Trauma-Responsive Caregiving

Healing for the Healers

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Impact and Influence

Think about the most difficult part of your work.

Stress

Burnout

Compassion Fatigue

Vicarious Trauma

Stress: When the demands of our environment or circumstances outweigh our actual or perceived abilities to manage these demands.

Burnout: The emotional exhaustion after doing too much, for too long.

Stressor

Stress

But, we're not zebras...

Complete the Cycle

1. Physical Activity
2. Breathing
3. Positive Social Interaction
4. Laughter
5. Affection
6. A Big Ol' Cry
7. Creative Expression

Source: Nagoski & Nagoski (2019). Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle

Stress

Burnout

Compassion Fatigue

Vicarious Trauma

Compassion Fatigue:
Emotional exhaustion
after caring for others.

Self-Compassion

Self-Kindness vs. Self-Judgement

Common Humanity vs. Isolation

Mindfulness vs. Over-Identification

“...in many ways self-compassion is a way of reparenting ourselves.”

Source: Neff, K. (2021): Fierce Self-Compassion, p. 201.

Stress

Burnout

Compassion Fatigue

Vicarious Trauma

Vicarious Trauma: Disruptions to a healer's sense of self, others, and the world as a result of helping those who are suffering after surviving trauma.

“Survivors of trauma are disproportionately represented in agencies providing a broad range of behavioral, social, and mental health services.”

Source: Knight, C. (Ed.) & Borders, L.D. (Ed.). (2020). Trauma-informed supervision: Core components and unique dynamics in varied practice contexts. Routledge.

Cost and Connection

“Practitioners also will be indirectly traumatized as a result of their work with trauma survivors. The risk of indirect trauma appears to be higher among professionals who have less education, are newer to their jobs, and have the most and least experience working with trauma survivors...”

Source: Knight, C. (Ed.) & Borders, L.D. (Ed.). (2020). Trauma-informed supervision: Core components and unique dynamics in varied practice contexts. Routledge.

WHEN EXPERIENCING OVERWHELM & TRAUMA

- feeling helpless, hopeless & that one can never do enough
- hypervigilance & always serious
- anger and cynicism
- guilt/fear/ complicated grieving
- lack of awe
- sense of persecution
- fight/flight/ immobility response
- dissociative moments
- inability to see options & diminished creativity
- physical ailments, depression, anxiety, & other mental health considerations
- chronic exhaustion & saturated nervous system
- pulled toward confirmation bias & away from critical thinking
- lack of presence/deliberate avoidance/cognitive overload
- intense/rigid/controlling/ unable to embrace complexity
- disheartened & dispirited
- grandiosity
- negativity bias & not assuming well
- difficulty empathizing/ minimizing/numbing
- sub-impeccable/toxic conduct & compromised impulse control
- addictions
- loneliness/isolation/ strained relationships

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“When we’re overwhelmed, we must, must determine how to metabolize and internally transform whatever is arising within us… Regardless of what we’re up against, and despite how we feel about our current circumstances, it’s still on us to conduct ourselves appropriately. And if we haven’t quite yet, we need to pause and start now.”

Source: van Dernoot Lipsky, L. (2018). The Age of Overwhelm: Strategies for The Long Haul.

Healing the Healer
1. Hold Your Balance
2. Hold Your History
3. Hold Your Focus
4. Hold Your Boundaries
5. Hold Your Priorities

Hold Your Balance:
Self-Care and Self-Regulation

Hold Your History: The Costs and The Connections

Hold Your Focus: Be Present Where Your Feet Are

Hold Your Priorities:
Juggle With Care, Especially the Glass

Hold Your Boundaries: Consider Your Own "Yellow Line"

Vicarious Trauma

<u>Vicarious Resilience</u>: When a healer experiences personal growth as a result of being witness to another's healing and transformation.

Source: Hernandez, P., Gangsei, D., Engstrom, D. (2007). Vicarious Resilience: A New Concept in Work With Those Who Survive Trauma. Family Process 46(2), p. 229-241.

Making Meaning and Finding Hope

1. Be a witness to healing.
2. Shift your perspective.
3. Connect with your values.
4. Believe in the power of relationships.

“We humans are not built to do big things alone, we are built to work together… The cure for burnout is not ‘self-care’; it is all of us caring for one another.”

Source: Nagoski, E. & Nagoski, A. (2019). Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking The Stress Cycle.

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