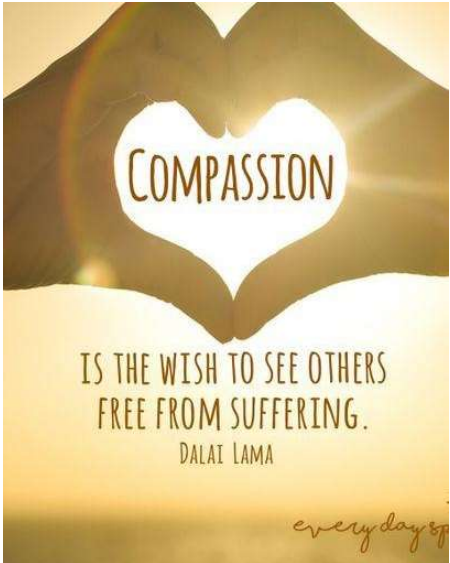


Creating Compassion Resilience

Jennie Null, LMFT, RPT-S, VP Development, Tanager
Erin Foster, Director, Linn County Access Center

1



What is Compassion?

- Four key components:
 1. an awareness of suffering
 2. being emotionally moved by suffering
 3. a wish to see the relief of that suffering
 4. a motivation to help relieve that suffering
 (Jazaieri, et al., 2012)

As a helper in this world, you are doing the work of compassion

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2



Compassion Fatigue

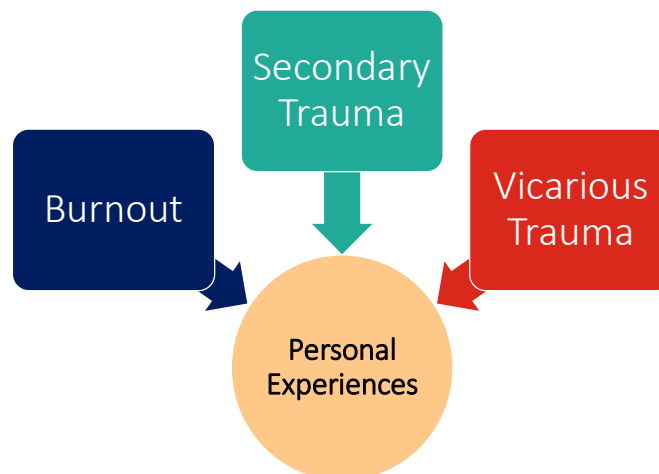
- “A **debilitating weariness** brought about by the repetitive, empathetic response to pain and suffering.
- The result of **absorbing and internalizing the emotions of those you serve** and sometimes co-workers.” (LaRowe, 2005)



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Elements of Compassion Fatigue



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The Progressive Impacts



- Impacts/symptoms can be widespread
 - Physical, emotional, psychological, relational, behavioral, etc.
- Reduced compassion, empathy, & willingness to provide care-giving
- Adopting or displaying traumatic symptoms
- Can vary depending on longevity of service
- Silencing Response

(Gentry & Baranowsky, 2013)

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The Silencing Response

- Provide pat answers-Losing the "bedside manner"
- Minimize community distress
- Angry with community or situation
- Blame community members for their experiences
- Avoid topic, change subject
- Not believing community members
- Fear what community member says
- Difficulty paying attention
- Fake interest or listening
- Suggest community "get over it"



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Journey to Resilience

- Psychologically Safe Workplaces
- Supportive Connections
- Care of Self
- Ongoing Journey



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Psychologically Safe Workplace

- Holds high importance in high risk or high stress professions
- When individuals feel safe in their work environment, interpersonal risk taking happens naturally
- Takes time, skills, & persistence
- Changing entire organization culture



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Psychological Safety

- Encourages dialogue
- Prepare in advance for disasters
- Acknowledge and address trauma
- Provides comprehensive wellness program
- Foster peer support & buddy networks
- Invests in training & skill development
- Strong leadership & supervision
- Provides recovery time
- Addresses bullying



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Supportive Connections



- Friends
- Family
- Peers
- Mentors & Leaders
- Self



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Let their love in!

- Be Present!
 - When with friends and family be present and integrate positive adaptive experiences.
- Communicate to friends and family what your needs are
 - Daily after work routine
 - After/before high stress days
- Accept the limitations of friends and family
 - Educate them on secondary & vicarious trauma
 - Share you personal signs of compassion fatigue
 - Ask their help in recognizing signs
 - Be receptive to their needs & concerns



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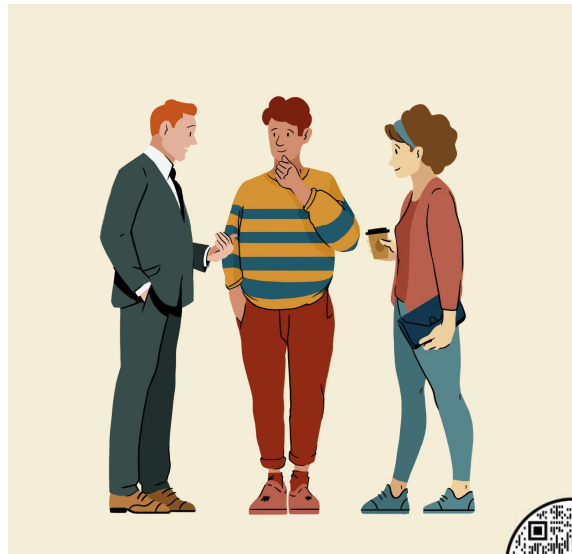
11

Power of Peer Support

- Turn towards those who they trust
- When peers are involved, evidence shows
 - Sustained behavioral changes
 - Decrease in mortality rates
 - Increased life expectancy
 - Increased knowledge of issue
 - Improved self-efficacy
 - Increased self-care skills
 - Improved quality of life

(UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health)

- **Be cautious of "Checking the box"**



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Care of Self

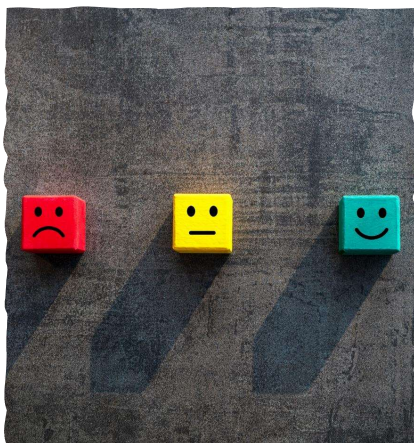
- Shift from Self Care → Care of Self
- Meeting your human needs
 - Nutrition, Water, & Sleep
 - Movement, Engagement, & Expression
 - Connection & Leisure
 - Down Time & Reflection
- Daily Practices, not just for non-work days
- Balance—Maintaining & Regaining
- Lead by example



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Emotional Regulation



Emotional Regulation Requires 3 A process
Awareness—Acknowledgement—Acceptance

- Practices to support Regulation
 - Breath work
 - Grounding practices
 - Mindfulness
 - Sensory regulation
 - Movement
 - Transition objects/practice



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You have nothing to prove, nothing to owe.

You need to be you

100% you in self mode, not achiever mode,
not over compensation mode, not proving
worth mode.

Just you being you

The seeds will blossom, the roots will grow.

Time and your authentic self are the only
things needed.

Trust in yourself. I trust in you.

Perceptual Maturation

- Decreases unrealistic expectations of self, others, & process of compassionate work
- Increasing Authenticity-"Bedside Manner"
- Closes the gap between "Idealist Beliefs" and Reality
 - Worker's worth is not equal to "outcomes achieved"
 - Many experiences can feel threatening, very few actually are
 - Recognize and relinquish entitlement- Exaggerated self-efficacy diminishes
 - You are not responsible for the community's pain, or to take it away

(Gentry, J., Baranowsky, A. B. 2013)



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Ground Yourself in Meaning & Purpose

- Staying rooted in your WHY
- Making Meaning Matters
 - How we make sense of situations & events
 - Ask yourself What & How
 - What can I take away from this experience? What purpose can this serve in present life? How have I contributed to the issue?

Hotchkin, T (2020)



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Making Meaning

- **Acknowledge the impact:** How did this happen? What's the point? What's my role in this? How did it impact me?
- **Consider your role:** What do I do now? What is one thing I will do differently based on what I learned?
- **Rediscover yourself:** Who were you before the trauma? What did the trauma take from you?
- **Consider your beliefs:** What are your deeply held beliefs about reality, such as fairness, control, and identity?
- **Consider your goals:** What are your goals, such as health, wealth, or family relationships?
- **Consider your sense of life:** Do you feel like your life is meaningful, purposeful, or comprehensible?



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Tools & Resources for Continued Learning


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 Compassion Resilience Plan	
My Personal Mission Statement:	The people in my professional support system include: _____ _____ _____
The things I value most about my work include:	Situations/clients/events that are risk factors for secondary trauma include: _____ _____ _____
The things I do daily to maintain positive functioning and adaptive professional coping include:	When I begin to feel compassion fatigue, I experience the following: Body Sensations _____ _____ _____ Changes in thought or perception _____ _____ _____
	The things that help me best cope with compassion fatigue include: _____ _____ _____ Ways I will challenge mistaken beliefs related to compassion fatigue _____ _____ _____ Ways I will allow or ask others to support me when I'm struggling: Family: _____ _____ Friends: _____ _____ Colleagues: _____ _____

Compassion Resilience Plan

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Additional Tools & Resources

- Headington Institute
 - Self Care & lifestyle Balance Inventory:
https://www.headington-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/R16-self-care-lifestyle-inventory-for-emergency-responders_24051.pdf
 - Journaling questions for humanitarian workers by Lisa McKay:
https://www.headington-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/r12-journal-questions-for-humanitarian-workers_74549.pdf
- Secondary Traumatic Stress Consortium
<https://www.stsconsortium.com/free-resources>
- Compassion Resilience Toolkit:
<https://compassionresiliencetoolkit.org/>
- Compassion Fatigue & Resilience Self Test:
<https://www.mtleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/CompassionFatigueSelfTestforPractitioners.pdf>
- ProQOL 5: <https://proqol.org/proqol-measure>

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Thank You

Resilience is not all or nothing. It comes in amounts. You can be a little resilient, a lot resilient; resilient in some situations but not others. And, no matter how resilient you are today, you can become more resilient tomorrow.

~Karen Reivich



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