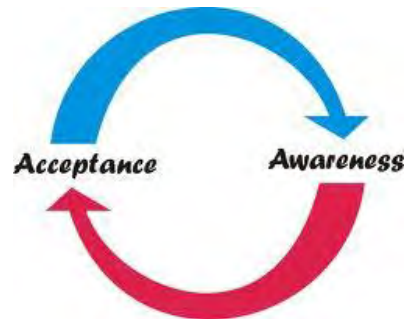
OBJECTIVES


- Foundation**
Discuss the impact of working in high stress and trauma exposed environments.
- Key Concepts**
Explain the differences between burnout, empathic strain, and secondary traumatic stress.
- Assessment**
Assessing your own level of impact
- Strategies**
Create an action plan

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TOP SECRET





“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

*Rachel Naomi Remen,
Kitchen Table Wisdom, 1996*



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GETTING US STARTED

Small group discussion...

- How has this work changed you?
- How has this work changed your views on the world?
- What happens to the stories you hear at work?
- Were you trained for this?



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Signs and Symptoms Worksheet



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UNDERSTANDING IMPACT



BURNOUT

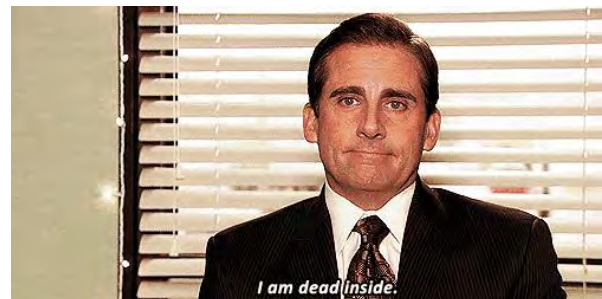
- “Physical & emotional exhaustion as a result of prolonged stress and frustration” (Stamm)
- Lack of enthusiasm and motivation
- Total exhaustion
- Feeling ineffective, disillusioned, hopeless & cynical
- Can be affected by feeling “overworked and underpaid” or by lack of work/life balance
- Can happen in any occupation



Empathic Strain/Compassion Fatigue

Figley (1995)

- A deep erosion of our compassion, of our ability to tolerate strong emotions/difficult stories in others
- Evident in helpers’ professional and personal life
- Can also happen to caregivers (“caregiver fatigue”)
- Also known as “compassion fatigue”



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Secondary Traumatic Stress

- A profound shift in world view that occurs due to exposure to others' trauma
- A change in frame of reference related to trust, control, safety, intimacy, or esteem



"I'm right there in the room, and no one even acknowledges me."



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SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS

- Indirect Trauma
- Can lead to PTSD



CartoonStock.com



“OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD”

We don't get empathic strain and secondary trauma because we did something wrong ...

We get it because we care!

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INDIVIDUAL RISK FACTORS

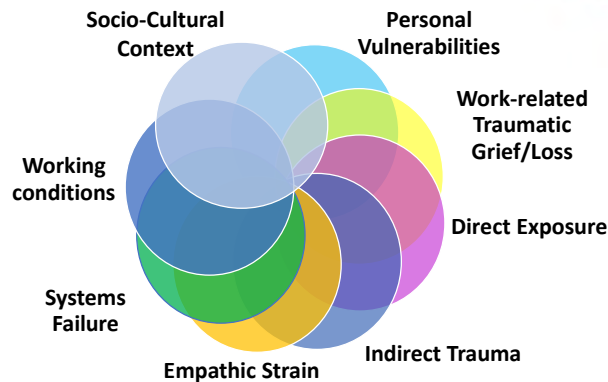


Image courtesy of Dr. Leslie Anne Ross, UCLA


Slide source TEND ACADEMY LTD





What's Draining You Worksheet




PROTECTIVE FACTORS


 **Balanced and reasonable caseload**

 **Supervision and support at work**

 **Time away from high stress work**

 **Social support outside of work**

 **Adequate training**

 **Diversifying responsibilities**

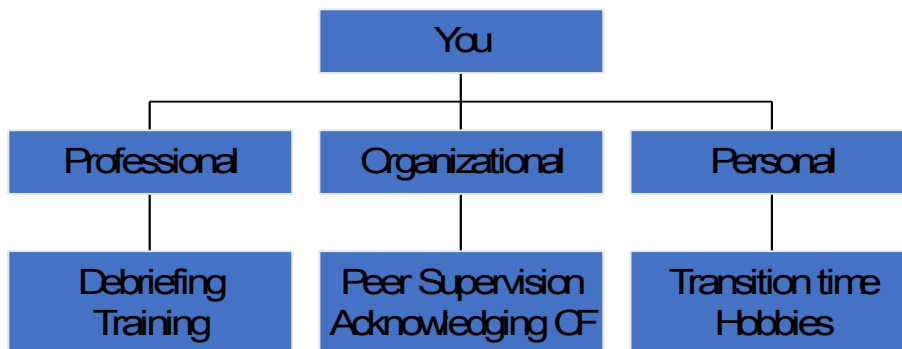
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- By only focusing on individual self care, we risk falling into the pitfall of blaming the helper for developing STS and Empathic Strain
- "This focus implies that helping professionals who are hurting are somehow at fault - they are not balancing work and life [...]"
- Far more effective were organizational changes which offered helpers better working conditions, more control over their schedule, good quality supervision and a reduced exposure to trauma.

Source: Killian, K.D. *Helping Till it Hurts? A Multimethod Study of Compassion Fatigue, Burnout, and Self-Care in Clinicians Working With Trauma Survivors* in *Traumatology*, Vol 14, No 2, June 2008.

Slide courtesy of Françoise Mathieu, 2019

ADDRESSING THE IMPACT



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Activity and Discussion



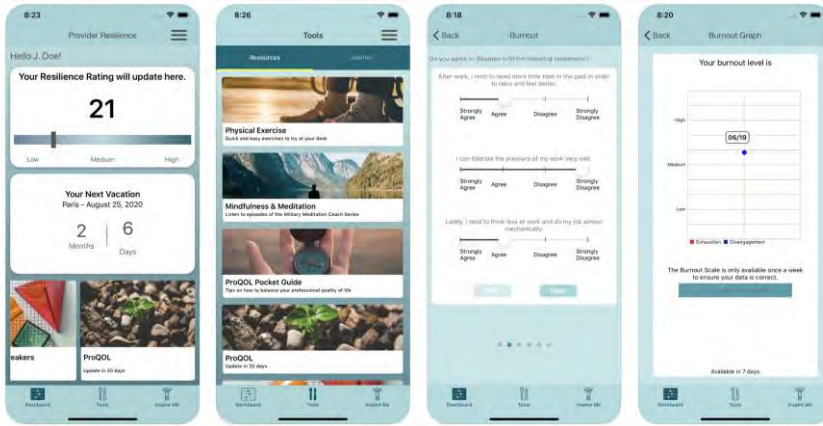
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MAKING A CHANGE...

1. Assess where you are at
2. Understand your warning signs
3. Learn strategies
4. Develop an intervention plan

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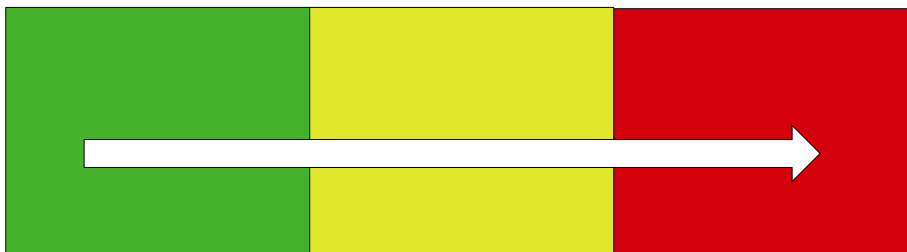
1. SELF ASSESSMENT: ProQol



OR
Available at
www.ProQol.org

B. Hudnall Stamm, 2009. Professional Quality of Life: Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Version 5

2. UNDERSTAND YOUR WARNING SIGNS



What is the worst part of my job? • How do I avoid (or delay) it? • What are the feeling(s) I am avoiding by avoiding this task or responsibility?

3. STRATEGIES: No Slime Zone



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3. STRATEGIES: Low Impact Debriefing

Low Impact Debriefing

<p>SELF AWARENESS </p> <p>Have you ever shocked or horrified friends or family with a work story that you thought was benign or even funny? Helping Professionals can become desensitized to the trauma and loss that they are exposed to daily. Be aware of the stories you tell and the level of detail you provide when telling a story. Are all the details really necessary? Can you give an abbreviated version?</p>	<p>FAIR WARNING </p> <p>If you had to call your sister to tell her that your grandfather has passed away, you would likely start the phone call with "I have some bad news" or "You better sit down". This allows the listener to brace themselves to hear the story. Allow your listener to prepare and brace themselves by starting with "I would like to debrief a difficult situation with you and the story involves traumatic content."</p>
<p>CONSENT </p> <p>Once you have warned the listener, then ask for consent. This can be as simple as: "I would like to debrief something with you, is this a good time?" or "I heard something really hard today, could I talk to you about it?" The listener then has a chance to decline, or to qualify what they are able ready to hear.</p>	<p>LIMITED DISCLOSURE </p> <p>Once you have received consent from your colleague, decide how much to share, starting with the least traumatic information, and gradually progressing as needed. You may end up not needing to share the most graphic details.</p>

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3. STRATEGIES: Hot Walk and Talk



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3. STRATEGIES: www.cacnd.org/buildingresiliency

STRATEGIES TO REMAIN HEALTHY & COMPASSIONATE



"DIG WHERE THE GROUND IS SOFT"



4. DEVELOP AN INTERVENTION PLAN

Four Steps to Compassion Satisfaction

Step Four

Make a commitment to implement changes

Step Three

Develop Empathic Strain Resiliency

Step Two

Strive to enhance self-care & improve work/life balance

Step One

Take stock of stressors at home and at work

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TOGETHER

Team Activity

Strategies:

- Low Impact Debriefing
- Hot Walk and Talk
- No Slime Zone

Questions to answer:

- What are the barriers?
- Who are your supporters?
- How can you make this possible?

Remember the rewards of the work!

- 3 things I love about my job
- 3 people whose lives I have touched
- My calling to this work
- 3 things I do well

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What's your commitment after today's workshop?

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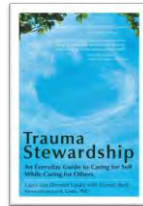
WWW.CACND.ORG/BUILDING-RESILIENCY



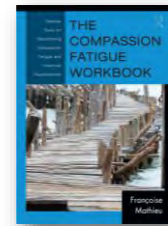
TENDACADEMY.CA/RESOURCES



www.STSconsortium.com



Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others
 Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky (2007)



The Compassion Fatigue Workbook, F. Mathieu (2012)



www.cacnd.org/building-resiliency/rst/

WHO	WHAT	WHERE
An employee assistance program specifically for victim service providers in North Dakota wanting to address the impact of working in high stress and trauma-exposed fields.	Individual sessions focused on building resilience for working in trauma-exposed fields, low-impact debriefing, vicarious trauma support, or evidence-based therapy for vicarious trauma.	RST has designated providers with specialty training and expertise in treatment of trauma and vicarious trauma. Select a RST provider and call to schedule your confidential session either in-person or via telehealth.

Address the impact of working with high stress and exposure to trauma

rst designated providers
 Contact one of the following providers to schedule a session

- ✓
 June Forde M.S., LPCC
 Forde Counseling Services
 Fargo, ND
 701.639.6493
 40pfeifer.com
- ✓
 James Pfeifer M.S., LPCC
 Pfeifer Counseling Services
 Fargo, ND
 701.639.6497
 40pfeifer.com
- ✓
 Tessa Sible M.S., LPC
 Mindful Health
 Counseling & Wellness
 Bismarck, ND
 701.751.0302
 mindfulhealthnd.com

FREE!
 RST is grant funded and is no cost to victim service providers and their employers



Contact Us!

Email: pcondol@dcac.org

Online: www.cacnd/buildingresiliency



Questions/Comments?

Email: Melkaiconsulting@gmail.com

Phone: (701) 321-0689



Post Training Survey



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DPZDRTM>

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