



SURVIVING COMPASSION FATIGUE AKA SECONDARY & VICARIOUS TRAUMA

JUDGE'S CONFERENCE

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Presenter
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TOPICS THAT WILL BE COVERED

- **The potentially damaging professional and personal effects of secondary stress.**
- **Multiple causes and triggers of secondary stress**
- **How to become resilient in the face of overwhelming and emotionally intense demands.**
- **Strategies for accelerated recovery and self regulation.**



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WHAT IS COMPASSION FATIGUE ?

- ◉ **Compassion Fatigue is a union of secondary stress and physical and emotional burnout resulting from intense service to suffering and vulnerable children and adults.**
- ◉ **Compassion Fatigue is a syndrome which consists of various symptoms that mirror Post Trauma Stress Disorder (PTSD).**

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WHO CAN GET COMPASSION FATIGUE?

- ◉ **Many helping professionals and caretakers as a result of listening to stories or witnessing the aftermath of traumatic events could develop many of the same symptoms associated with Post-Trauma Stress Disorder including and most often symptoms that are more insidious.**
- ◉ **People who provide service, assistance and support to others in pain, either physical or emotional, tend to be empathetic and compassionate. These necessary qualities that help them to do their jobs, place them in the direct path of experiencing Compassion Fatigue reactions**
- ◉ **It is the cost of caring**



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BURN OUT



- ◉ Stems from overwhelming demands of tasks.
- ◉ Does not come close to the impact of vicarious trauma
- ◉ The distinction is the sympathy/empathy caregivers experience from the suffering of others.
- ◉ Where children are concerned, this is often outside of the realm of what we expect as caring human beings
- ◉ Burnout has a better prognosis for recovery.
- ◉ Beware the combination of both VT and Burn out.

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CAUSES AND TRIGGERS OF COMPASSION FATIGUE

- ◉ Working with adults and particularly children who are victims of trauma or violence.
- ◉ Lack of training in dealing with issues of trauma or violence and it's subsequent outcomes.
- ◉ High ideals of making a difference in the lives of children and adults.
- ◉ Personality traits of compassion and empathy.
- ◉ Past histories of trauma or victimization in the worker.
- ◉ Lack of consistent self-care behaviors and habits.
- ◉ Working with large numbers of traumatized and/or victimized people

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IMPORTANT TERMS

REGULATION: The ability to experience and maintain stress within one's window of tolerance. Generally referred to as being calm, focused, or relaxed. This term is utilized by literally every scientific discipline.

DYSREGULATION: The experience of stress outside of one's window of tolerance. Generally referred to as being stressed out, or in a state of distress.



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STOP AND REFLECT ON THIS

If trauma is not quickly “integrated “ and the changes in the anatomy, biology and neurology become chronic, it makes people more vulnerable to such events in the future. The body loses its natural rhythms for regulating arousal and relaxation; entering a seesaw between hyper arousal and hypo arousal; moving the person from explosive emotions to numbness fatigue, detachment and isolation.....

- ◉ *Let's share in a discussion to anchor your understanding*



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CRITICAL BRAIN SYSTEMS

