Developing Resilience in Trauma Workers
APA Division 56
Early Career Psychologists Committee
Presented by Drs. Charles and Kathy Regan Figley

Definitions
Compassion Fatigue Model
Ethics: Standards of Self Care
Disaster Work Issues

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your day.

Gratitude
Definitions

- Secondary Traumatic Stress
- Compassion Fatigue
- Vicarious Traumatization
- Burnout
- Self-Compassion
- Resilience
- Post-Traumatic Growth

Primary Traumatic Stress Injuries (DSM IV-TR)

- Witnessed event which involved actual or threatened death or serious injury to physical integrity of self or others
- Response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror.
Primary Stress Injuries

- Acute Stress < 2 days
- Acute Stress Disorder
  - Minimum 2 days
  - Maximum 4 weeks
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder > 4 weeks
  - Re-experiencing event (Intrusion)
  - Arousal
  - Numbing/Avoidance

Secondary Traumatic Stress Injuries

- Compassion Stress < 4 weeks
- Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)
- Compassion Fatigue (CF) > 4 weeks
  - Reexperiencing event
  - Arousal
  - Numbing/Avoidance
- Vicarious Trauma (VT)
What might make a person suspect Secondary Traumatic Stress Injury?

- Cognitive (e.g., difficulty concentrating)
- Emotional (e.g., anxiety, rage, sadness)
- Behavioral (e.g., irritable, withdrawn)
- Interpersonal (e.g., isolation)
- Physical (e.g., rapid heartbeat, aches/pains)
- Spiritual (e.g., loss of purpose, meaning, hope)

Additional signs of Compassion Stress/CF/STS/VT

- Performance of Job Tasks
  - e.g., low motivation, increase in errors
- Morale
  - e.g., negative attitude, decrease in confidence
- Interpersonal
  - e.g., impatience, staff conflicts
- Behavioral
  - e.g., absenteeism, exhaustion
Burnout

- Exhaustion mixed with anxiety and depression
  - Negative self-esteem
  - Poor attitude
  - Reduced efficiency
  - Reduced effectiveness

Self-Compassion

“…acting the same way towards yourself when you are having a difficult time, fail, or notice something you don’t like about yourself.”

~ Kristen Neff (www.self-compassion.org)
Resilience

- Ability to physiologically and psychologically adapt to environmental changes
- Characteristic of survivors/thrivers (rather than “victims”)

Post-Traumatic Growth

Positive changes which result from struggling to cope with a traumatic event.

Richard Tedeschi & Lawrence Calhoun
http://66.199.228.237/boundary/Childhood_trauma_and_PTS/PosttraumaticGrowthInventory.pdf
What contributes to Compassion Fatigue?

Also influenced by level of Organizational and Peer Support

- Exposure to Suffering
- Detachment
- Prolonged Exposure to Suffering
- Other Life Demands

Empathic Ability

- Concern

Empathic Response

- Sense of Satisfaction

Residual Compassion Stress

- Traumatic Memories

Compassion Fatigue

The Compassion Fatigue Process (Figley, 2001)

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Disaster Work (Yinka’s story)

- Stafford Act governs all disaster response and recovery activities in the U.S.
- Integrate into the disaster system during non-disaster times
- Disaster Environment Demands =
  - Running a Marathon
- Therefore
  - Must train for the Marathon – be resilient!

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Next we will hear from Mira

Personal story of Early Career Challenges As a School Counselor

Discussion

Dr. Charles and Kathy Regan Figley
Strategies for Developing Resilience

Standards of Self-Care
Mira and Yinka's Experiences
Helping Colleagues

“Put the Oxygen Mask on Yourself First”

Charles R. Figley PhD
When Helping Hurts
Produced by Gift from Within
www.giftfromwithin.org
Abide by Standards of Self-Care
Developed by international trauma experts serving on the Green Cross’ Commission on Certification and Accreditation

www.greencross.org
at Standards tab
or

I. Purpose

- First, do no harm to yourself in the line of duty when helping/treating others.
- Second, attend to your physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs as a way of ensuring high quality services for those who look to you for support as a human being.
II. Ethical Principles of Self-Care in Practice

These principles declare that it is unethical not to attend to your self care as a practitioner because sufficient self care prevents harming those we serve.

Be Gentle with Yourself

- Honor the inner conflict of putting yourself first rather than taking care of others first (oxygen mask)
  - Awareness
  - Gratitude
- Forgive yourself for backslides
  - Progress, not perfection
- Regard your Self with as high esteem as you would your client/patient (Self Compassion)
  - Nurturing self-talk
III. Standards of Humane Practice of Self-Care

- Universal right to wellness!
  - Physical rest and nourishment
  - Emotional rest and nourishment
- Sustenance modulation
  - Self-restraint

IV. Appreciation and Compensation

- Supervisors
- Clients
- Advocates / Buddies
V. Standards for Establishing and Maintaining Wellness

A. Commitment to Self-Care
B. Strategies for letting go of work
C. Strategies for gaining a sense of self-care achievement

Self-Care Planning

How does one identify the critical elements of a comprehensive personal resilience (self-care) plan?
VI – VIII. Focus on Self-Care

VI. Inventory of Self-Care – Personal

VII. Inventory of Self-Care – Professional

VIII. Prevention Plan Development

Self-Care Assessment: Inventory of Self-Care

- Personal Life

Life Stress (Social Readjustment Rating Scale)
- Stress Vulnerability
- Ego Resilience (ER-89)
- Spiritual Intelligence (King)
- Self-Compassion (Neff)
- Basic Needs - Personal
Self-Care Assessment: Inventory of Self-Care Professional Life

- Compassion Satisfaction
- Burnout
- Compassion Fatigue (STS)
- Basic Needs at Work

Self-Care Goals

Identify SMART Goals based on self-assessment data
- Growth and/or Maintenance
- Discuss with Self-Care Buddy
- Meet regularly to monitor each other’s progress.
Include Compassion Stress Management Techniques

When working with Clients/Patients; Between Clients/Patients & After Work

To build resilience one must….

SUMMARY
Q & A
WRAP UP