

**Preventing Compassion Fatigue
Through SELF-CARE**



WestEd
Center for Child & Family Studies

Julie Kurtz, Regional Director

**“ To put the world in order we
must first put the nation in
order; to put the nation in order;
we must first put the family in
order; to put the family in order,
we must first cultivate our
personal life; we must first set
our hearts right.” — Confucius**

A Journey to the Center of Yourself

“According to Neuroscientists, we are only conscious of 5 percent of our cognitive activity, so most of our decisions, actions, emotions and behaviors depend on 95 percent of our brain activity that goes beyond our conscious awareness.”



— Jeffery Fannin and Robert Williams from Neuroconnections Newsletter Fall 2011

What is Healthy Development for Adults?

- ❖ Building a strong relationship with yourself and others
- ❖ Create environments where you are restored and thrive
- ❖ To be able to experience, identify, express, emotions
- ❖ Establish a positive sense of self
- ❖ Be able to adapt to life's ups and downs and stay grounded and steady
- ❖ The ability to prioritize taking care of oneself and promote an optimally healthy lifestyle
- ❖ Build a strong set of tools socially and emotionally

Know thyself! Get a Ph.D in you!

Adapted by the Mayo Clinic:

What do we mean by “burnout”?

Burnout is a special type of stress — a state of physical, emotional or mental exhaustion combined with doubts about your competence and value



Compassion Fatigue

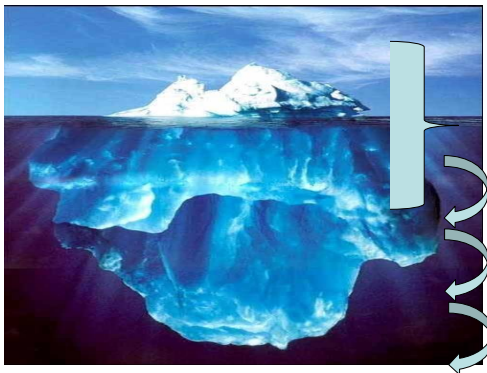
- Just as an untreated cold can turn into something more serious, burnout that is not addressed may turn into compassion fatigue. Formally defined, compassion fatigue is “a state of tension and preoccupation with individual or cumulative trauma of clients” (Figley, 2002, p.125).

Signs of Compassion Fatigue

- Physical exhaustion
- Insomnia
- Headaches or migraines
- Increase susceptibility to illness
- Somatization or hypochondria
- Increased use of substances
- Anger or irritability
- Exaggerated sense of responsibility
- Avoidance of clients
- Impaired ability to make decisions
- Forgetfulness
- Compromised care for clients

Stress is in the Eye of the Beholder

- What is stressful for one may not be for another
- Happy events can be stressful
- Stress can impact our reactions to people and situations
- Cumulative stress without the balance of restorative activities can lead to long-term adverse health or mental health consequences



Impact of Stress

- The physical toll of this constant state of increased stress comes in the form of various illnesses and physical complaints such as insomnia, backaches, headaches, stomach aches, high blood pressure, and even heart disease.
- The more intense and constant the stressors, the more an individual's emotional and physical health may be compromised.

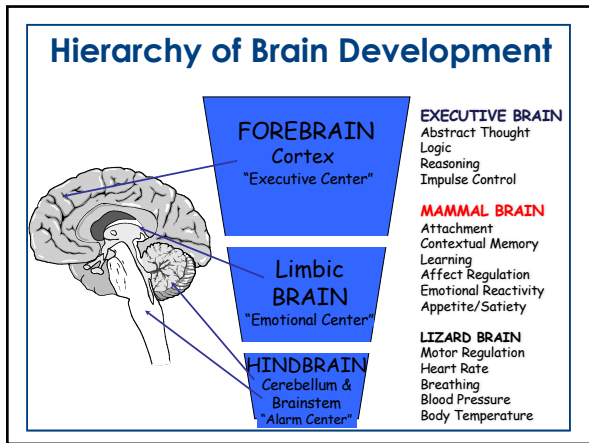
WARNING SIGNS STOP

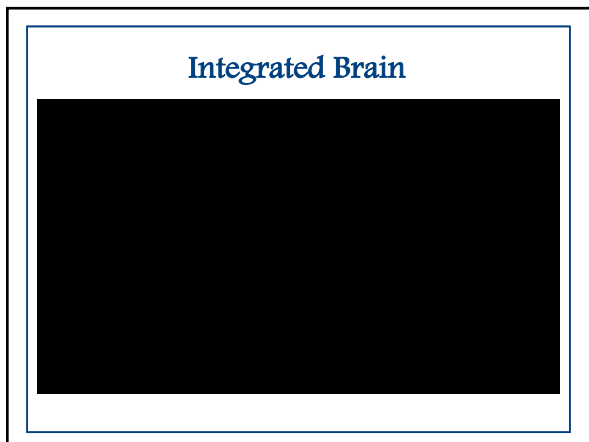
- Have you become cynical or critical?
- Do you drag yourself to work and have trouble getting started once you arrive?
- Have you become irritable or impatient with family, co-workers, customers or clients?
- Do you lack the energy to be consistently productive?
- Do you lack satisfaction from life or your achievements?
- Are you using substances such as food, drugs or alcohol to feel better or to simply not feel?
- Have your sleep habits or appetite changed?
- Are you troubled by unexplained headaches, backaches or other physical complaints?

Things that you WANT to be fried









Relationships

- You Taking care of yourself has to do with, well, YOURSELF! This is the starting place.
- We can't expect our families, friends, colleagues, or organizations to place a value on self-care if we don't do so ourselves.
- Self-care, restorative activities and life-work balance equate to increased energy, reduced stress and a stronger ability to be present when giving to others.
- Self-care allows you to be more balanced, more readily available to care for others

For those caring for traumatized or vulnerable children...

It is almost impossible to hold a strong, grounded space for others unless we have our own team who will hold a safe, nurturing space for us. - Julie Kurtz



Relationships

- Our relationships with others are a key piece of taking care of ourselves. Sometimes these relationships help; sometimes they distract. Taking care of ourselves cannot happen in isolation.
- We must surround ourselves with those who help support us, listen to us, care for us and bring positive supports to us.
- Choosing who we are surrounded by can help promote our health and well being.

Connecting with Others

- Self-care can be as much about spending time in the company of others as it is about making time for ourselves. For many of us, our primary connections are to **family and very close friends**. These are the people who we come home to or speak with at the end of the day.
- These intimate connections are frequently our **“life support,”** and yet these are the relationships that tend to suffer most when we are overwhelmed.

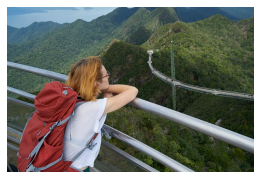
Reflecting on Connections

- What rituals do you share with closest friends/family? How do these promote self-care?
- How do you balance your time among work, other responsibilities, and important connections?
- What connections enable you to reflect on the things going on in your life?
- What activities do you enjoy doing with friends/family? Are these activities part of your routine? If not, how could you incorporate them?
- How do you communicate with friends/family who are a part of your daily life?
- Is there anything you would like to change about your Connections? What would you like to stay the same?



Protective Gear

- Every profession needs protective gear. Help me think of the protective gear worn by the following:
 - Firefighter
 - Police Officer
 - Chemist
 - Football Players
 - Construction Workers
 - Child Care Professional/Helping Profession







Physical Environment

- **Think of a store you love going to (that restores you).**
 - Describe the environment.
 - What in particular makes you feel peaceful, restored or energized in this environment?
- **Think of a store you dread going to (that dysregulates you).**
 - Describe the environment.
 - What in particular makes you feel uncomfortable, dysregulated or more anxious in this environment?

Activity adapted from Brault Behavior Training: brault@wested.org



Environment

- Our work and living space plays a large role in our lives. It is where we spend much of our waking time and energy. The environment we live in must continue to nurture our spirit of rest, relaxation and restorative space **What space do you want to create?**
- To help them through their journey, we must create organizational cultures with an environment that value care of the self, the team, and the organization. **How can you contribute to a work environment that is nurturing and responsive and peaceful?**

Self-Talk


- Positive Messages You Send Yourself Daily...
- Critical Messages You Send Yourself Daily...


Ratio of Negative to Positive

<p>Negative Self-Talk</p> <p>to</p> <p>Positive Self-Talk</p>	<p>Positive Self-Talk</p> <p>to</p> <p>Negative Self-Talk</p>

Acknowledging YOU! Let's Practice...

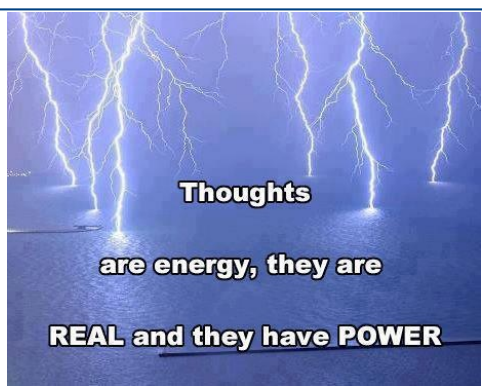
Name 5 Things You Did This Week that were kind and compassionate for yourself?	How did it feel to do those things for yourself?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	



Activity 

Internal Dialogue

- How many times do you say negative things in your head?
- **What theme does the endless stream of thoughts going through your head say? Is the glass half empty or full?**
- What is the impact of negative self-talk on you, others or the environment you are in?



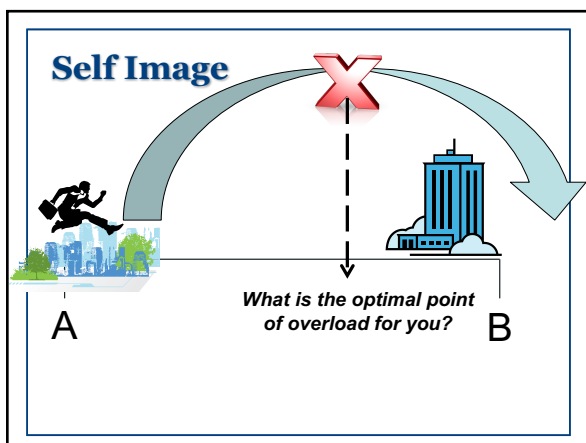
Thoughts
are energy, they are
REAL and they have POWER

“Your beliefs act like filters on a camera, changing how you see the world. And your biology adapts to those beliefs.”

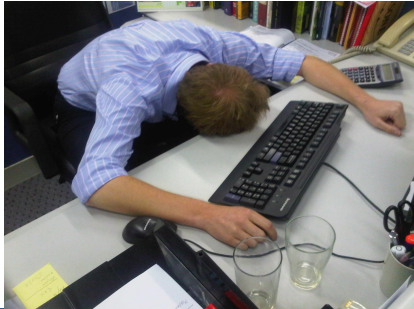
– Jeffery Fannin and Robert Williams from Neuroconnections Newsletter Fall 2011

What Happens When Your Plate is Too Full?





What Happens When You are on Overload?



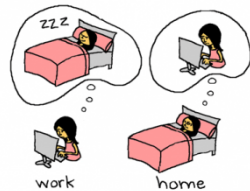
Mental Real Estate

Only so much room in our minds



Taking Care of Self

- Work/Life Balance
- 93% of the population has a stronger **WORK SIDE** than **SELF SIDE**



Adapted from the Judgment Index USA

Taking Care of Self

- **Care for yourself** AS WELL as you care for others
- Can be especially difficult for those in “caretaker” roles (i.e. parents, nurses, teachers, pastors, counselors, etc.)
 - As role gets larger, becomes even more difficult
 - Remember oxygen mask example!!!

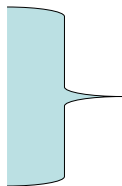
Do you provide as much if not more care for yourself as others?



Taking Care of Self

= Need to replenish problem-solving energy

General Work Pressure
Too Much on Plate
Lack of Rest, Relaxation, and Restorative Activities



What Can Help Us Predict Burnout?

- TRIGGERS:
 - What are cues/triggers at in **BLUE ZONE** when I am calm? What can I do during that time?
 - What are the cues/triggers when I am in **GREEN ZONE**? What tools can you use during that time?
 - What are the cues/triggers you are in the **YELLOW ZONE**? What can I do during that time?
 - What are the cues/triggers you are in the **RED ZONE**? What can I do during that time?

Adapted from the Zones of Regulation by Michelle Winner Garcia



CAUTION! TRIGGERS AHEAD!!

What are your triggers?



Activity: If You Had Only XXX Minutes...

Instructions: Use Flip Chart or Binder Paper to list what you can do to care for yourself if you only had XX amount of time. List as many strategies as you can think of:

- 5 minutes
- 15 minutes
- 1 hour
- ½ Day
- Full Day
- Full Week



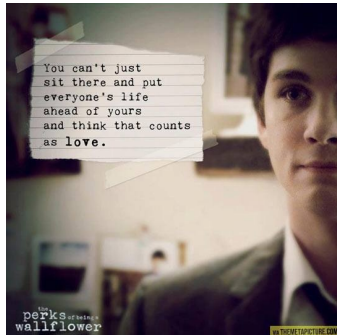
LIFE Mantra

The ancient Greek aphorism: “Know Thyself”

Life goal is a Ph.D in YOU!



Mantra for Self



Take This Personally

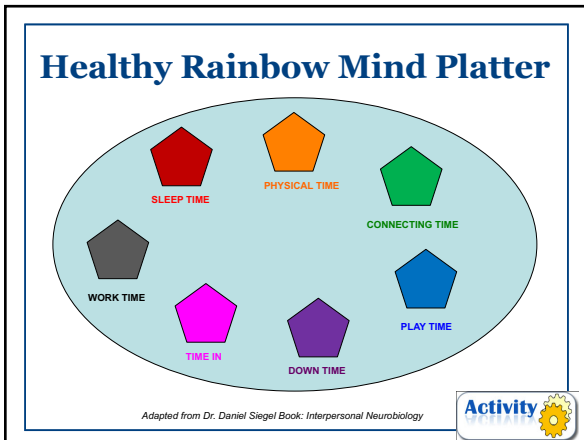
“By emitting loving or joyful energy vibrations/thoughts our subconscious influences others to feel the same way toward us.”

— Jeffery Fannin and Robert Williams from Neuroconnections Newsletter Fall 2011

Brave Next Steps

- Take some time to fill in the “Healthy Mind Platter” Handout.
- This is a plan for you. A commitment for you to work on areas needing development around caring for yourself.
- Make your next steps simple, achievable and that allows for you to feel successful.





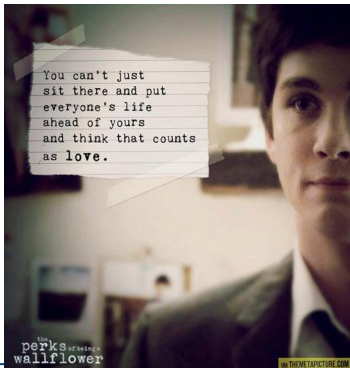
Protective Factors

- Protective factors are things that contribute to mental health, and allow a person to be resilient in the face of challenges.
- Someone with a lot of protective factors will be better equipped to overcome life's obstacles.
- Some protective factors are out of your control.
- By focusing on what you can control, and building upon those protective factors, you will improve your ability to cope with many of life's challenges.

And the answer is...

TIME

Mantra for Self



Closing Activity

Picking a Compassion Fatigue Mantra



Thank you!

***"I've got to keep breathing.
It'll be my worst business
mistake if I don't."***

—Steve Martin



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Resources

- www.ace-network.com/cfs/spotlight.htm
- American Institute of Stress: www.stress.org
- American Psychological Association (search for "compassion fatigue"): www.apa.org
- Association of Clinicians for the Underserved, Strength for Serving Project: www.clinicians.org/programsandservices/strengthforserving/strength_serving_intro.html
- Fried Social Worker: www.friedsocialworker.com
- HelpGuide: www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_relief_meditation_yoga_relaxation.htm
- Homelessness Resource Center: www.homeless.samhsa.gov
- Life Balance Assessment Inventory: <http://tinyurl.com/lifebalance>
- National Health Care for the Homeless Council: <http://nhchc.org/healthyenviron.html>
- Fried Social Worker: www.friedsocialworker.com
- HelpGuide: www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_relief_meditation_yoga_relaxation.htm