So You Didn’t Receive A Hard Hat at Orientation?

A Look at the Occupational Hazards of Trauma Work
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

There are no relationships with sources of commercial support, e.g., pharmaceutical companies and/or corporations whose products or services are related to pertinent therapeutic areas.
Goals and Objectives

Goal: To increase knowledge and understanding of how working with children and families who have experienced trauma can impact us and how to manage the related challenges.

- Objectives
  - Participants will be able to describe the distinctions between compassion satisfaction, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress
  - Participants will be able to identify secondary traumatic stress reactions in themselves and others
  - Participants will acquire strategies to help manage secondary traumatic stress reactions and increase personal resiliency
Stress Test
“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.”

Rachel Naomi Remen, Kitchen Table Wisdom 1996
Compassion Satisfaction

*Compassion Satisfaction* refers to “the pleasure you derive from being able to do your work well”

~ Beth Stamm, 1999

**got joy?**
Burnout

*Burnout* is “a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long term involvement in emotionally demanding situations”

Pines, Aronson, & Kafry (1981)
Burnout

Related to “lack of fit” in...

- Workload – workload vs. resources
- Control – influence vs. accountability
- Reward – pay, recognition, satisfaction
- Community – relationships
- Fairness – equal treatment?
- Values – ethical/moral

Maslach & Leiter (2005)
Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)

Secondary Traumatic Stress is “the natural, consequent behaviors and emotions resulting from knowledge about a traumatizing event experienced by another. It is the stress resulting from helping or wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person”

Figley (1995)
Prevalence of STS

- Social Workers (N = 282) (Bride, 2007)
  - 55% met at least one of the core criteria for PTSD
  - 24% scored above the clinical cutoff.
  - 15% met the core criteria for PTSD.

- Domestic/Sexual Violence Social Workers (N = 154) (Choi, 2011)
  - 66% met at least one of the core criteria for PTSD.
  - 29% scored above the clinical cutoff.
  - 21% met the core criteria for PTSD.

- Substance Abuse Counselors (N = 936) (Bride & Roman, 2011)
  - 54% met at least one of the core criteria for PTSD.
  - 16% scored above the clinical cutoff.
  - 13% met the core criteria for PTSD.

- Social Workers (N = 529) (Bride & Lee, 2012)
  - 48% met at least one of the core criteria for PTSD
  - 15% scored above the clinical cutoff.
  - 11% met the core criteria for PTSD.
What does this mean?

…..Occupational Hazard
~ Munroe (1999)
Risk Factors

- Exposure
- Interaction
- Lack of experience
- Personal trauma history
- Empathy – the double edged sword

Perry (2003); ACS-NYU Children's Trauma Institute (2012)
Signs & Symptoms

- Increased irritability or impatience with others
- Intense feelings and intrusive thoughts about the traumatic experiences you are being secondarily exposed to
- Changes in how you experience yourself or others
- Persistent anger or sadness
- Increased fatigue or illness
- Disconnection from co-workers and/or loved ones
Preventing/Managing STS

- Building awareness
- Avoid “self care” pitfalls
- Build and maintain connections
- Know your “triggers”
- Finding Inspiration: what motivates you?

Adapted from: ACS-NYU Children’s Trauma Institute, September 2011. The resilience alliance. New York University Langone Medical Center: New York City, NY.
What Motivates You...?

“Really, I’m fine. It was just a fleeting sense of purpose—I’m sure it will pass.”
## Specific Self Care Tools

### At Work
- Scents (lavender, sage, citrus)
- Stretching, getting fresh air
- Breathing, mindfulness
- Knowing your limits
- Increasing awareness
- Taking a time out
- Music
- Supervision, support from co-workers
- Self-care buddy
- Humor
- Vacations
- Transition to home – leave it at the office

### At Home
- Exercise, eat healthy
- Develop/increase personal wellness plan
- Support from family and friends
- Professional support
- Vacations
- Music
- Breathing, mindfulness
- Attend to spiritual relationships
- Visualization
- Humor

Why does this matter?

“To put the world in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order; we must first put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must first cultivate our personal life; we must first set our hearts right.” - Confucius
Resources

Dr. Brene Brown: Empathy vs. Sympathy
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw

Professional Quality of Life Screening (ProQOL)
  - http://www.proqol.org/ProQol_Test.html

The Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale
  - Bride, Figley

NCTSN STS Webpage

Trauma Stewardship
  - Laura van Dernoot Lipsky with Connie Burk

ACS-NYU Children’s Trauma Institute – The Resilience Alliance
  - Promoting Resilience and Reducing Secondary Trauma Among Welfare Staff – Training Manual
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