COMPASSION & RESILIENCY: ESSENTIAL FOR HEALTHCARE

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Objectives

1. To review the problem of compassion fatigue and its effects on professional practice, including moral distress, patient-centered care and job retention.

2. Describe methods of resiliency useful for decreasing compassion fatigue to enhance compassion satisfaction and provide safe patient care.

Note: Both presenters have no professional endorsements to disclose.
Compassion Fatigue results from taking on the emotional burden of a patient's agony (due to our empathy).

Is also known as Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder or Vicarious Trauma (Figley & Kleber, 1995).

Compassion Fatigue, in its more serious form, prevents us from providing professional care.
Having difficulty sleeping
Avoiding things that remind you of your work
Outbursts of anger
Intrusive thoughts
Cynicism
Thoughts of quitting
Bullying: Relational aggression

(Dellasega)
On a deeper level we encounter:

- Suffering
- LOSS: bad diagnosis, uncertain future, death
- Feeling inadequate
- Mystery: Why does this happen?
- Moral distress
Professional QOL Scale (ProQOL)

- Self-test
- Easily scored
- Gives levels of
  - Compassion Satisfaction
  - Compassion Fatigue:
    - Burnout
    - Secondary Traumatic Stress
- Enables you to do something if you are at risk for CF
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 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1=Never</th>
<th>2=Rarely</th>
<th>3=Sometimes</th>
<th>4=Often</th>
<th>5=Very Often</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am happy.</td>
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<td>2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].</td>
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<td>3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.</td>
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<td>4. I feel connected to others.</td>
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<td>5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.</td>
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<td>6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].</td>
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<td>7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].</td>
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<td>8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].</td>
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<td>9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].</td>
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<td>10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].</td>
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<td>11. Because of my [helping], I have felt &quot;on edge&quot; about various things.</td>
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<td>12. I like my work as a [helper].</td>
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<td>13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].</td>
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<td>14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].</td>
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<td>15. I have beliefs that sustain me.</td>
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<td>16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.</td>
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There is something we can do to address Compassion Fatigue
Direct healthcare employees at risk for CF may include those involved in trauma care, cancer care, end of life care and medically futile care (Stamm, 2010; Aycock & Boyle, 2009; Potter et al., 2010; Ferrell, 2006).

If CF is not prevented, significant costs are incurred including:

- burnout,
- loss of productivity,
- staff retention problems,
- healthcare worker shortages,
- decreased holistic care,
- lack of experienced healthcare workers providing complex care

(Aycock & Boyle, 2009; Potter et al., 2010; Ruysschaert, 2009).
Resiliency defined

- The property of a material that enables it to resume its original shape or position after being bent, stretched, or compressed; elasticity.

- The ability to become strong, healthy, or successful again after something bad happens.

- An ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change
A problem for healthcare administrators is supporting healthcare employees to practice good self care to decrease or prevent CF (Aycock & Boyle, 2009; Baldacchino, 2006), Potter et al., 2010).

“It would be good to address how to have longevity and promote balance” (Volk, 2013).

Utilization of institution-based resources would be cost-effective and promote interdisciplinary care (Potter et al., 2013; Slocum-Gori et al., 2011).
Studying the effects of an institution based resiliency program on compassion fatigue scores of healthcare workers.

- Is there a difference in compassion fatigue scores of healthcare workers as a result of participating in an institution-based resiliency program?

- Is an institution-based psychosocial service a feasible consideration for a resiliency program for healthcare workers?
Conclusions so far indicate:

- Amount of change in scores of secondary trauma stress has been greater
- Change in burnout scores has also been measured
- Agreement or strong agreement to:
  - Intently use all 4 elements of resiliency learned in the program
  - Professional benefit of participating in the program
Resiliency Includes the Following Elements:

- Intentionality
- Self-regulation
- Self-validation
- Commitment
Intentionality = goal-directed action
Intentionality

- Being intentional enables you to take more control over the things you can control and to be aware of what is not within your control.

- Intentionality helps us to find more satisfaction in the work we are doing.

- Intentionality reminds us that what we do is important and can make a difference.
Intentionality Exercise

(Find a partner and discuss)

- What makes it a good day?
- What do I most like about my work?
Forming a Resilient Attitude includes:

- Intentionality
- Self-regulation
- Self-validation
- Commitment
Self Regulation: Shifting Gear
Stress effects us:
  Physiologically
  Physically
  Cognitively/Emotionally
  Spiritually

Our sympathetic nervous system is activated
**PNS vs SNS**

**Parasympathetic**
- Stimulates flow of saliva
- Slows heartbeat
- Constricts bronchi
- Stimulates peristalsis and secretion
- Stimulates release of bile
- Contracts bladder

**Sympathetic**
- Dilates pupil
- Inhibits flow of saliva
- Accelerates heartbeat
- Dilates bronchi
- Inhibits peristalsis and secretion
- Conversion of glycogen to glucose
- Secretion of adrenaline and noradrenaline
- Inhibits bladder contraction

**Medulla oblongata**

**Vagus nerve**

**Chain of sympathetic ganglia**

**Solar plexus**
Self Regulation

- The ability to shift from SNS dominance to PNS dominance, especially when stress is present
- Being intentional and mindful
- Balance is the goal
Self-Regulation can be achieved

- Music assisted relaxation
- Mindfulness based stress reduction
- Psoas stretch and Pelvic floor exercises (kegels) to relieve pressure
- Yoga
- A brief time out (count to 10, deep breaths, etc.)
- Connection with others
- Code Lavender
Forming a Resilient Attitude includes:

- Intentionality
- Self-regulation
- **Self-validation**
- Commitment
“Self-Compassion Increases Self-Improvement Motivation”

Participants who practiced a **self-compassionate** mindset showed greater willingness to learn from and improve on their self-perceived weakness, mistake, or failure.

(Breines JG, Chen S. Pers Soc Psychol Bull. 2012 May 29)
Build on a healthcare worker’s individual strengths, including
- religious faith
- cultural activities including music and art
- good physical care
- have contact with colleagues

Music and spirituality are linked through the concepts of hope, meaning, and purpose
  (Lippe, 2002)
We are meaning makers
When we value ourselves we choose what is meaningful
Spiritual Self-Assessment:
  - Why do good things happen to people?
  - Is there a God?
  - What is the meaning of life?
  - What is my purpose in life?
Much of our compassion fatigue results from unresolved grief.

We carry hurt/sadness from cases/situations that were never fully fully resolved.

Forgiveness can help.

We can be open to allowing what was so that we invite what can be.

Self-forgiveness is the most difficult:

I made a mistake AND I’m a good person.
“As adults we need to find ways to recharge and refuel the unconditional caring for ourselves without depending on the conditional relationship of another person.”

- H. Bonny
I am a positive powerful worthwhile human being

I love what I do...
... and I do what I love

I ROCK!

I make a difference

Keep calm...and believe in myself

I am kind, I am loving, and I am happy
Forming a Resilient Attitude includes:

- Intentionality
- Self-regulation
- Self-validation
- Commitment
Commitment=covenant
Biblical, sacred word
Choosing to live differently
Making a new meaning
Empowered by ourselves to change
Visual reminders (card, rubberband, photo, colleagues, a song)
Resiliency Tools/Exercises

- Visual reminders: rubberband, poem, rock
- Small group discussions/Connection
- Music assisted relaxation
- Mindfulness based activity
- Affirmations
- Journaling
- Poems, sayings, visuals
- “It’s the little things”

What’s in your toolkit?
References

- Domar, Alice D., Ph.D and Dreher, Henry, Self–Nurture: Learning To Care For Yourself As Effectively As You Care For Everyone Else, 2001.
- Quinn, Janet ,F. PhD, RN, I am a Woman Finding My Voice: Celebrating the Extraordinary Blessings of Being a Woman, 1999.