

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue & Self- Care: Taking Care of YOU

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Modeled after the Oregon.gov Training





Learning Objectives

01

Learning about compassion fatigue vs vicarious trauma and their warning signs

02

How to ask for help and focus on self-care

Key Terms

Compassion Fatigue: Compassion fatigue occurs when providers take on the suffering of patients who have experienced extreme stress or trauma

Vicarious Trauma: Vicarious trauma is a process of change resulting from empathetic engagement with trauma survivors.

Role Overload: Having too many competing demands and too many roles

Burnout: Feeling that what you are doing has stopped making a difference. the result of the stress and frustration caused by the workplace such as low pay, unrealistic demands, heavy workload, heavy shifts, poor management, and inadequate supervision.

Self-Care: The proactive steps individuals take to preserve and improve their physical, mental, and emotional well-being





Secondary Traumatic Stress

- Under-Controlled vs Over-Controlled
 - Excessive blaming v Bottled Emotions
 - Substance Abuse v. Isolation
 - Aggression v. Apathy
- Prevalence of STS
 - 40-85% of “helping professional” develop vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and/or high rates of traumatic symptoms
 - 50% of CPS workers suffer high to very high levels of compassion fatigue

Identifying the Differences

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES & WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT

Being able to recognize the difference between cognitive vs emotional empathy and burnout vs compassion fatigue will allow providers to identify the hallmark symptoms/identifiers and employ the best treatments for themselves

COGNITIVE EMPATHY

Understand and analyze another's emotions without necessarily feeling them yourself

BURNOUT

Providers feel like what they do don't matter because of stress

EMOTIONAL EMPATHY

Experiencing same emotions as another person, essentially "feeling with them"

COMPASSION FATIGUE

Providers take on the suffering of their patients

Triggers. Know Yours.

Everyone has triggers, though these might look a little different from person to person. It is important to be able to identify yours, for your health and safety, as well as the health and safety of those you serve.



PHYSICAL REACTIONS

Be aware of physical signs like increased heart rate, tense muscles, or upset stomach.



EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

Notice when you feel anxious, stressed, angry, or emotionally exhausted



BEHAVIORAL REACTIONS

Be tuned into your reactions, such as avoidance of work/areas with certain clients or in-general, frantic energy or pacing,.

Round Table Talk

- What are ways you feel your work has had a negative influence on what matter to you in life?
- What are ways you feel your work has had a negative influence on what matter to you in the world?
- What are ways you feel your work has had a negative influence on the way you see yourself or the way others in your life see you?



Importance of Self-Care

“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation,” wrote professor and civil rights activist Audre Lorde in her 1988 essay collection, “A Burst of Light.”

GREATER
WELL-BEING

HIGHER LEVELS
OF CLINICAL
PERFORMANCE

BUILD STRONGER
RELATIONSHIPS

LOWER LEVELS
OF STRESS

HIGHER LEVELS
OF COMPASSION

PREVENT
BURNOUT, CF, & VT

HIGHER LEVELS
OF POSITIVE
AFFECT

IMPROVE YOUR
SELF-ESTEEM

IMPROVES
SELF-AWARENESS

Risk & Resilience Factors

There are different categories of factors/contributors that can be associated to our risk and resilience of/from CF,VT, & STS.



FAMILIAL FACTORS

Family Support System
Definition of Family Roles
Modeled Behavior



COMMUNITY/CULTURAL FACTORS

Spiritual/ Faith Resources
Social Network

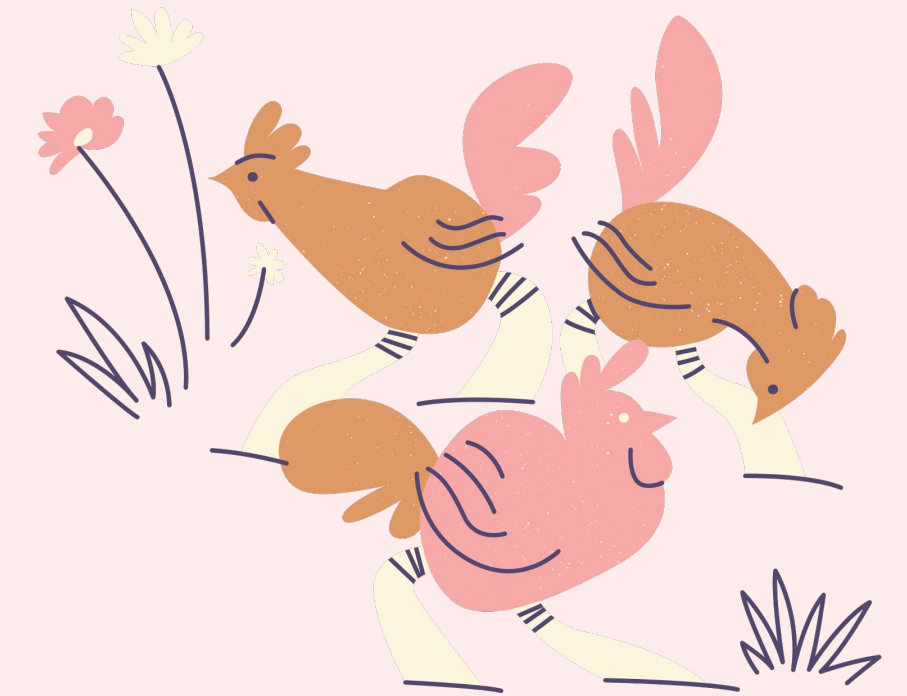
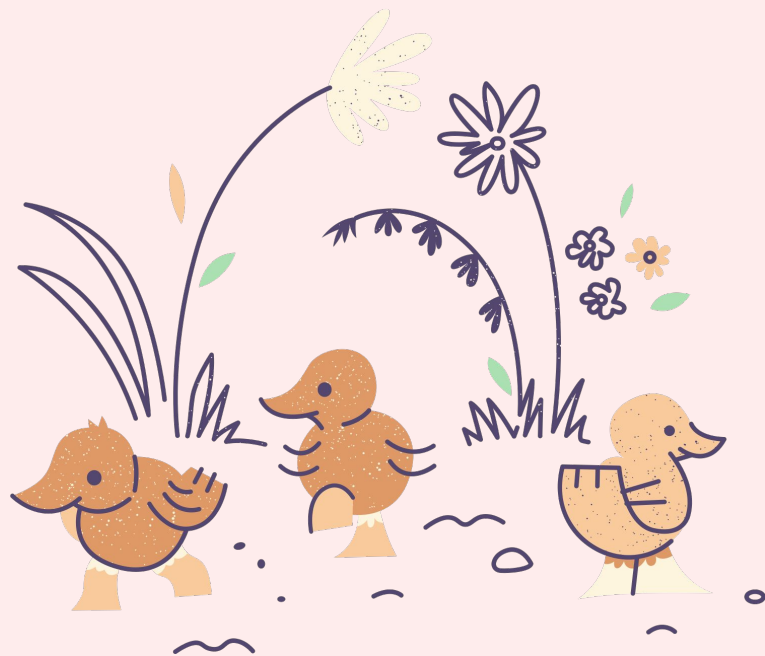


INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

E.G Personality & Coping
Style
Work Style
Past Trauma History

ProQOL

Valid measure of
compassion
satisfaction &
fatigue



Used to measure positive
and negative aspects for
over 15 years and was
developed with data from
over 3,000 individuals

Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)

*Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue
(ProQOL) Version 5 (2009)*

When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you [help] can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the last 30 days.

	1=Never	2=Rarely	3=Sometimes	4=Often	5=Very Often
1.					
2.					
3.					
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Asking For Help

SOMETIMES ASKING FOR HELP IS THE MOST MEANINGFUL EXAMPLE OF SELF-RELIANCE. — CORY BOOKER

It is okay, to not be okay. Asking for help should always be in your self-care tool box and NOT as a last resort. Just because we can do anything does not mean we can do everything and it is okay to ask for help when you are struggling in any capacity.

THERAPY

Taking on the trauma and stress of other humans every day can be a lot, just because we are professionals does not mean we can not see a professional. You are still competent.

SUPERVISOR/COWORKERS

Nobody understands what you are going through better than those doing the same type of work, weekly/bi-weekly/monthly staff meetings can help.

FAMILY

It can be hard to open up to someone in the family, because you don't want to burden them with what we go through. You don't have to share everything but give them the ability to support you

SOCIAL NETWORK

Same with family it can be hard to share with friends but the sentiment is the same, give them the ability to support you



Regular Supervision

01

Regular meetings allow for early detection of compassion fatigue symptoms, enabling timely support before issues escalate.

02

Create a safe space for individuals to openly discuss the emotional impact of their work, share concerns, have guidance and often encourages reflection

Self-Care Craft



Thanks for Listening!

Any Questions?

(810) 989-5246

admin-hr@bwsh.org



Resources

- <https://acf.gov/trauma-toolkit/secondary-traumatic-stress>
- <https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/compassion-fatigue>
- <https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/vtt/what-is-vicarious-trauma>
- Mathieu, F. (2012). *The Compassion Fatigue Workbook*. (Routledge, NY)
- Conrad, D., & Kellar-Guenther, Y. (2006). *Compassion fatigue*
- <https://www.verywellmind.com/cognitive-and-emotional-empathy-4582389#:~:text=Cognitive%20empathy%20involves%20knowing%20how,to%20experience%20those%20things%20yourself.>
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7842650/#:~:text=The%20pleasure%20derived%20from%20helping,reflection%20and%20level%20of%20CF.>
- <https://www.change4health.org/it-begins-with-you/recovery-resilience/ibuw-resilience/>
- <https://sweetmangotherapy.com/how-to-identify-the-triggers-of-your-anxiety-a-therapists-perspective/>
- <https://onlinesocialwork.vcu.edu/blog/self-care-for-social-workers/>