

A background image showing several hands of different skin tones reaching in from the edges and meeting at the center to form a circle. The hands are rendered in a semi-transparent, light gray style, creating a sense of unity and support.

Creating Spaces for Trauma-Informed Care in Higher Education

SESSION 4: CREATING SPACE FOR SELF-CARE

“AN EMPTY
LANTERN
PROVIDES
NO LIGHT.
SELF-CARE IS
THE FUEL
THAT ALLOWS
YOUR LIGHT TO
SHINE BRIGHTLY.”

UNKNOWN
IT'S ALL YOUR MIND.COM

Agenda

What is self-care?

Why is self-care important for helping professionals?

Self-care self-assessment

Self-care first aid plan

Self-care maintenance plan

Q&A



What is self-care?

CHAT BOX: WHAT DO YOU THINK OF WHEN YOU HEAR “SELF-CARE”?

Both/And

DUTY

- Practices and activities that helping professionals can commit to and engage in to reduce stress, increase resilience, and enhance their overall well-being.
- Trauma-specific

RIGHT

- Policies and practices that organizations can commit to and engage in to reduce stress, increase resilience, and enhance the overall well-being of their employees and the organization.
- Trauma-informed

Self-Care is an Ongoing Process





Why is self-care important for helping professionals?

Types/Risks of Indirect Trauma

Secondary Traumatic Stress

- Short-term exposure
- PTSD symptoms

Vicarious Trauma

- Long-term exposure
- C-PTSD symptoms

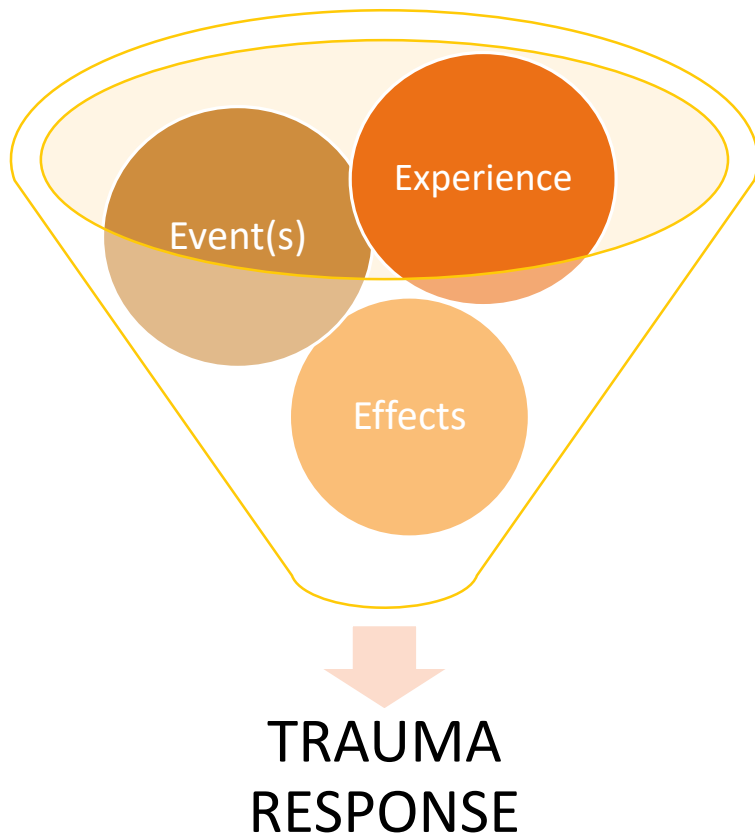
Burnout

- Accumulation of job stress
- Long-term impact

Countertransference

- Overidentify with or try to meet needs through client/student

Trauma alters the stories we tell about ourselves, others, & the world



(SAMHSA, 2014)

“Traumatic events overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of **control, connection, and meaning.**”

(Herman, 1997)

When you're feeling safe & connected, how would you complete these phrases?

I am _____,
people are _____,
and the world is
_____.

Example: I am
confident, people are
basically good, and the
world is full of
possibilities.

I am _____,
people are
_____, and the
world is
_____.

Example: I am **frozen**,
people are
overwhelming, and
the world is
dangerous.

Now think of a time when you felt shut down and overwhelmed ... and finish those three phrases.

Persistent or excessive anger, guilt, or helplessness in relation to student/colleague's past or current suffering

Preoccupation with one or more students/colleagues

Excessive interest in or fascination with details of student/colleague's trauma

Rescue fantasies

Symptoms such as headaches, sleeplessness, intrusive imagery, emotional numbing, difficulty trusting others

Feeling like nothing you do makes a difference

Common Signs of STS, VT, BO, or CT

(adapted from Neumann & Gamble, 1995)

The Starfish Story

Original Story by: Loren Eiseley

One day a man was walking along the beach, when he noticed a boy hurriedly picking up and gently throwing things into the ocean.

Approaching the boy, he asked, "Young man, what are you doing?"

The boy replied, "Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die."

The man laughed to himself and said, "Don't you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can't make any difference!"

After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the surf. Then, smiling at the man, he said,

"I made a difference to that one."



You make a
difference

Self-Care
Assessment
Tools

ProQOL (pp. 11-13)

Self-Care Planning and
Assessment Tool (pp. 14-15)

Taking Your Stress
Temperature (p. 16)

Top 10 Signs You're Too
Stressed (p. 17)

What is your ProQOL score and what does it mean?

TURN TO PAGE 11 OF THE WORKBOOK

GET SOMETHING TO WRITE WITH

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)

Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue (ProQOL) Version 5 (2009)

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*.

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Very Often

- _____ 1. I am happy.
- _____ 2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].
- _____ 3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.
- _____ 4. I feel connected to others.
- _____ 5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
- _____ 6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].
- _____ 7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].
- _____ 8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].
- _____ 9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].
- _____ 10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].
- _____ 11. Because of my [helping], I have felt "on edge" about various things.
- _____ 12. I like my work as a [helper].
- _____ 13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].
- _____ 14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].
- _____ 15. I have beliefs that sustain me.
- _____ 16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.
- _____ 17. I am the person I always wanted to be.
- _____ 18. My work makes me feel satisfied.
- _____ 19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].
- _____ 20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.
- _____ 21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.
- _____ 22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.
- _____ 23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].
- _____ 24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].
- _____ 25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.
- _____ 26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.
- _____ 27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a [helper].
- _____ 28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.
- _____ 29. I am a very caring person.
- _____ 30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.

Reverse Scores

Reverse the scores on questions 1, 4, 15, 17 & 29

YOU WROTE

CHANGE TO

1

5

2

4

3

3

4

2

5

1

Compassion Satisfaction

Add scores on these questions:

3, 6, 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 27, 30

- 22 or less = low
- 23-41 = average
- 42 or more = high

Compassion satisfaction is about the pleasure you derive from being able to do your work well.

Higher scores represent greater satisfaction related to your ability to be an effective caregiver in your job. Lower scores may indicate problems with your job or that you derive your satisfaction from activities other than your job.

Burnout

Add scores on these questions:

1, 4, 8, 10, 15, 17, 19, 21, 26, 29

- 22 or less = low
- 23-41 = average
- 42 or more = high

Burnout refers to an accumulation of occupational stress and is associated with feelings of hopelessness and difficulties dealing with work or doing your job effectively.

Higher scores could mean you are at greater risk for burnout or that you are having a bad day. Lower scores suggest you are feeling positive about your ability to do your work effectively.

Secondary Traumatic Stress

Add scores on these questions:

2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 23, 25, 28

- 22 or less = low
- 23-41 = average
- 42 or more = high

STS refers to indirect exposures to extreme or traumatic stress and is associated with a rapid onset of traumatic stress symptoms (e.g., intrusions, avoidance, sleep difficulties, etc).

Higher scores may not indicate a problem, but it is advisable to consider what may be causing a higher score and discuss with a supervisor, colleague, or health care professional.

1. You find yourself looking for any reason to call in sick and stay in bed all day.
2. Your children shudder in fear when your boss's name is mentioned.
3. You've wondered (more than once) if your cell phone would float when hurled into a river.
4. You use a pencil instead of a pen to schedule dates with your partner.
5. Journal articles, reports, or case files have become "light bedtime reading."
6. Your best friends think you've moved away because they haven't heard from you in so long.
7. You consider caffeine a part of a balanced diet.
8. You fall asleep in the dentist's office because it's the only time you put your feet up.
9. You're too tired to remember the name of your pet.
10. It takes you six days of vacation to even begin to feel relaxed, and six minutes back in the office to make you forget that you took a vacation at all.

Top 10 Signs You're Too Stressed

YOUR Top 10 Signs

Write out your own Top 10 Signs and keep them somewhere to help yourself and others recognize you're too stressed.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____



Self-care first aid plan

Self-Care First Aid Tool

Write out

Write out brief answers to the self-care questions that you can carry with you or keep handy for when life gets extremely stressful.



Share

Give a copy to one or more support people.



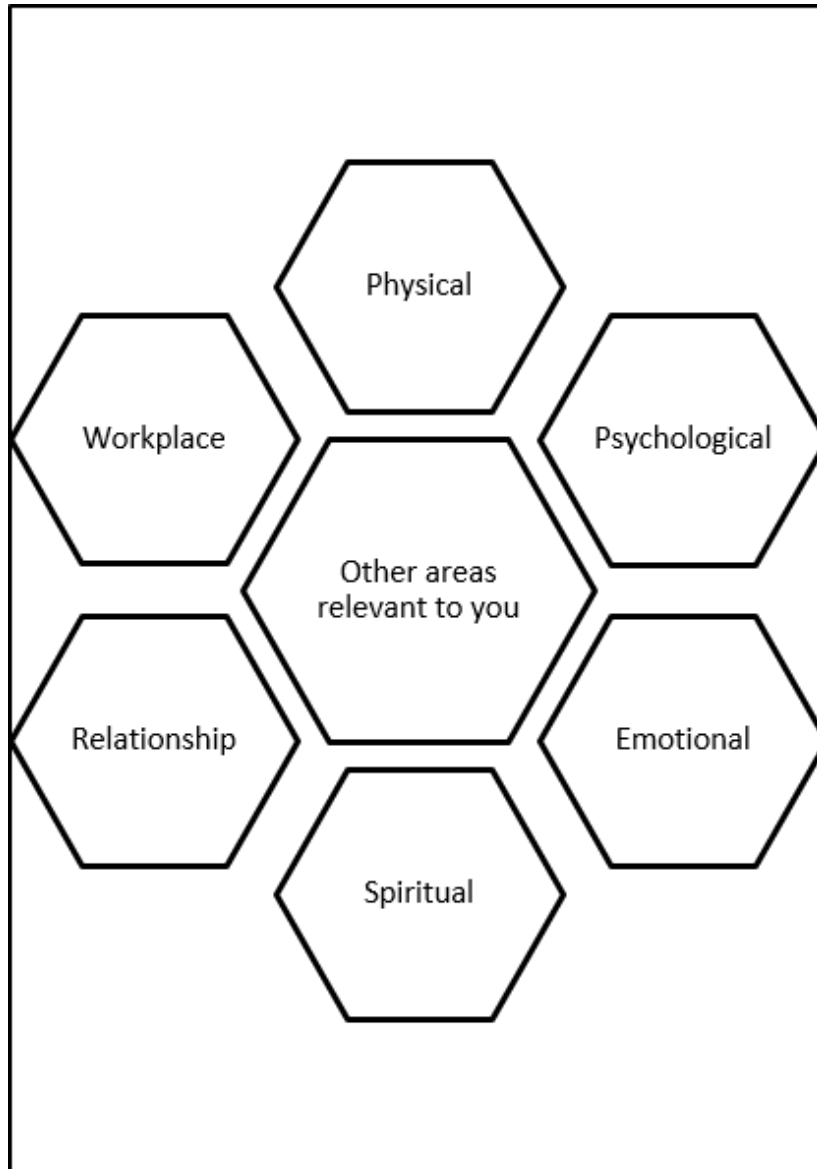
Update

Keep a copy of the questions on file so you can update your list every six months or so.

1. Who can I turn to for support when I'm afraid or lonely? Who comforts me, makes me feel safe, and allows me to have my feelings?
2. Who do I need to avoid? Who adds to my anxiety, overwhelms me with questions, or has a tough time listening without criticizing me or giving advice?
3. What does my body need to feel nurtured, strong, and healthy?
4. What short and long-term responsibilities or commitments do I need to let go to clear some space to make time to attend to my needs and my well-being?
5. What unhelpful or unhealthy coping strategies or activities do I need to avoid?

6. What helpful and healthy coping strategies or activities do I need to add or do more?
7. How will I best express my feelings?
8. What object can I use as a talisman that will remind me to breathe, relax, and be in the moment?
9. What can I do when I need to take a break from the stress? What's my best healthy distraction?
10. What positive thing(s) can I say to myself when I notice I'm giving myself a hard time?

Self-Care Maintenance Plan



Self-Care Maintenance Plan

Use in conjunction with the Self-Care Planning and Assessment Tool (pp. 14-15) to periodically update your personalized self-care plan



Motivation Card

Make a list or draw a picture of some things that bring you happiness.

Keep it on your desk, in your wallet, or on your refrigerator. Sometimes visual reminders of the joys in our lives can motivate us.

Self-Care Resources

- [Self-Care Starter Kit](#)
- [Self-Care in the Digital Age](#)
- [Self-Care for Educators](#)
- [*What about you? A workbook for those who work with others*](#)
- [Professional Quality of Life \(ProQOL\) Measure](#)

Self-Care Apps

MyFitnessPal

Headspace

Charity Miles

Lumosity

Gratitude Journal

Sunrise Inspiration

Sleep Bot

Happify



Coming Up Next

- Q & A
- Session 4 Evaluation
- 3:30 - 4:00 Session 5: Creating Time for Reflection
 - Action Plan
 - Best Hopes



Questions?



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References

