

Secondary Traumatic Stress/ Compassion Fatigue

This Is Hard, This Work That We Do
AND We Are Making A Difference

January 15, 2020

11:00am – 12:00pm PT

Alan O'Malley-Laursen, MSW, LICSW
Compassion Fatigue Educator/Therapist
Certified Clinical Trauma Professional
Olmsted County [Minnesota] Child & Family
Services



Webinar participation

You are viewing Success Onboardin... 's screen View Options

Zoom Video Communications was Named a 2018 Gartner Peer Insights Customer Choice for Meeting Solution

Enter your work email Sign Up Free

Q&A

You asked: 19:41

Type your questions and comments here!

Please input your question

Send Anonymously Send

Figure 1. Gartner Peer Insights "Voice of the Customer" Meeting Solutions Overall Ratings

Gartner Peer Insights "Voice of the Customer" Meeting Solutions Overall Ratings
As of January 31, 2018

| Eligible Vendors | Gartner Peer Insights Customer Choice | Gartner Magic Quadrant Position | Number of Reviews | Overall Customer Rating |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Zoom Video Communications | Customer Choice | Leader | n=666 | 4.69 |
| Highfive Technologies | | | n=30 | 4.65 |
| Lifesize | | | n=30 | 4.40 |
| LogMeIn | Customer Choice | Challenger | n=163 | 4.36 |
| Teamviewer | | | n=42 | 4.33 |
| BlueJeans Network | Customer Choice | Visionary | n=57 | 4.32 |
| Google | Customer Choice | Challenger | n=131 | 4.27 |
| Cisco | Customer Choice | Leader | n=380 | 4.21 |
| Microsoft | | Leader | n=200 | 4.16 |
| Adobe | | Challenger | n=72 | 4.14 |

Notes: Vendors with greater than 25 reviews on Gartner Peer Insights in the past one year as of January 31, 2018 are included in this analysis. Gartner Peer Insights Customer Choice announced on February 13, 2018. Gartner Magic Quadrant for Meeting Solutions published on September 19, 2017. Number of reviews and ratings as of January 31, 2018. ©2018 Gartner Inc. All rights reserved.

Source: Gartner Peer Insights (January 31, 2018)

Gartner Zoom received a 4.69 out of 5 overall customer rating. Read the Report

Audio Settings Chat Raise Hand Q&A Leave Meeting

Poll Question

What is your position type?

- A) Direct Service
- B) Supervisor/Manager
- C) Administrative Support
- D) Director/Organizational Leader
- E) Other

Poll Question

What service sector do you work in?

- A) Child Welfare
- B) Juvenile Justice
- C) Mental Health
- D) Legal Services
- E) Community-Based Provider (e.g. CASA, housing, etc.)
- F) Academic/Research
- G) Other

Today's Presenter

Alan O'Malley-Laursen, MSW, LICSW

- Compassion Fatigue Educator /
Therapist
- Certified Clinical Trauma Professional
- Olmsted County [Minnesota] Child
& Family Services



Agenda

Multi-Dimensional Human Services Workplace Stress

Overview of Secondary Stress Reaction/Compassion Fatigue
and Related Dynamics

Self Care

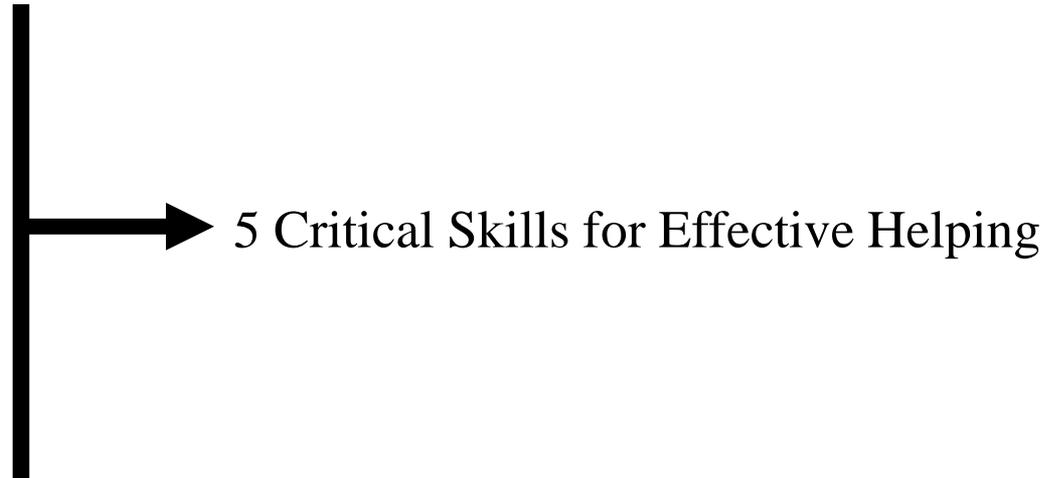
Compassion Satisfaction

Reflective Practice

Self Regulation

Radical Compassion

Self Awareness



Brief overview of
Secondary Stress Reaction/Compassion Fatigue

“Mindful of the ACEs in the Room”

- Elizabeth Criswell, U of MN, Early Childhood Curriculum Coordinator

Including intergenerational/historical trauma

“Mindful of the ACEs in the Room”

Today I will be talking about the emotional impact that this work that we do can have on each of us. As such, it is possible that you may find yourself experiencing feelings and thoughts that might be distressing. Please feel free take whatever measures you need to take care of yourself such as tuning out, leaving the room, or some other self-care strategy.

- Modification of work of Elizabeth Criswell, M.Ed.

*Take a deep breath.
It calms the mind.*



<http://www.facebook.com/BedeempldBrain>

“Air Is Good”

“Sometimes I feel like that’s what we do.... We hold up the weight of the world. And, in doing so, we hear screams and witness the suffering that sometimes becomes our screams and our suffering, only we choke it back and continue bearing the weight without complaining and without acknowledging that we too need relief.”

Laurie Barkin: *The Comfort Garden: Tales from the Trauma Unit*

Terminology

- Secondary traumatic stress
- Vicarious trauma
- Compassion fatigue
- Burnout

“Secondary Stress Reaction”

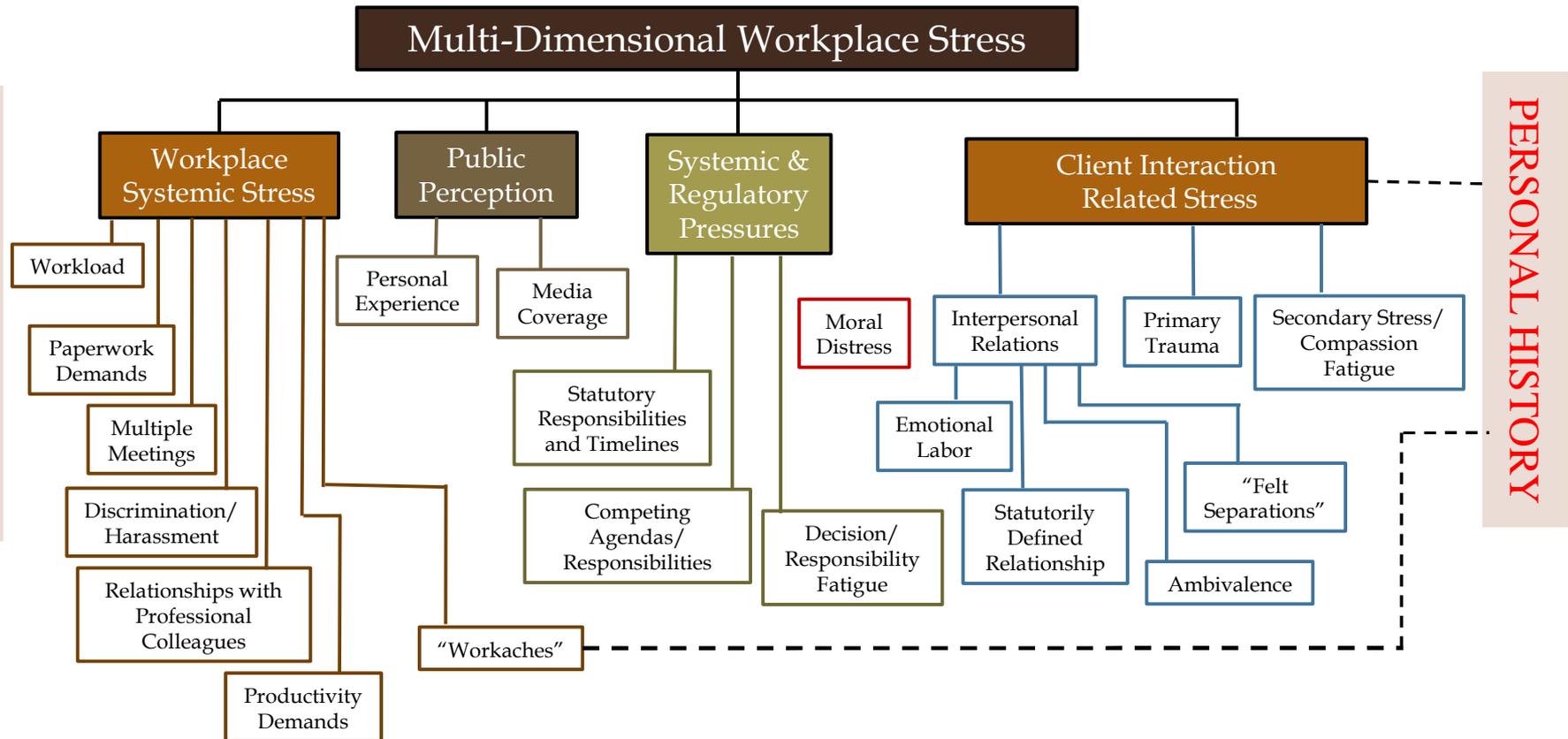
Definition:

The emotional cost of caring: A response to the cumulative experience of empathic engagement with people who are suffering – the personal experience resulting from helping or wanting to help the suffering person.

Adapted from a presentation by Victoria Van Slyke, Ph.D, MSW, LICSW –
Identifying Stress Reactions in Staff and Its Impact on Performance and Well-Being: An overview for supervisors

Multi-Dimensional Human Services Workplace Stress

[Inspired by Patricia Fisher's "Complex Stress Model"]



<https://vimeo.com/277534464> [See Link]

Alan O'Malley-Laursen, MSW, LICSW, CFE/T, CCTP

NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKER



SAME WORKER ONE YEAR LATER



Secondary Stress Reaction

An “Occupational Hazard”

- It is the nature of our work
- Having an emotional response is the norm

Symptoms of SSR

- **Emotional** – anger, sadness, grief, anxiety, depression, hopelessness, numbing, overwhelmed
- **Physical** – headaches, stomach aches, lethargy, hyperarousal, increased fatigue or illness, sleep problems
- **Personal** – isolation, cynicism, irritability, moody, withdrawn, increased risk for alcohol or substance use, negativity, pessimism
- **Workplace** – avoidance, lack of motivation, reduced job productivity, job dissatisfaction

From *Secondary Trauma: Building Resilience*, presentation by
Jeremy Mork, MSW, LICSW and Cynthia Packer, MSW, LICSW



“...burning new pathways in the brain
so abruptly and forcefully that the system is on fire”

Challenging Situations

- Frequent or continuous exposure to the suffering of clients. This can be especially difficult in work with children
- Exposure to details of traumatic events either directly in face to face sessions with clients or indirectly through written information
- High caseloads including frequent crises
- Limited resources
- Isolation
- Complications related to historical trauma

From *Secondary Trauma: Building Resilience*, presentation by
Jeremy Mork, MSW, LICSW and Cynthia Packer, MSW, LICSW

“Malaise”

Got to fight everyday.....

to keep mediocrity at bay

- Van Morrison

“Malaise”

I used to care.....

but things have changed

- Bob Dylan

“It Wears Down Your Soul.”

Steve Osborne - 20 year veteran of NYC Police Department
Interview with Terry Gross on NPR's *Fresh Air* – April 22, 2015

“Decision Fatigue”

Research on parole decisions

Depletion of mental energy

- Some correlation with glucose levels

Results

- Impulsivity
- “Do nothing”

“Emotional Labor”

“The stories I’ve heard.....
Need to keep it together...”

Kari Egan, Hospice Chaplain – *NPR Fresh Air, October 31, 2016*

Emotional Labor

...masking true feelings in order to present the self in socially [and professionally] desirable, appropriate ways.

- Caringi, Lawson and Devlin [2012]

“Constantly having to wear the mask.” [Nancy Deever]

Everywhere I go,
I get slandered, libeled,
I hear words I never heard in the Bible
And I'm so tired, so tired
But I'm trying to keep my customers satisfied,
Satisfied

- Paul Simon

Empathic Strain:

...the emotional effort required to maintain a stance of unconditional positive regard..., while the authentic emotion of the worker may be one of anger, disgust, or defensiveness. This type of emotional effort can be exhausting, and may even be a primary source of emotional [compassion] fatigue in doing child welfare work.

- Miller, Brian (2018). Indirect Trauma-Sensitive Supervision in Child Welfare. In V.C. Strand & G. Sprang (eds.) *Trauma Responsive Child Welfare Systems* (p.305-6). Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG.

Showing respect and warmth...can be challenging if we do not particularly like or respect a person's behavior.... We may find ourselves reacting strongly to a person's behavior and want to distance ourselves from it or display our disapproval of it.

Nicki Weld

E Ko T Matakahi Maire: Therapeutic Social Work. (2017) Stand Children's Services

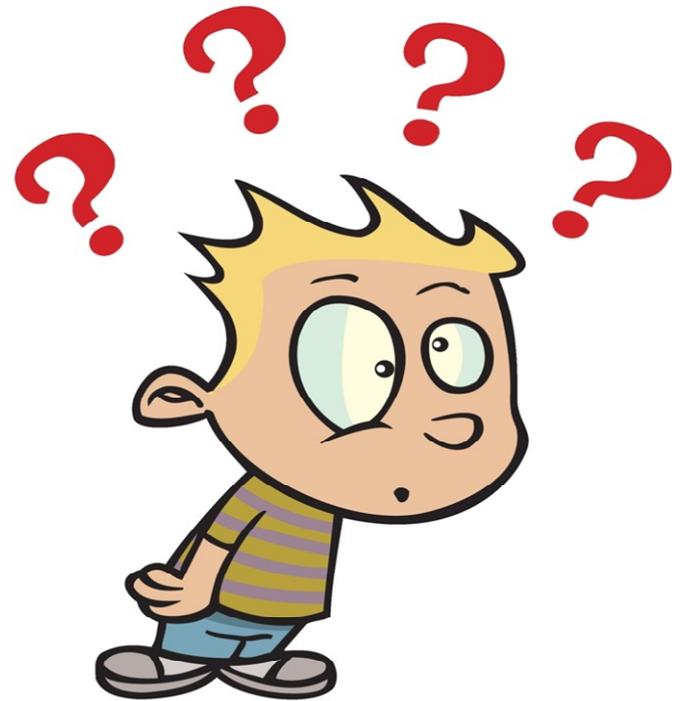
“You are the devil that came to our lives
I don’t know for what.”

“You are the reason that my family is
being torn apart...”

...masking true feelings in order to present the self in socially
[and professionally] desirable, appropriate ways.

- Caringi, Lawson and Devlin [2012]

Ambivalence Management



Ambivalence Management

Most decisions/case direction landing places are

- 75/25, at the very best
- Most often 55/45

Ambivalence Management

The emotional strain [or labor] involved in mediating [parceling out] one's ambivalence and uncertainty.

Need to represent [or “land on”] one side of the ambivalence while suppressing [or dismissing] the “minority” perspective.

Ambivalence Management

Most decisions/case direction landing places are

- 75/25, at best
- Often 55/45

“Dialogue with the Ambivalence”

- Recognize it
- Talk about it
- Own it

So What?

Human Services Workplace Stress,
including
Secondary Stress Reaction

INHERENT IN THE WORK WE DO

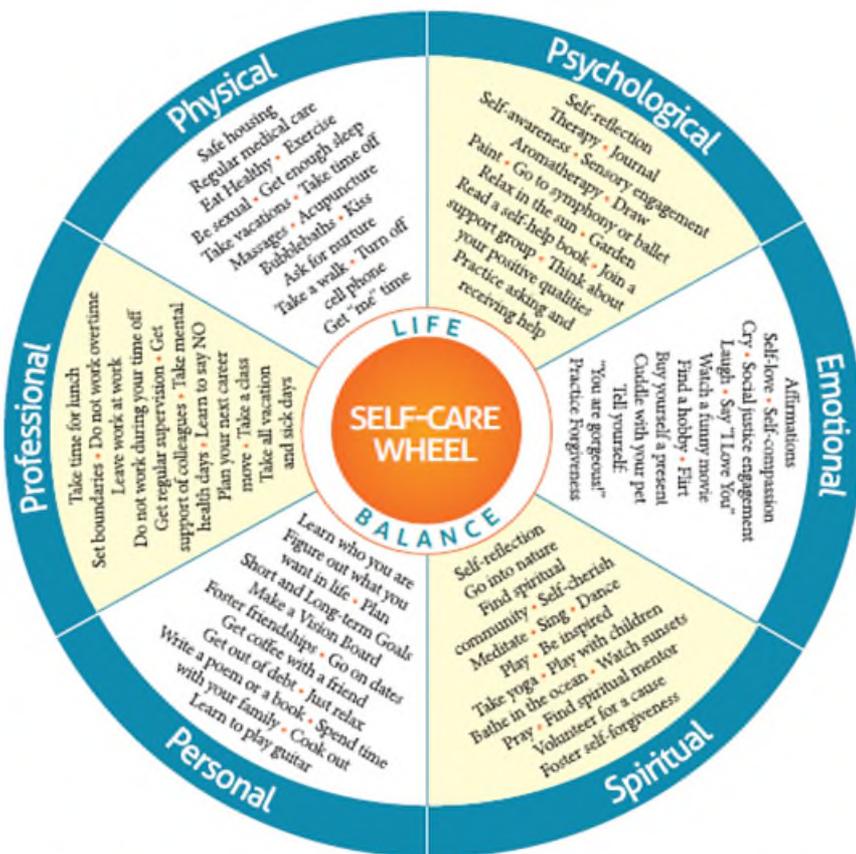
Preparation...

Not

Prevention

Self Care/Wellness

SELF-CARE WHEEL



This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013).

Dedicated to all trauma professionals worldwide.

www.OlgaPhoenix.com

Olga.Phoenix.com

Self Care/Wellness =

Resilience Enhancement

Limitations of Self Care.....

Self Care \neq

Mediation of SSR

...it does not appear that engaging in any coping strategy...
has an impact on immediate traumatic symptoms.

Bober and Regehr, Strategies for Reducing Secondary or Vicarious Trauma: Do They Work?
Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention 6: 1-9 (2006)

Beyond Self Care/Wellness.....

Necessary.....

But not sufficient

Then.....

What to do?

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY



RUN LIKE HELL

We are not “strong enough” to do this work....so we have to be smart about the work that we do.

- Bonnie Martin, LPC, speaking on working with trauma survivors

Organizational Strategies

*See Handout with Links to
CANTASD.org [National Child Abuse
and Neglect Technical Assistance and
Strategic Dissemination Center] and
to capacity.childwelfare.gov [Center
for States Capacity Building]*

Poll Question

How would you rank your organization's recognition of and efforts to specifically address secondary traumatic stress/compassion fatigue among its workforce?

- A) Non-existent
- B) Poor
- C) Fair
- D) Good
- E) Excellent

Professional Self Reflection

What brings you to this work?

*How did you come about choosing
this line of work?*

The desire to
make a difference
in the lives of others

Compassion Satisfaction

The sense that one is making a difference in the lives of others.

Colorado study:

“...despite a high risk of compassion fatigue, these staff members had a low risk of burnout, finding that compassion satisfaction may mitigate these levels [of burnout].”

Caringi, James C.; Lawson, Hal A.; and Devlin, Mary (2012) "Planning for Emotional Labor and Secondary Traumatic Stress in Child Welfare Organizations," *Journal of Family Strengths*: Vol. 12: Iss. 1, Article 11.

Modulating and Enhancing the Emotional Experience of This Work We Do:

- Actuating Compassion Satisfaction
- Engaging in Reflective Practice
- Self Regulation
- Radical Compassion
- Self Awareness

Strategies to Enhance Compassion Satisfaction

Appreciative Inquiry

Intentional elicitation and amplification of good practice

- “More valuable lessons can be learned from examples of successful decisions than from the...ones that lead to loss or harm.”

[Eileen Munro [International Consultant on C.P. Practices]

- Makes conscious the unconscious [and hence more accessible “on demand”]

Appreciative Inquiry

During case consultations [or case contemplations]:

In what ways can you give yourself credit for the positive outcome?

What did you say or do that helped the client make the change[s]?

What did you say or do in that situation that you feel really good about, that you are proud of?

Derived from the work of Andrew Turnell [Signs of Safety]

Reflective Practice

Ability to step back from the immediate experience to sort through one's own thoughts and feelings about what is happening in one's work with clients.

Reflective Practice

Process over Content

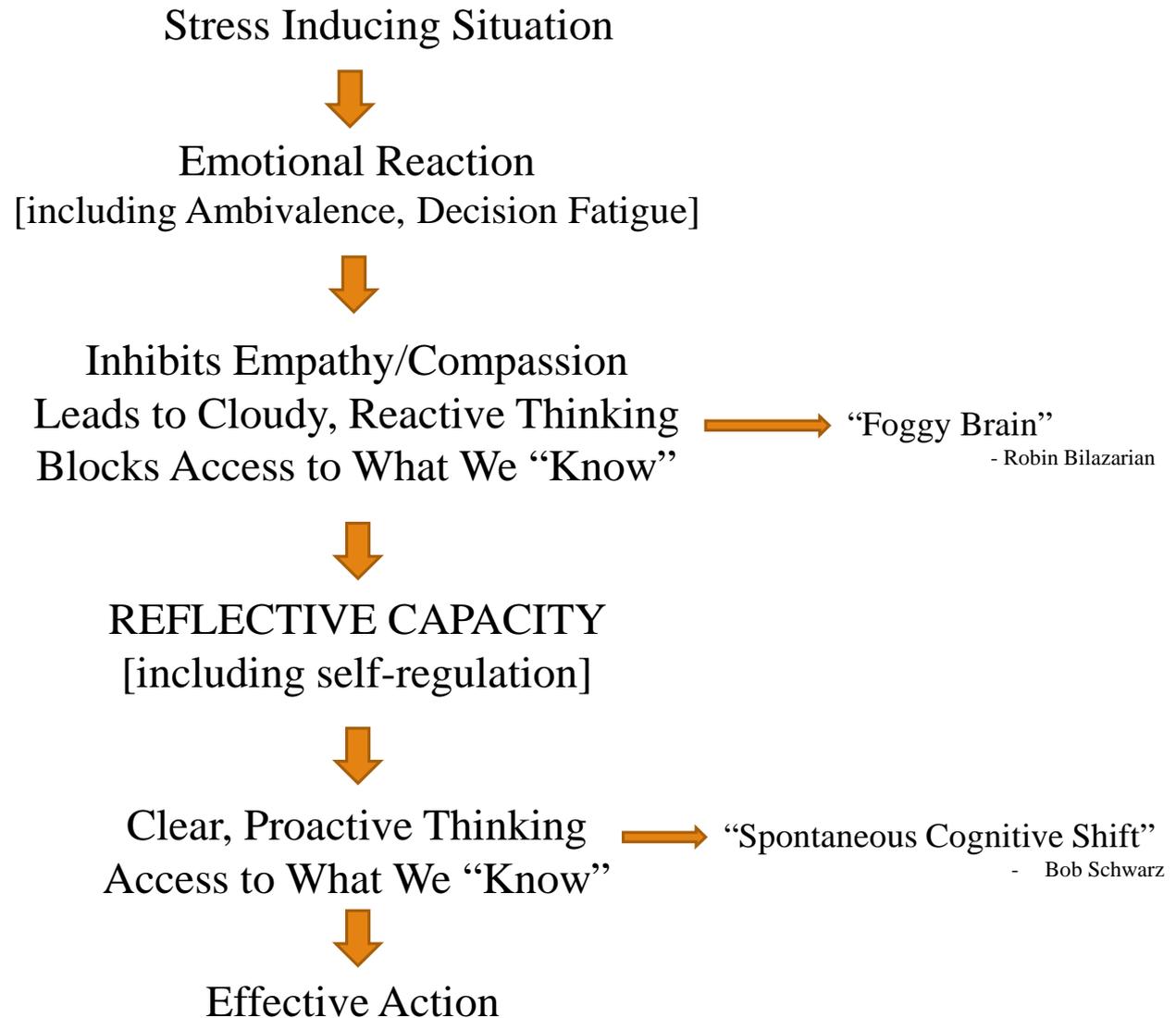
Reflective Practice

Transforming the internal [emotional]
experience into constructive action

Moving the process from the limbic [reaction]
to the pre-frontal cortex [thoughtfulness]

Nicki Weld

Impact of Emotional Reflection on Effective Service Delivery



Self Regulation

Ability to use physiological and cognitive strategies to allow the use of critical thinking skills to develop and implement intentional, thoughtful and purposeful intervention strategies.

Stress reduces prefrontal cortex functioning to 60%
while the amygdala remains at 100%

- Research cited by Mary Pulido

“In times of stress and fear...the compassion
circuitry goes off-line.”

- Winograd and Cohen, Workaches

Brainstem/limbic networks process threat...

...within a fifth of a second....

Gordon, et. al [2008]

*Between stimulus and response
there is a space....*

Viktor Frankl, Austrian neurologist, psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor

...In that space is [the] power to choose our response.

- Frankl

Self regulation of emotions and cognitions helps to widen and subsequently utilize this space to build an internal locus of control

Self regulation results in:

- Comfort in one's body
- Restoration of prefrontal cortex functioning
- Intentional instead of reactive behavior

- This slide derived largely from study guide for International Association of Trauma Professionals sponsored Certified Clinical Trauma Professional Exam

*Take a deep breath.
It calms the mind.*



<http://www.facebook.com/BedeempledBrain>

“Air Is Good”

Radical Compassion

Ability to suspend critical judgement and engage in compassionate thinking and actions in relation to clients who exhibit behaviors that trigger a reaction of dislike, disgust, abhorrence or the like

Radical Compassion

VS

Critical Judgment

...nonjudgmental empathy for all clients we are working with, regardless of their past or current behavior. [Miller, p. 306]

**Be Kind
Always**

- Cue card on desk of clinic receptionist

Radical Compassion

“Every life has a story...
if we take the time to read it.”

- From an employee video

Compassion...is a choice. It begins with the **intentional** consideration of the raw humanity of the other...which leads to an empathic appreciation of their condition...and results in generous, hospitable and loving action.

- Alan O'L [with inspiration from Krista Tippett and the Reverend Coqui Conkey]

“Have compassion for everyone you meet, even if they don't want it. What seems conceit, bad manners, or cynicism is always a sign of things no ears have heard, no eyes have seen. You do not know what wars are going on down there where the spirit meets the bone.”

- Poet Miller Williams

How Achieve Radical Compassion??

- Not so easy....
- “Compassion takes courage”
[4th Grade Sunday School Student]

How Achieve Radical Compassion??

- Acknowledge/affirm the feelings
- Put self in client's shoes
 - Why do you think they are this way; taking this disturbing action; saying this hurtful, frustrating or annoying thing?
 - How might this parallel your own experience? In what ways are they just like you and me?

Self Awareness

Ability to consider one's own history and experiences [e.g., family of origin, Adverse Childhood Experiences, trauma history (including historical trauma), other life experiences] as influencing one's perspectives/ beliefs, values, actions and interactions with clients.

Self Awareness

“In a room full of caring people, ACEs are high”

Jane Stevens 4/28/15

ACEs Connection
A Community-of-Practice Social Network

Interplay of historical trauma/intergenerational
traumatic grief

Trauma history = reduced regulatory capacity

Self Awareness

- Which types of clients do you sometimes or often find it hard to work with?
- Which elicit some stress response in you?
- Which client situations are difficult for you to deal with?
- Why do you think you might have this difficulty?

WHAT ELSE?





Watch How Many Hours You Work!!!

Take Your Vacations!!!

...a long-ago group of hikers trekking to Mt. Everest. The expedition had started days late due to impassable weather and the group was pushing their mountain guides to hike hours longer than usual each day. One day, after days of pushing hard, the sherpas simply refused to go. There were angry words and offers for more money, but the guides wouldn't budge. Finally their translator explained. "They say they have walked so fast they need a day....."

“..... for their souls to catch up to their bodies.”

And Another Thing.....

At the end of the day....

**TURN OFF THE DANG
SMARTPHONE!!!**

Our smartphones are stressing us out, shortening our lives

It's by chronically raising levels of cortisol, the body's main stress hormone.

By Catherine Price New York Times | MAY 25, 2019 — 10:55AM

An increasing body of evidence suggests that the time we spend on our smartphones is interfering with our sleep, self-esteem, relationships, memory, attention spans, creativity, productivity and problem-solving and decision-making skills.

But there is another reason for us to rethink our relationships with our devices. By chronically raising levels of cortisol, the body's main stress hormone, our phones may be threatening our health and shortening our lives.

[Cortisol = fight, flight, freeze]

One More Challenge

Sustainability

- Maintaining the process
- More than just a “passing fad”
- Build it into the way we do business

Conclusion

If we do all of these things...

...if we radically care for those we work with

...and if we take radical care of ourselves

....then perhaps...

We can still smile!



THANK YOU!!!!

Alan O'Malley~Laursen, M.S.W., L.I.C.S.W.

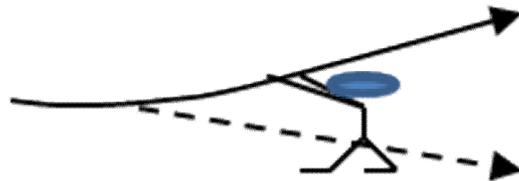
Compassion Fatigue Educator/Therapist

Certified Clinical Trauma Professional

Olmsted County [Minnesota] Child & Family Services

omalleylaursen.alan@co.olmsted.mn.us

alaursen@chartermi.net



Bending the Arc of the Developmental Trajectory
Be Aware, Be Prepared, Make A Difference

Questions?

Next CEBC-Hosted Webinar

Topic:

Working with gender nonconforming and transgender children

Date and Time:

Monday, March 16, 2020

10:00-11:00am PT

Stay in Contact with Us

Email Alerts: www.cebc4cw.org/email-alerts

Contact Us: info@cebc4cw.org



Facebook

facebook.com/cacebc4cw



LinkedIn

linkedin.com/company/california-evidence-based-clearinghouse-for-child-welfare-cebc-



Twitter

[@cebc4cw](https://twitter.com/cebc4cw)