

New Challenges Facing Frontline Workers: Effectively Serving Our Older Clients during the Pandemic

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&**

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HUNTER



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day



JUNE 15

**WORLD ELDER ABUSE
AWARENESS DAY**

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

- ❖ The purpose of the workshop is to understand ways to help frontline workers with their trauma while working with clients experiencing the same trauma- in the time of COVID-19
- ❖ Teach webinar participants the skills that promote healthy behaviors while working in the time of COVID-19 and share those skills with their clients and colleagues.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Recognize stressors in general and stressors due to COVID-19 and the impact of quarantine for yourself, clients, colleagues, and others. (Joanna)
2. Appreciate the effects that a shared trauma has on providers and their work with clients (Randi)
3. Understand the five fundamental principles for health care providers, community members, and others (Randi)
4. Create and practice stress management and routine self-care activities (Joanna)

Workshop Goals

BENEFITS TO FRONTLINE WORKERS:

Reduce The Impact of Traumatic Symptoms Related To The Pandemic
Increase Healthier Behaviors for Staff and clients
Improved Sense of Hope and Encouragement Among Workers
Innovative Strategies To Address The Impact of Shared Trauma Between Client and Provider

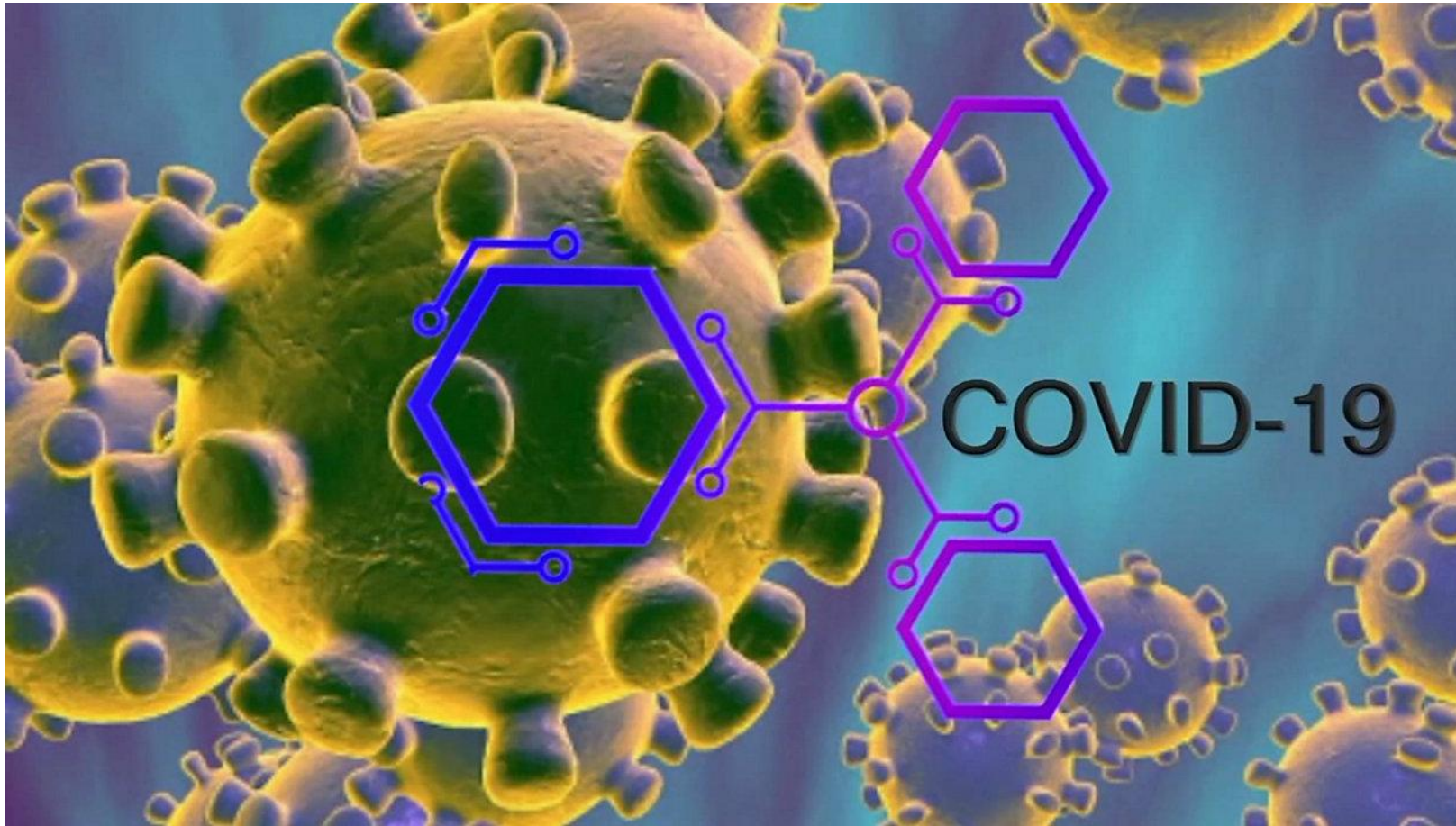
BENEFITS TO CLIENTS:

Willingness to Work with Provider
Willingness to Trust Their worker
Decrease in Pandemic Fears
Decrease in Isolation

BENEFITS TO THE ORGANIZATION:

Increased Ability to Protect the Workforce and the Client Populations

Why Are We Here - Online Today?



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WHY DO I FEEL THIS WAY, ALL OF THE TIME?



Trauma Stewardship: What Is Happening To Me?



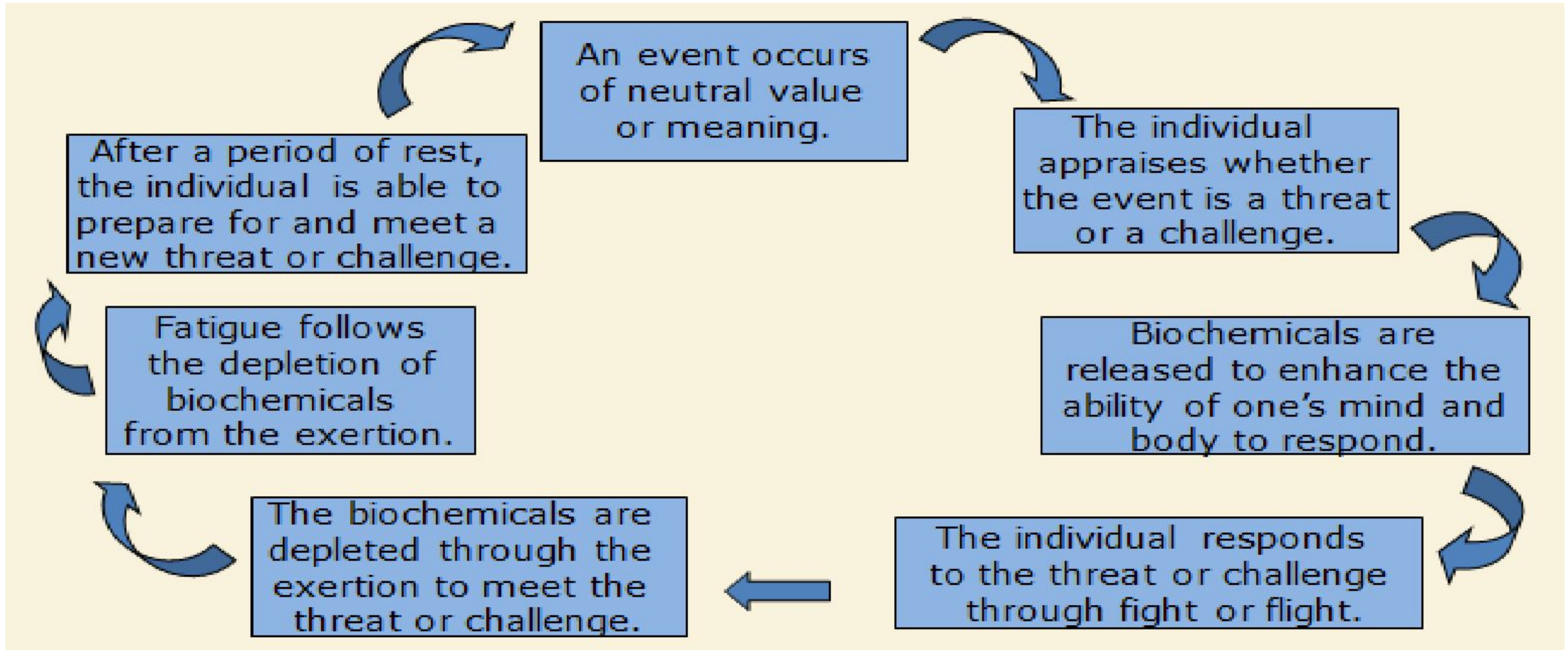
Let's Talk About Stress, Baby

Let's Talk About You & Me

Stress and anxiety are unavoidable in all of our lives. It can be protective as long as a person can absorb it or use it to build psychological strength.

While unavoidable, practicing stress management techniques can help us to recognize, as stress is mounting, and avoid impulsive and non-adaptive behaviors.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR BODY WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE STRESS?



COVID Related Work Stressors

- working from home without sufficient equipment, space and quiet
- personal loss/loss of clients
- constant struggle with work/home/life balance
- fear about job security and potential losses due to economic downturn
- fear about going out, shopping, etc.
- anxiety about how the world will look in the future
- physical strain of protective equipment (dehydration, heat, exhaustion)
- physical isolation (restrictions on touching others, even after working hours)
- constant awareness and vigilance regarding infection control procedures
- pressures regarding procedures that must be followed (lack of spontaneity)
- fear of another wave of the disease or a viral mutation



Stressors We or Our Clients Might Experience

- Food insecurity
- Fixed Income
- Chronic conditions needing treatment and nowhere safe to go
- Limited supports/opportunities to socialize
- Increased burden of illness in low income communities of color and LGBT communities
 - Increased numbers of multi-generational families in one small space
 - Increased number of essential, front line workers

Signs of Stress



Psychological First Aid

Often used as a response to natural disasters and mass violence, Psychological First Aid, aims to reduce immediate stress and improve adaptive functioning in the face of a traumatic event.



Trauma & Stress: What Is The Connection How Does That Affect My Work

Direct Trauma Exposure

You experience the trauma directly- such as watching a client get hurt or die.

Indirect (Secondary) Trauma

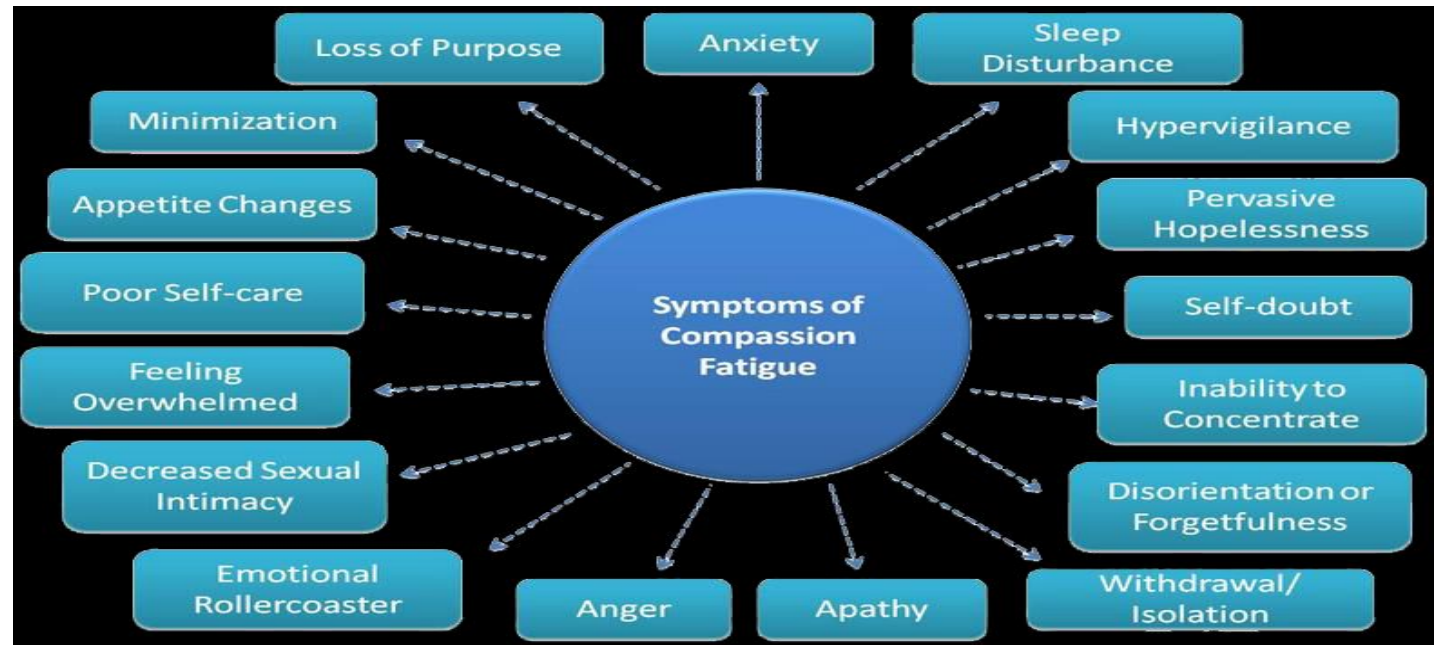
You experience the trauma by listening to your clients' trauma narratives

Collective (Shared) Trauma

Both you and your client are simultaneously exposed to the same Collective trauma

LET'S LOOK CLOSER AT INDIRECT STRESS





COMPASSION FATIGUE

“State of tension and preoccupation with traumatized patients by re-experiencing the traumatic events, avoidance/numbing of reminders and persistent arousal associated with the patient”

Figley, C., 2013

Burnout

A syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment

Develops as a result of general occupational stress; the term is not used to describe the effects of indirect trauma exposure specifically

Fatigue

Insomnia

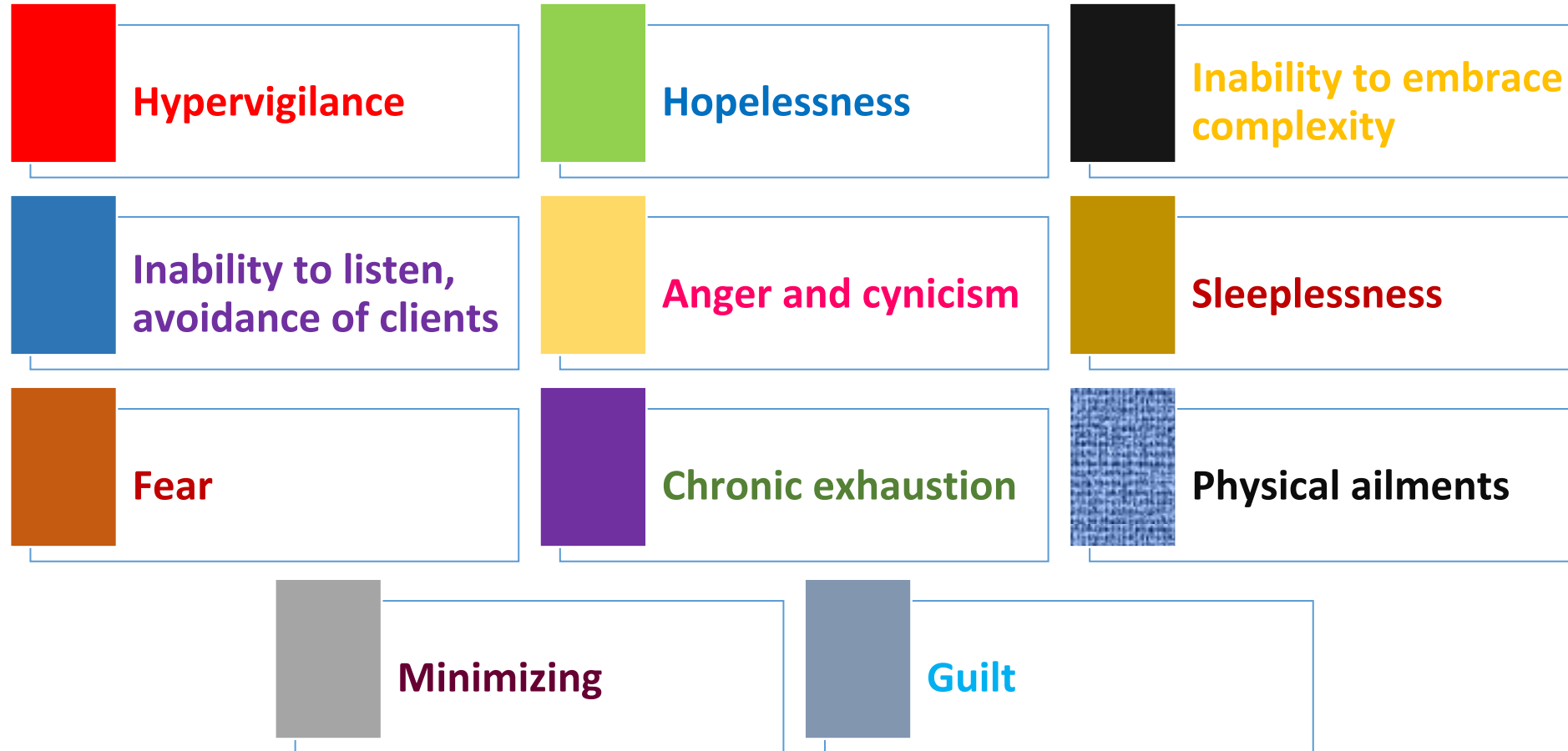
Gastrointestinal disturbances

Colds, immunity vulnerability

Headaches

Figley, C., 2013; & NCTSN, 2011

Secondary Traumatic Stress Physical And Emotional Stress Responses To Working With A Highly Traumatized Population



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

(PTSD) is a mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event — either experiencing it or witnessing it. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event.

Mayo Clinic, 2019

**Intrusive
Memories**

Avoidance

**Negative
Changes in
Thoughts &
Moods**

**Changes in
Physical &
Emotional
Reactions**

**Intensity of
Feelings**

Vicarious Trauma

NCTSN, 2011

Changes in the inner experience of a trauma worker or helper that results from empathic engagement with traumatized clients and their reports of traumatic experiences.

Being afraid to take time away from your daily activities

Thinking the worst in every situation

Reacting disproportionately

Never taking a vacation

Forgetting why you do your job

Decreased performance at work

Not getting enough sleep

Increased arguments with your family

Decreased social life

WHAT DO YOU OR YOUR CLIENTS BRING TO THE STRESS TABLE?
**ARE THERE EVENTS IN YOUR LIFE COURSE
THAT MAKE YOU MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO STRESS?**

Professional commitments

Personal/Family commitments

Physical/mental health conditions

Self-awareness

Previous traumatic events from childhood thru adulthood

Cumulative Disadvantages or Advantages over your life span in areas of education, health care, housing and finances.

Collective (Shared) Trauma

A collective trauma is a traumatic psychological effect shared by a group of people of any size, up to and including an entire society. Traumatic events witnessed by an entire society can stir up collective sentiment, often resulting in a shift in that society's culture and mass actions.

Collective (Shared) Trauma

Frontline Workers May Feel:

More Vulnerable

Fear & Anxiety: personal reactions to direct threats that distract

Emotional Reactivity: More stronger feelings;

Unexpected Reactions

Greater emotional & physical exhaustion

Increased sadness, grief or depression

Presenteeism and Increased Distractibility

Spiritual Malaise

Intrusive Imagery: Reactions to symptoms

Reactions to PPE's

Reactions to people not following social distancing

How Does a Shared Traumatic Exposure Impact Your Work with Clients?

“I care about...[my clients] professionally, but when you're hearing, or you're concerned that somebody might have died, you truly realize how much you love that person as a person, and you want to make sure they're okay.

So I recall getting calls later from people and crying when they contacted me to let me know they were okay, and similarly, I was getting calls from clients to make sure that I was okay since I'm Downtown.

So what it does is it creates a whole new level of intimacy in the transference/countertransference matrix”

(Tosone, 2014).

<https://socialworkpodcast.blogspot.com/2014/09/shared-trauma.html>,

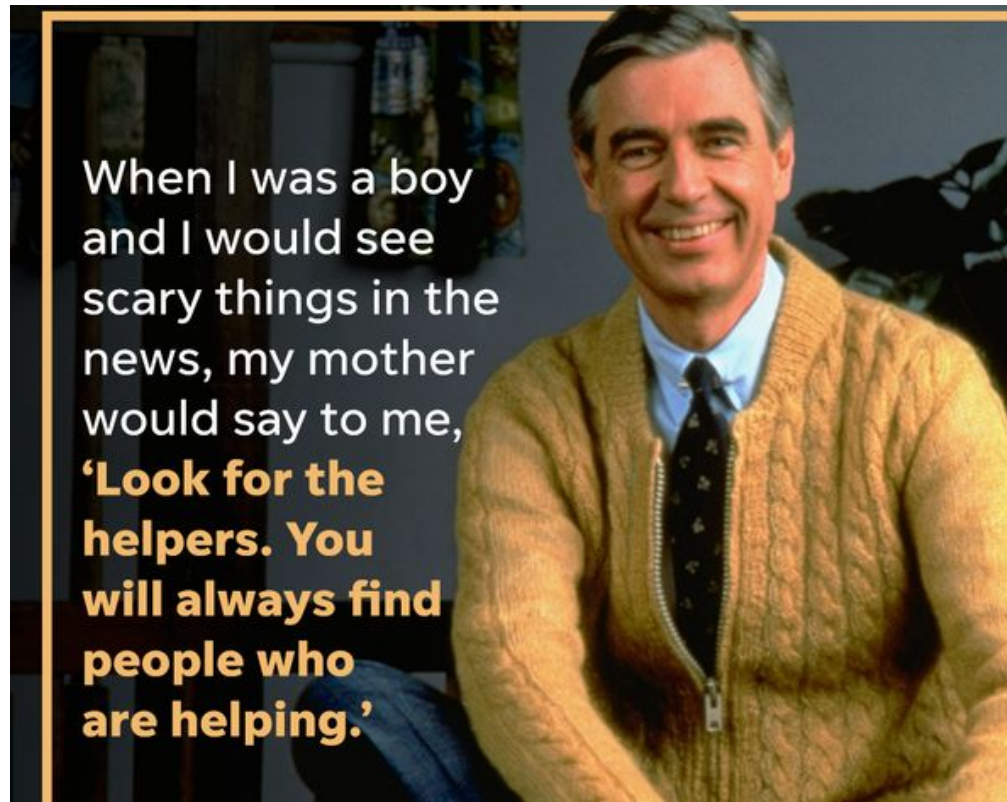
The Five Fundamental Principles for Psychological Well-Being for Agencies, Workers and Clients During COVID-19 (PTSD.VA.GOV, 2020)

Note that there are no “cookie-cutter” answers. In fact, during disasters such as this, there are more significant opportunities for innovation and variation to occur in the choice and implementation of how to incorporate these principles.

Five Fundamental Principles for Worker Wellness During A COVID-19 or Other Shared Trauma

1. Promote a sense of safety for workers and clients
2. Raise feelings of efficacy for frontline workers, workplaces and clients
3. Promote a sense of accuracy and accountability from agency to worker and from worker to client
4. Develop new communication methods: intra/inter agency and with clients
5. Build and promote a sense of calm- admin to workers; workers to clients

Who Cares For the Helpers?



- Fred Rogers

**Be kind.
Be patient.
Be generous.
Be accepting.
Be all of these things
to yourself.
That is where
it begins.**

Seed & Song

Self-Care for Frontline Workers

- Practice gratitude
- Get moving
- Stay in touch with family and friends
- Unplug
- Get outside
- Slow deep breaths
- Take up a new hobby
- Make sleep a priority
- Get organized
- Begin journaling
- Use a meditation app



Gratitude

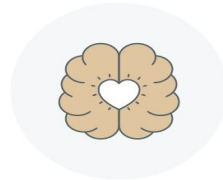
The Benefits of Gratitude



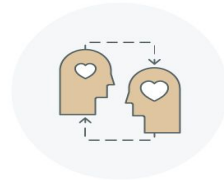
IMPROVES PHYSICAL HEALTH



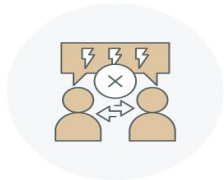
IMPROVES SLEEP



IMPROVES PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH



INCREASES EMPATHY



REDUCES AGGRESSION



MORE SOCIAL CONNECTION



ENHANCES SELF-ESTEEM



IMPROVES MENTAL STRENGTH

Source: Morin (2014)



I am grateful for:

Positive Things About My Life:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

3 Strengths/Qualities

3 Things I'm Good At Doing

Positive Things About My Health & Body

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Relations I Am Grateful For:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Activities I Enjoy

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

People Who Have Taught & Supported Me

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Grateful For A Dream I'm Moving To-



GratitudeHabitat.com

A Token of Gratitude

Many ways to express and practice gratitude, some include:

- Gratitude meditation (double whammy for self-care)
- Gratitude jar
- Gratitude journal
- Gratitude email or letter, deliver in person, if able to social distance
- Gratitude stone
- Gratitude self-prompts
 - e.g. I am grateful to hear these 3 things today; I am grateful for these three people in my life; I am grateful that my body can do these 3 things; etc.

The Sitting Disease

We all know the risks of a sedentary lifestyle

- **Obesity**
- **Heart diseases**, including **coronary artery disease** and **heart attack**
- **High blood pressure**
- **High cholesterol**
- **Stroke**
- **Metabolic syndrome**, hormonal imbalance
- **Type 2 diabetes**
- **Certain cancers**, including **colon**, **breast**, and **uterine cancers**
- **Osteoporosis** and **falls**
- Increased feelings of **depression** and **anxiety**



"I like to mix up my exercise routine. Sometimes I right click. Sometimes I double click..."

Moving Forward

1. Make your goals **DOABLE** and **MEASURABLE**

No one really likes starting an exercise routine, but rarely complain after they've exercised

2. Start around the house

Stand/walk when you are on the phone; commit to 30 minutes of low impact exercise while watching your favorite show

3. Commit to purchasing an online video class or at-home equipment

If you can't purchase one, many free videos are available on-line (YouTube, Peleton App, etc.)

Go Ahead, Be a Social Butterfly



Science says social connections:

Make us happier...

Allow us to learn better...

Live longer!!!

The Science Behind Human Connection



HUNTER | Brookdale Center
for Healthy Aging

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https://relief.unboundmedicine.com/relief/view/PTSD-National-Center-for-PTSD/1230004/all/Practical_Assistance

<https://www.lidementia.org/simple-self-care-techniques-for-caregivers/>

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/321019>

Joyous and Hopeful Videos

- <https://youtu.be/6gpoJNv5dlQ> - You'll Never Walk Alone- virtual Choir, 15 countries + 500 people
- Martha's video (?) : Les Mis <https://youtu.be/LIX1N8FfFIE>

POLL QUESTIONS

- Poll #1

1. Do you continue to provide in-person interactions with clients since the beginning of the quarantine?
_____ Yes _____ No
2. Were you given adequate PPE by your agency? _____ Yes _____ No
3. Are you only working remotely? _____ Yes _____ No
4. Were you trained by your agency about safety protocols when making home visits?
_____ Yes _____ No
5. Do you have children living with you? _ Yes. Ages _____ _____ No

POLL #2

Poll #2

1. Do you live with family member (s) who are frontline workers who work outside the home?
 Yes
 No
2. If yes, what type of work do they perform
 Law enforcement (NYPD)
 Fire department
 Medical staff, e.g., Physician, RN , EMT
 Nursing home or rehab center
 Homecare workers
 Restaurant or grocery store employee
3. Is there an elderly person(s) living with you?
 Yes
 No
4. Did someone in your immediate family contract COVID-19?
 Yes, relationship _____
 No
5. Was this person hospitalized?
 Yes
 No
6. Have you lost a family member or someone to COVID-19 with whom you have a close relationship?
 Yes
 No

THANK YOU FOR SHARING THIS TIME WITH US

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