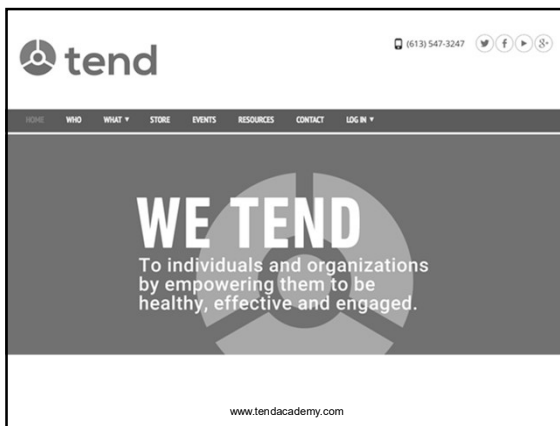


“WHEN IT HURTS TO HELP A CHILD”

Rebecca Brown, MSW, RSW, CHWC
Social Worker, Compassion Fatigue Educator,
Certified Trauma Counsellor
Adj. Assist. Professor, Dept. Family Medicine, UWO





GOALS OF KEYNOTE (MINI WORKSHOP)

- Increase self awareness
- Identify what you can change
- Decide where to begin



WHAT DO I KNOW?

- Masters Degree in Social Work
- Medical Social Worker (5 years)
- Children's Aid Society (23 years)
- Provincial OACAS Trainer
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Coordinator; Domestic Violence Committees
- Certified Compassion Fatigue Educator (Green Cross)
- National & International Trainer & Public Speaker
- Certified Health & Wellness Counsellor
- Adj. Ass. Professor, UWO, Dept. of Family Medicine

Equine Assisted Therapist



Trauma Healing Through
Horses

I am a **Vicarious Trauma** and
Compassion Fatigue
Survivor!



PROFESSIONS AT RISK

- Military
- 1st Responders (Police, Fire, EMS)
- Medical/Health Care
- Child Protection Workers
- Residential Staff
- Addictions Workers
- Foster Parents
- Seniors Caregivers
- Therapists
- Teachers
- Victims Services
- Lawyers/Court Staff
- Clergy
- Corrections/Probation
- Others.....



“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.”

Dr. Rachel Remen, "Kitchen Table Wisdom" 1996

Increase self awareness

The reality of the work...

- Overwhelming and compromised systems
- Trauma exposure
- Difficult stories
- Grief & Loss
- Poverty/Despair
- Conflict
- Mental Health



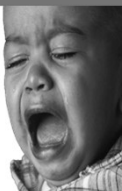
Vicarious Trauma,
Compassion Fatigue
and Resilience



Increase self awareness

The reality is STRESS, STRESS, STRESS

- Policy cuts
- Lack of resources
 - Constant change
 - Increased workload & shift work
 - Uncertainty
 - Resistance from clients



Vicarious Trauma,
Compassion Fatigue
and Resilience



Increase self awareness

The work that you do:

- Where do those stories go at the end of your day?
- What are your vulnerabilities?
- How do you protect yourself?
- Were you trained to do this work?



Vicarious Trauma,
Compassion Fatigue
and Resilience



Increase self awareness

Were you trained to
handle
the work you do?



Vicarious Trauma,
Compassion Fatigue
and Resilience



Increase self awareness

Definitions

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Vicarious Trauma/Secondary Stress
- Compassion Fatigue
- Stress
- Burnout
- Resilience



Vicarious Trauma,
Compassion Fatigue
and Resilience

Increase self awareness

Legal Profession

- Law is a prestigious profession
- High expectations
- Difficult to open up
- Perfectionism, workaholic, denial, isolation
- Fear of vulnerability
- Competitive, adversarial

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience

tend

Increase self awareness

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is defined by the DSM IV as a diagnostic label for the constellation of emotional, behavioural and cognitive symptoms that may result from **direct involvement** in a traumatic experience

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience

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Increase self awareness

Vicarious Trauma (Secondary Stress)

Vicarious Trauma affects a person who was **not directly involved** in the trauma, yet the symptoms are similar to those of trauma survivors.

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience


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Increase self awareness

Impact on helping professionals

Vicarious Trauma

- Acute “visceral reaction” to trauma exposure: you *feel* it
- Exposure to traumatic information causing nightmares, difficulty getting rid of certain images, an intense preoccupation with a particular story or event we’ve been exposed to, being *haunted* by images



Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience

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HOME HEALTH ALL

‘Tough forensic guy’ John Bradford opens up about his PTSD

Stigma

CHRIS COBB, OTTAWA CITIZEN | 11.10.2013

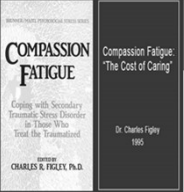

“I didn’t believe it could happen to me. I thought I was able to keep it all from getting to me. I should have known better.”



Increase self awareness

Compassion Fatigue

- The cumulative building up over time
- Erosion of the ability to be compassionate and empathic
- Sense of helplessness and hopelessness
- World view and sense of safety are altered

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience

Increase self awareness

Impact on helping professionals

How has your world view changed?


"I liked recess a lot better before the safety helmets."

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience

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Increase self awareness

Impact on helping professionals

Compassion Fatigue

"As helpers, we can't help but to take in some of the emotional pain victims have left with us. As they release some of their pain, we take it in. By the end of the day, we've collected *bits and pieces* of their accounts of trauma, and they have become our own." - Dr. Charles Nelson

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience

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COMPASSION FATIGUE

From this perspective the symptoms of compassion fatigue can be interpreted as messages from what is right, good, and strong within us, rather than indicators of shameful weaknesses, defects, or sickness.

Eric Gentry, Crucible of transformation, 2002.

Increase self awareness

Stress

- Administrative demands
- Crisis work
- Suffering of others
- Cumulative over time
- Other...



Vicarious Trauma,
Compassion Fatigue
and Resilience

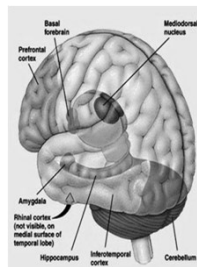
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Increase self awareness

Psychobiology
of Stress

Amygdala

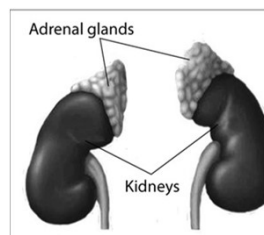
- Causes the “Fight, Flight or Freeze” reaction
- Stores both pleasant and unpleasant experiences through *Somatic Markers*
- Release of Cortisol & Adrenaline hormones into blood stream
- It remembers the *feel* of events; not the facts
- Triggers flashbacks



Vicarious Trauma,
Compassion Fatigue
and Resilience

Water and Stress Reduction

Drinking water flushes
Cortisol levels



Increase self awareness
Signs and Symptoms

Psychoneuroimmunology

- Science of the interactions of mind and body
- Connection of emotions and physiology in human responses to stress and the impact on health and illness
- *“Disease and illness result from suppressed emotional responses and chronic stress”*
- Dr. Gabor Matè

Increase self awareness
Psychobiology of Stress

The Psychophysiology of Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma, “Help for the Helper” by Babette Rothschild

“Trauma Stewardship,” an everyday guide to caring for self while caring for others.
by Laura Van Dernoot-Lipsky

“The Making of a Nurse” by Tilda Shalof

Increase self awareness

Moral Distress/Conflict

- From the field of medical ethics
- When policies or routines conflict with beliefs about patient care
- When we are told to do things that we fundamentally disagree with or are morally opposed to
- “When there are inconsistencies between a [helper’s] beliefs and his or her actions in practice” (Baylis 2000)

Increase self awareness

Decision Fatigue

- Can happen even when someone is well rested
- Brain becomes fatigued by the cumulative cognitive demands of multiple, complex and difficult decisions
- Each decision expends energy from the executive command center of the pre-frontal cortex
- Results in lowering cerebral glucose and reducing decision making capacity



Increase self awareness

Signs and Symptoms

Burnout

- Physical/emotional exhaustion, low job satisfaction, feel powerless and overwhelmed
- Depleted ability to cope with work demands
- Can happen in any occupation
- Change jobs/roles
- Doesn't affect world view



SYMPTOMS OF COMPASSION FATIGUE

Headaches

Hypertension

Exhaustion

Anxiety &
Depression

Increased illness

Symptoms of Chronic Stress (Vicarious Trauma or Comp. Fatigue?)

- Lack of sleep
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Headaches
- Digestive/GI problems
- Back pain
- Eye twitch
- Bruxing (teeth grinding)
- Hives/Excema
- Anger/mood swings
- Poor concentration
- Hypertension
- Cardiovascular disease



Behavioral Signs & Symptoms

Increased use of alcohol and drugs	Anger and Irritability	Avoidance of certain clients
Absenteeism Avoidance Chronically Late	Impaired ability to make decisions	Problems in personal relationships
Hyper-sensitivity to emotional reactions	Compromised care for clients or family	Perfectionism Over-compensating

Multi-tasking getting out of control?





BUT SERIOUSLY, THIS IS NO JOKE

- Can you just walk into your local AA or NA?
- Addictions treatment & support programs for health professionals, police, high profile professionals can increase shame, fear & isolation

Increase self awareness

Psychological and Emotional Signs

- Detached, empty
- Negative view of clients
- Depression; Anxiety
- Reduced compassion & empathy
- Cynicism & resentment
- Feeling professional helplessness
- Depersonalization

Sources: Saakvitne, Figley, Gentry, Baranowsky & Dunning (1997)

Signs and Symptoms

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience

Increase self awareness

Emotional Signs

- Problems with intimacy
- Defensive & blaming others
- Resentment of other's *easy jobs*
- Partner "doesn't understand"
- Professional inadequacy
- Question own abilities to cope



Vicarious Trauma,
Compassion Fatigue
and Resilience



ARE YOU ENOUGH?

- Are you **cool** enough?
- Are you **smart** enough?
- Are you **brave** enough?
- Are you **tough** enough?
- Are you **clear** enough?
- Are you **strong** enough?
- Are you **calm** enough?
- Are you **kind** enough?
- Are you **real** enough?
- Are you **good** enough?



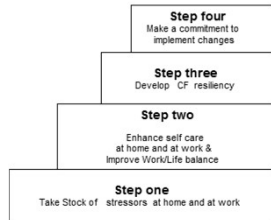
Identify what you can change

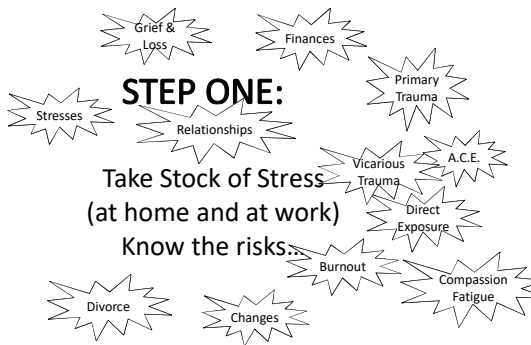
Vicarious Trauma,
Compassion Fatigue
and Resilience



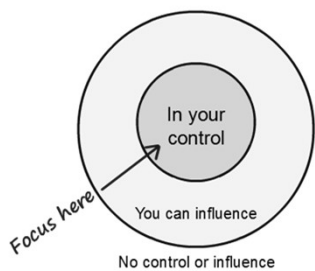
COMPASSION FATIGUE STRATEGIES

CF Strategies - The four steps





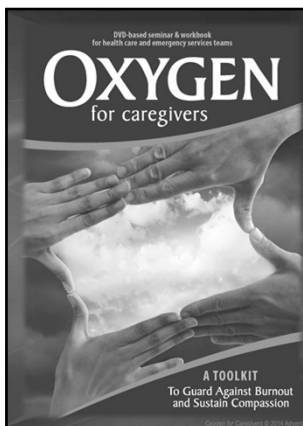
What works?



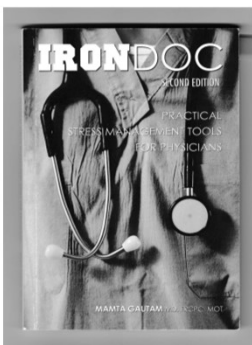
STEP TWO:

- Enhancing Self-care/Resilience
 - Physical
 - Emotional
 - Spiritual





- Self-care
- Work-life balance
- Insight
- Warning signs
- Training
- Narrative medicine
- Social support
- Empower co-workers
- Debriefing
- Resilience
- Outlets
- Faith



“IRON Doc Practical Stress Management Tools for Physicians”

By Mamta Gautam,
MD, FRCPC, MOT

FIND YOUR WAY TO:

Talk it Out!

- Colleagues/Peers
- Friends
- Partners
- Journal
- EAP

Burn it Off!

- Run/Walk/Bike
- Gym
- Yoga
- Meditate
- Other suggestions?

MY STRESS LEAD ME TO.....

The Boston Marathon



....twice!

~~SELF-CARE~~ vs “RESILIENCE BUILDING”

“Trauma workers have an ethical responsibility to be healthy, well & resilient”

-Green Cross Academy of Traumatology

What is your ~~self-care~~
“resilience building” activity?



STEP THREE:

- Develop *resilience* through relaxation training
- *Deliberate, intentional, mindfulness*

MINDFULNESS 101

“LIFE SAVER” EXERCISE



- Highlights the Mind-Body connection
- Slowly savour candy
- Focus on breath and a sense of *being in this present* moment
- Letting go of any intrusive thoughts, stresses, doubts or worries
- Breathing slowly, calmly & intentionally
- *Don't bite the candy!*

“STOP, BREATHE & THINK” APP



RESILIENCE:

“Resilience training is vital to enable us to
bounce rather than break
under the pressure, stress, trauma and
cumulative impact of the work that we do.”
- Mayo Clinic 2009

STEP FOUR:

- Making a Commitment to Change
- Building Your Own
“Resilience Tool Kit”

Step four

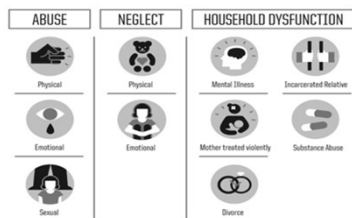
- What are my warning signs?
- What do I need in my “tool kit”?
- What can I do on my own?
- What do I need help with?



**Vicarious Trauma,
Compassion Fatigue
and Resilience**

[illegible]

Three Types of ACEs



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Credit: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



Image courtesy of Dr Leslie Anne Ross, Children's Institute Inc. Los Angeles

THE WARNING SIGN CONTINUUM

Check your G.A.S. Meter

Compassion Fatigue

Identify what you can change
Step four

Tool Belt

- Have on me at all times, just in case I need them
- Quick, easy, inexpensive
- Music (i-pod), CD's in car,
- Books
- Laughter/Gratitude
- Other.....


Identify what you can change
Step four

Power Tools

- Larger items (keep these at home)
- Gym membership; pets musical instrument; learn a new skill/hobby
- Running; yoga class; recreational activities; art class
- Scheduled and commitment
- May need other's support & involvement

Identify what you can change
Step four


© Cartoonbank.com



GREGORY

"Boy, I'm going to pay for this tomorrow at yoga class."

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience




Identify what you can change
Step four

Tool Bench

- Planned event; social activities; date night
- Massage therapy, professional counselling
- Vacation
- Part time vs full time

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience

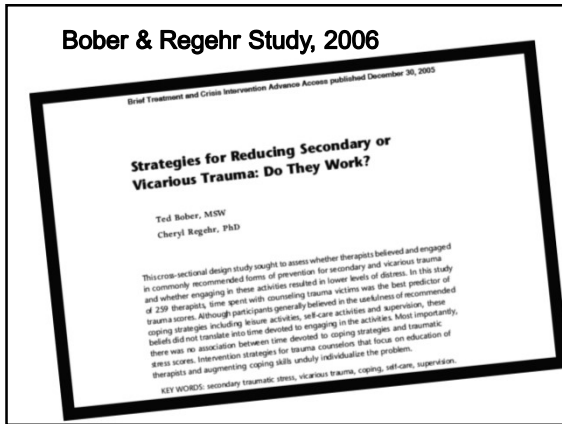


BEYOND KALE & FACIALS

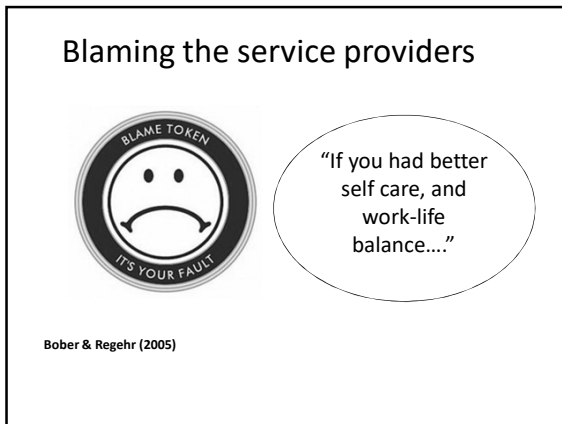


Will this really work?

Bober & Regehr Study, 2006



Blaming the service providers



Identify what you can change

The Toxic Workplace

- Feeling wronged & bitter: A sense of helplessness, of persecution
- Are we "Sliming" each other?
- "We become convinced that others are responsible for our well-being and that we lack the personal agency to transform our circumstances"

~ Laura van Dernoot Lipsky (2009) *Trauma Stewardship*

SARCASM IS JUST ONE MORE FREE SERVICE WE OFFER

Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience

tend

Research shows that reducing workload was a good place to start...



TRAUMA INFORMED CULTURE

- “A trauma-informed organization will recognize stressors of the work as legitimate, provide a non-punitive work environment, and recognize the impact of occupational exposure to pain and trauma rather than seeing it as individual weakness.”

CW360 Secondary Trauma and the Child Welfare Workforce, 2012

THE RESILIENCE ALLIANCE

**PROMOTING
RESILIENCE AND
REDUCING SECONDARY
TRAUMA
AMONG CHILD
WELFARE STAFF**

THE RESILIENCE ALLIANCE

Promoting
Resilience
and
Reducing
Secondary
Trauma
Among
Child Welfare
Staff

ACS-NYU
CHILDREN'S
TRAUMA
INSTITUTE
SEPTEMBER 2012
NYC
LANGMUIR

PRACTICAL EXERCISES AND APPROACHES

Patricia Fisher, Ph.D.

Facilitating Workplace Wellness & Organizational Health in Trauma-Exposed Environments

**BUILDING
RESILIENT TEAMS**

Designed for teams working in trauma-exposed fields such as health care, social services, policing, corrections, justice, emergency services, paramedics and the military


Dr. Patricia Fisher

3 Key Components:

- Individual
- Managerial
- Organizational

**WORKPLACE STRATEGIES
STRESS AT WORK**


**Develop Strategic Alliances
-Awareness & Support**



"the most significant factor associated with compassion satisfaction is support within the organization"
(Killian 2008 étude d' intervenants en trauma)

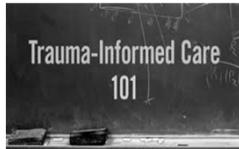
START THE CONVERSATION

- Engagement
- Connection
- Support
- Supervision



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

- What practices are we currently using in our agency to increase resiliency/protect staff?
- Are we really modeling resilience?



THE STAR FISH STORY: