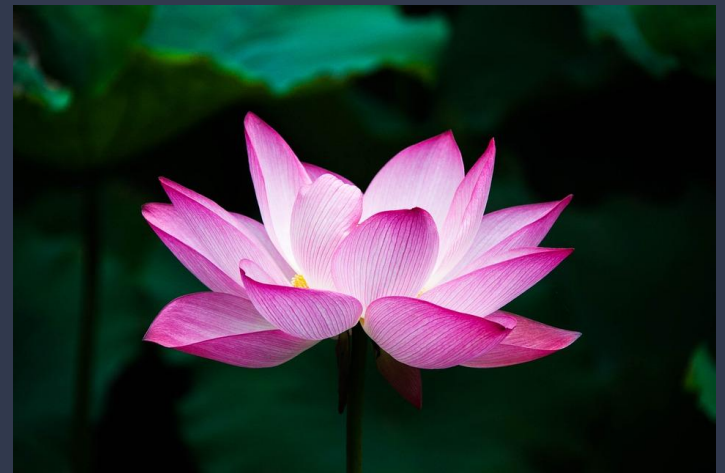


Mitigating the Effects of Vicarious Trauma and Compassion Fatigue within the Helping Professions

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Learning Objectives

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- Develop an understanding of Secondary Traumatic Stress, Compassion Fatigue, and Vicarious Trauma, how these terms are defined and how the impact those working in helping professions;
- Participate in large and small group discussions regarding protective factors to mitigate the effects of STS, CF, and VT;
- Develop a personal wellness plan with specific and achievable strategies to implement in the near future;
- Develop an expanded view of how STS, CF, and VT effects helpers not only personally, but also within a larger system;
- Develop and discuss the lasting impact STS, CF, and VT can have on the helping field, including our specific work with our intended population.

Norms for today...

3

Confidentiality

Challenge by Choice

Start on time, end on time



What is COMPASSION?

The etymology of
"compassion" is Latin,
meaning "co-suffering."

noun

a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow
for another who is stricken by
misfortune, accompanied by a strong
desire to alleviate the suffering.



www.tagxedo.com

Definitions:

- **Compassion Satisfaction**
 - Positive aspects of working as a helper
- **Compassion Fatigue**
 - Negative aspects of working as a helper
- **Burnout**
 - Inefficacy and feeling overwhelmed
- **Work-related traumatic stress (STS, VT)**
 - Primary traumatic stress direct target of event
 - Secondary traumatic exposure to event due to a relationship with the primary person

What is Compassion Fatigue?

6



How many deer are in this photo?

7



What do you see?

8



Sans Forgetica

Memory is the mother
of all wisdom.

– Aeschylus (c. 525–456 bc)

ProQOL measure

Professional Quality of Life

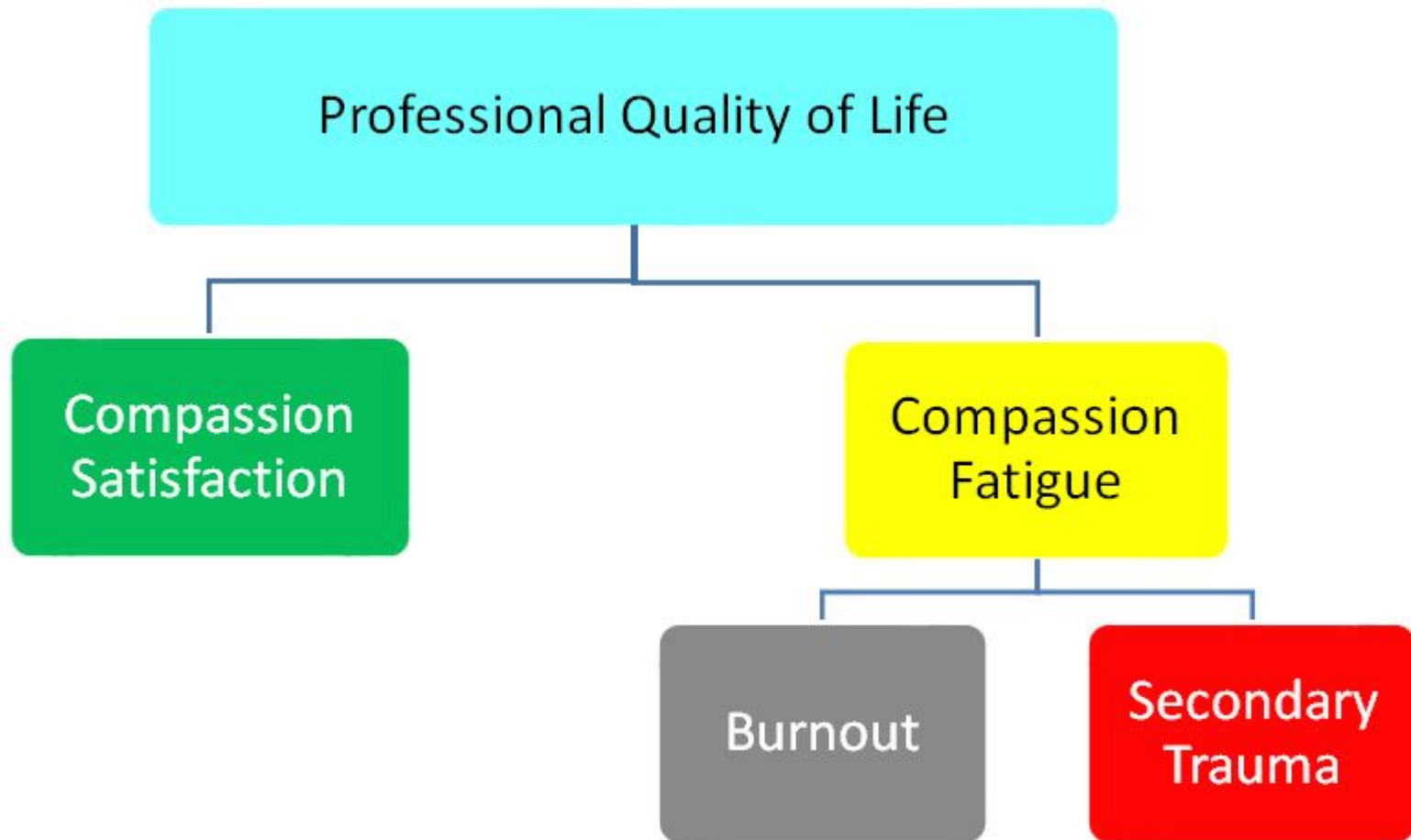
Compassion Satisfaction

- The positive aspects of helping
- “The good stuff”

Compassion Fatigue

- The negative aspects of helping
- “The bad stuff”

CS-CF Model



Measuring CS & CF: The *Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)*

- The ProQOL is free
- A 30 item self report measure of the positive and negative aspects of caring
- The ProQOL measures Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue
- Compassion Fatigue has two subscales
 - Burnout
 - Secondary Trauma
- The ProQOL is the most widely used measure of the positive and negative aspects of helping in the world
- The ProQOL has proven to be a valid measure of compassion satisfaction and fatigue
- It has been used for over 15 years
- The measure was developed with data from over 3000 people

Resiliency Planning

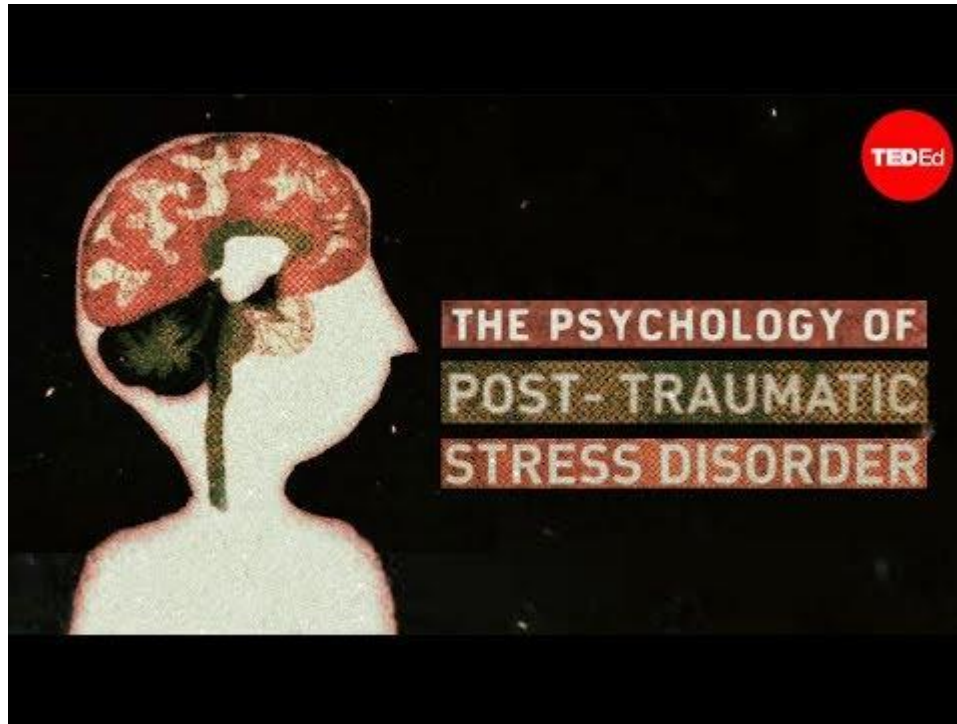
- Individual, personally
 - The ProQOL can help you plan where to put your energy to increase our resilience
- Organizational planning
 - Can help organizations find ways to maximize the positive aspects and reduce the negative aspects of helping
- Supportive Supervision
 - The ProQOL can be used as information for discussions

In your workbook:

- Complete ProQOL
- Independently score
- Discussion in small groups

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 you and 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
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/> 1.	I am happy.			
<input type="radio"/> 2.	I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].			
<input type="radio"/> 3.	I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.			
<input type="radio"/> 4.	I feel connected to others.			
<input type="radio"/> 5.	I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.			
<input type="radio"/> 6.	I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].			
<input type="radio"/> 7.	I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].			
<input type="radio"/> 8.	I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].			
<input type="radio"/> 9.	I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].			
<input type="radio"/> 10.	I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].			
<input type="radio"/> 11.	Because of my [helping], I have felt "on edge" about various things.			
<input type="radio"/> 12.	I like my work as a [helper].			
<input type="radio"/> 13.	I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].			
<input type="radio"/> 14.	I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].			
<input type="radio"/> 15.	I have beliefs that sustain me.			
<input type="radio"/> 16.	I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.			
<input type="radio"/> 17.	I am the person I always wanted to be.			
<input type="radio"/> 18.	My work makes me feel satisfied.			
<input type="radio"/> 19.	I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].			
<input type="radio"/> 20.	I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.			
<input type="radio"/> 21.	I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.			
<input type="radio"/> 22.	I believe I can make a difference through my work.			
<input type="radio"/> 23.	I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].			
<input type="radio"/> 24.	I am proud of what I can do to [help].			
<input type="radio"/> 25.	As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.			
<input type="radio"/> 26.	I feel "bogged down" by the system.			
<input type="radio"/> 27.	I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a [helper].			
<input type="radio"/> 28.	I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.			
<input type="radio"/> 29.	I am a very caring person.			
<input type="radio"/> 30.	I am happy that I chose to do this work.			

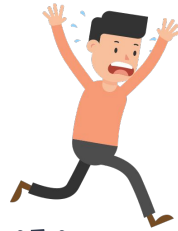
The biology of stress and trauma:



The Autonomic Nervous System

The brain stem uses the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems to regulate the human body:

- Sympathetic System: Activates the fight, flight and/or freeze



- Parasympathetic – Stabilize, relax, rejuvenate



Autonomic Nervous System

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“If the Sympathetic Nervous System is responsible for giving the ‘green light’ to protect survival at whatever cost, the Parasympathetic Nervous System is responsible for giving the “red light” that allows the system to *stop* fighting or fleeing, to rest, to regenerate, to rebuild, to reconstruct meaning out of a meaningless event, and allow for the recognition of safety and secure attachment.” (Macy, 2003)

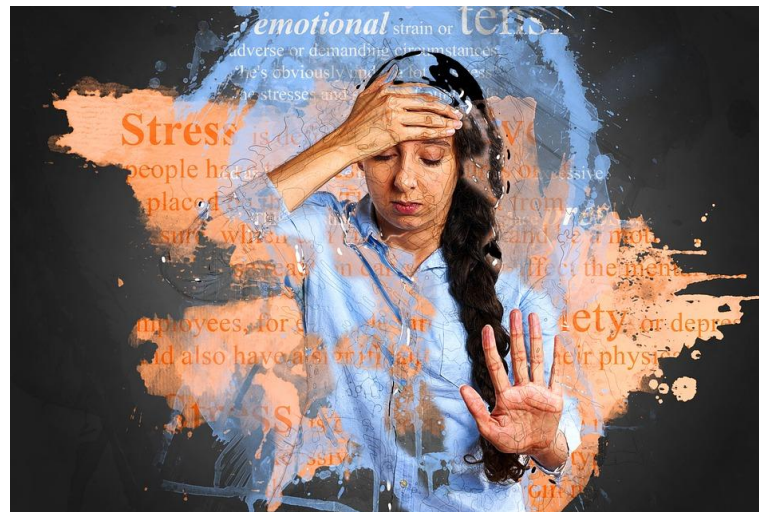


Small Groups:

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What might FIGHT, FLIGHT and/or FREEZE look like in the workplace?

Brainstorm



FIGHT

19

- Hyperarousal
- Aggression
- Irritability
- Difficulty concentrating
- Quick temper
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep



FLIGHT

20

- Avoidance
- Withdrawal from others
- Avoiding clients
- Escaping
- Daydreaming
- Sick days
- Difficulty getting out of bed
- Hiding



Freeze

21

- Shutting down
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Feeling overlooked or invisible
- Ignoring responsibilities
- Looking dazed or “spacey”
- Over compliance
- Giving up
- Void of emotional expression



In your workbook:

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Write down three signs of Compassion Fatigue/STS you have experienced in the past month:

Write down three signs of Compassion Satisfaction you have experienced in the past month:

20 Signals That “I’m Stuck”

- Self Doubt, Guilt, Second Guessing
- A Growing Sense of Isolation
- Intense Sustained Feelings of Depression-Grief
- Mental Confusion
- Development of Suspiciousness in dealing with others
- Relationship Problems: Work, Home, Play
- Decline in Work Performance
- Delayed Triggering and Onset
- Self Destructive Behavior: Poor Decisions
- Suicidal Thinking

20 Signals That “I’m Stuck”

- Intrusive Images
- Distress at Exposures to similar events/objects
- Avoidance of thoughts or emotions connected to the incident or activities triggering memories
- Numb/restricted range of emotional responses
- Excessive (Prolonged) Stress Reactions
- Hypervigilance/Foreshortened Future
- Increased Irritability to Rage
- Obsession with Incident or client
- Current Incident Triggers Past Events-
↓ Ability to “deal” with other Events

Personal/Professional/Organizational Factors

25

The interaction of each of these factors is experienced differently by each person. Additionally, each person might experience the factors different at different moments in their life.



Personal

- Previous experiences (personal and professional history)
- Support network – in and out of work
- Self care and self awareness
- The meaning of your work to you
- Emotional and coping style
- Current life circumstances and stressors
- Work style: experience, confidence, training



Professional

- Working with abuse and violence to children
- Particular clients or families
- Isolation in our work vs social support
- Large caseloads without balance
- Work Setting - physical and organizational
- Availability of supervision, choice, resources



Organizational

- Limited respite & vacation time
- High caseloads
- Lack of clinical supervision
- Denial of effects of trauma
- Denial of effects of STS on staff
- Lack of continuing education opportunities
- Lack of personal growth opportunities, including personal therapy

In your workbook:

Name at least three factors contributing to Compassion Fatigue or STS at your agency for each area:

Personal

Professional

Organizational





And now for some WELLNESS



Understanding Wellness

- Historically, definitions of wellness have focused on the lack of disease to more currently a state of balanced living.
- Take a moment to think about what wellness means to you.
- Discussion: How would you define wellness?



Wellness Wheel



Small Groups:

What are ways you attend to wellness in the different areas of the Wellness Wheel?



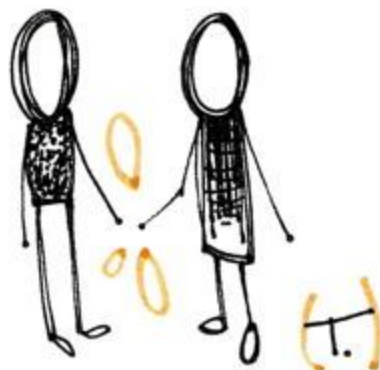
Readiness for Change

- Change is hard, even if it is something you desire.
- Change is a process with cognitive and behavioral aspects.
- Prochaska and Diclemente (1983) developed the Stages of Change
 - Pre-contemplation
 - Contemplation
 - Preparation
 - Action
 - Maintenance
 - Termination

Sometimes our light
goes out, but is blown
again into instant flame
by an encounter with
another human being.



albert Schweitzer



CONNECTION

- To the larger community of those helping others to heal, seek justice, find safety
- To yourself
- To others in the field
- To others outside the field
- To resources
- To your own spirituality



DON'T GO IT ALONE

Personal Wellness Plan



Problem Statement:

Long Term Goal:

Short Term Objective:

Target Date:

****Remember to make your objectives SMART****
Simple * Measurable * Achievable * Realistic * Timely