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# Managing the Impact of Secondary Traumatic Stress and Burnout Among Child-Serving Professionals: Practical Strategies for Self-Awareness & Well-Being

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SCHOOL

# Lifeline For Kids



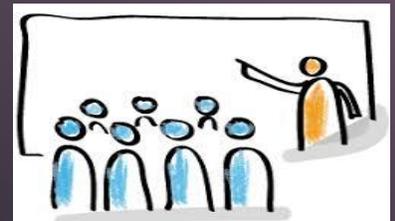
**Widespread trauma-informed & trauma-responsive training across professional groups**



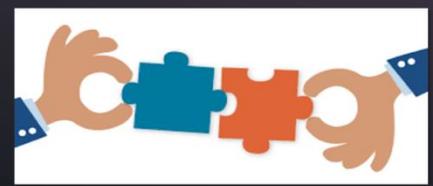
**Creation of a neutral Centralized Referral System, LINK-KID (1-855-LINK-KID)**



**Dissemination of training in Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy**



**TRAIN**

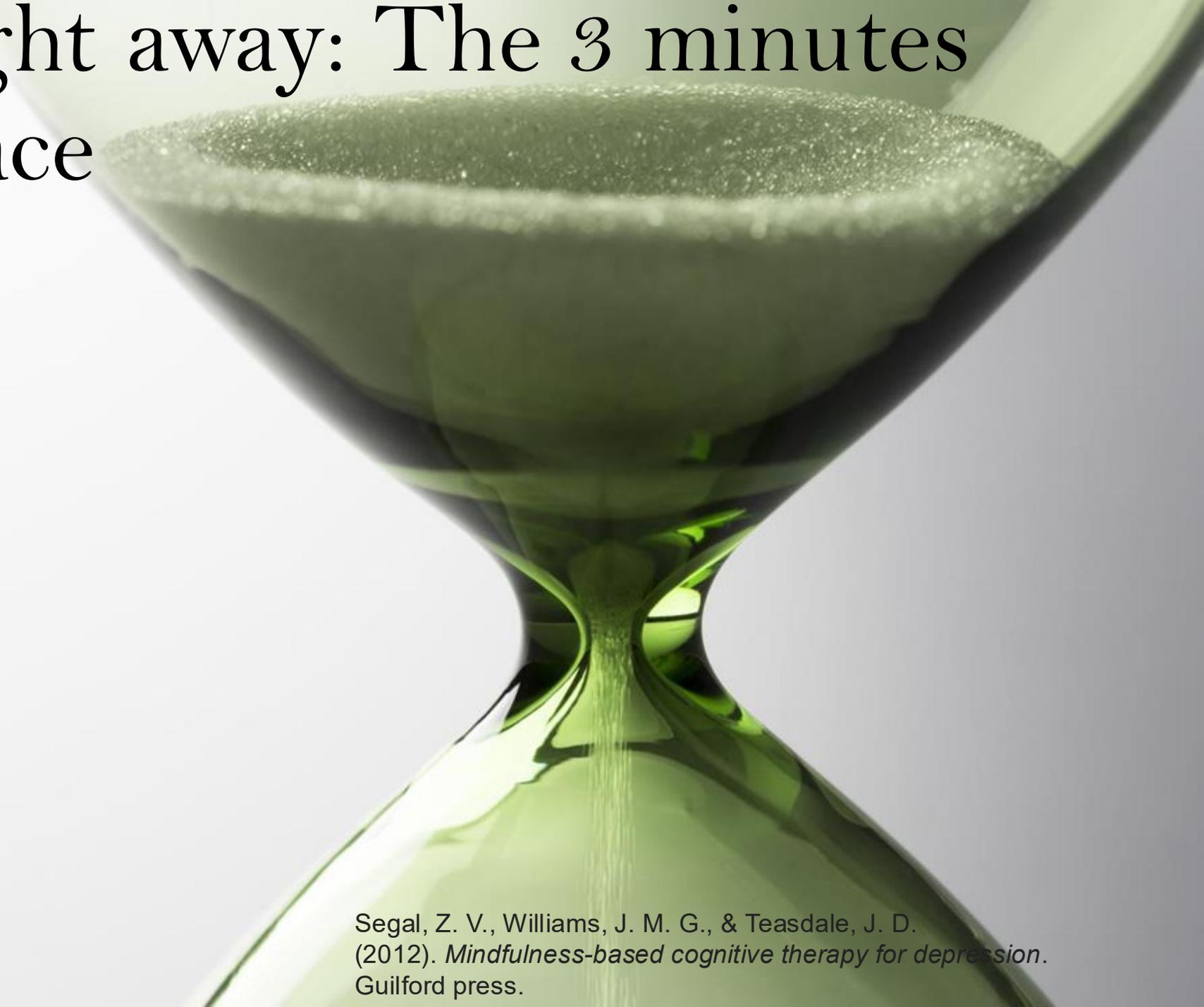


**LINK**



**TREAT**

# Let's start right away: The 3 minutes breathing space



## Step 1:

**Check-in what is here for you right now? What thoughts, what emotions and what body sensations are here?**

## Step 2:

**Now focus on your *breath*. Focus on the sensations in your body as you breath in and out.**

## Step 3:

**And now expand your awareness to your *body* as a whole. Be aware of your posture, of your face, of your breathing.**

Segal, Z. V., Williams, J. M. G., & Teasdale, J. D. (2012). *Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for depression*. Guilford press.

# Agenda



- Definition of Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS), Burnout and related terms
- Signs and symptoms
- Practical strategies
  - Self-awareness
  - Connectedness
  - Regulation & Reflective practices

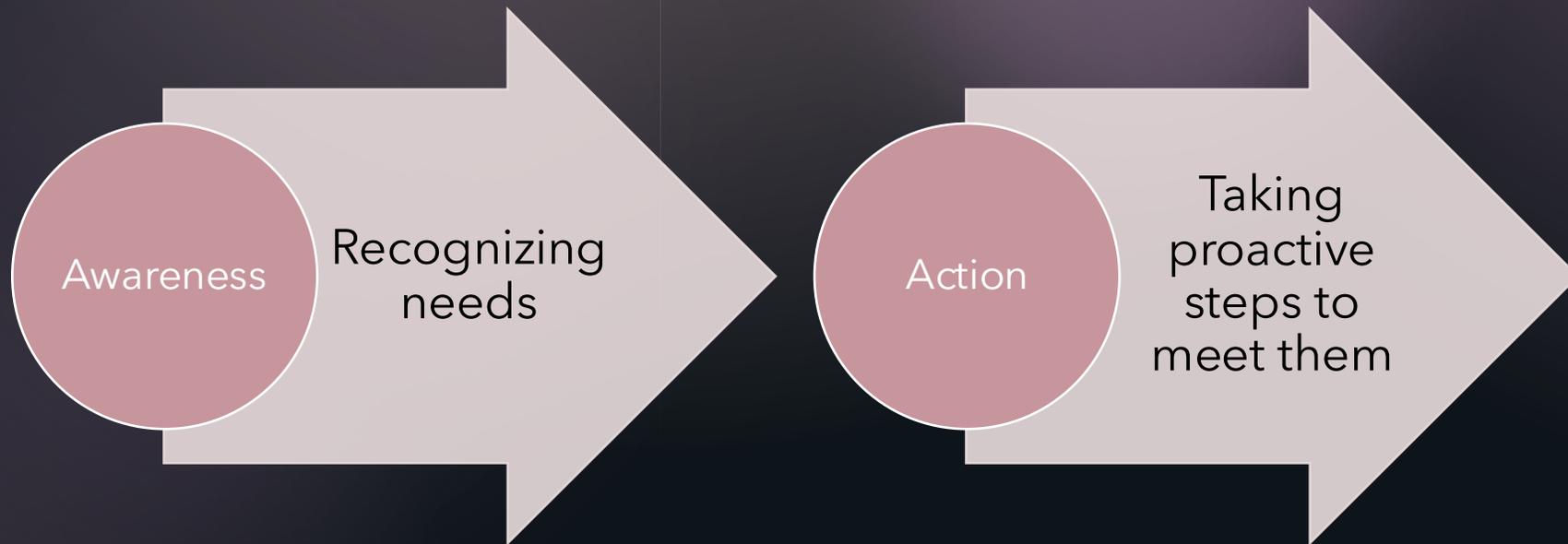


# Self-Care [or self-awareness]: a burden or a choice?

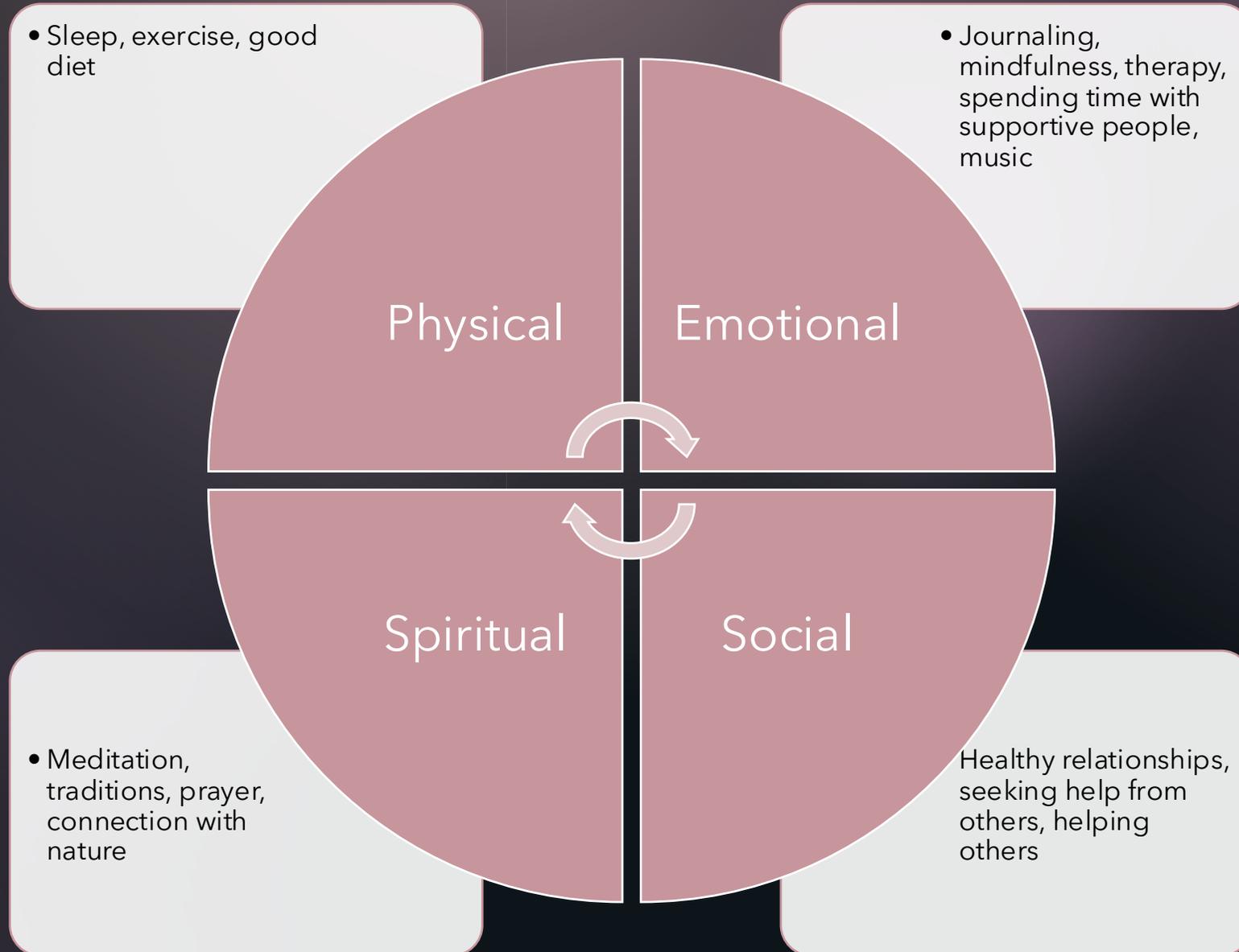
*True self-care is not bubble baths and rose petals; it is making the choice to **build a life you don't need to escape from.***

# What is self-care?

- The **intentional practices** and activities individuals engage in to maintain and enhance their physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being. It involves **recognizing** personal needs and **taking proactive steps** to meet them, ensuring balance and resilience in daily life.



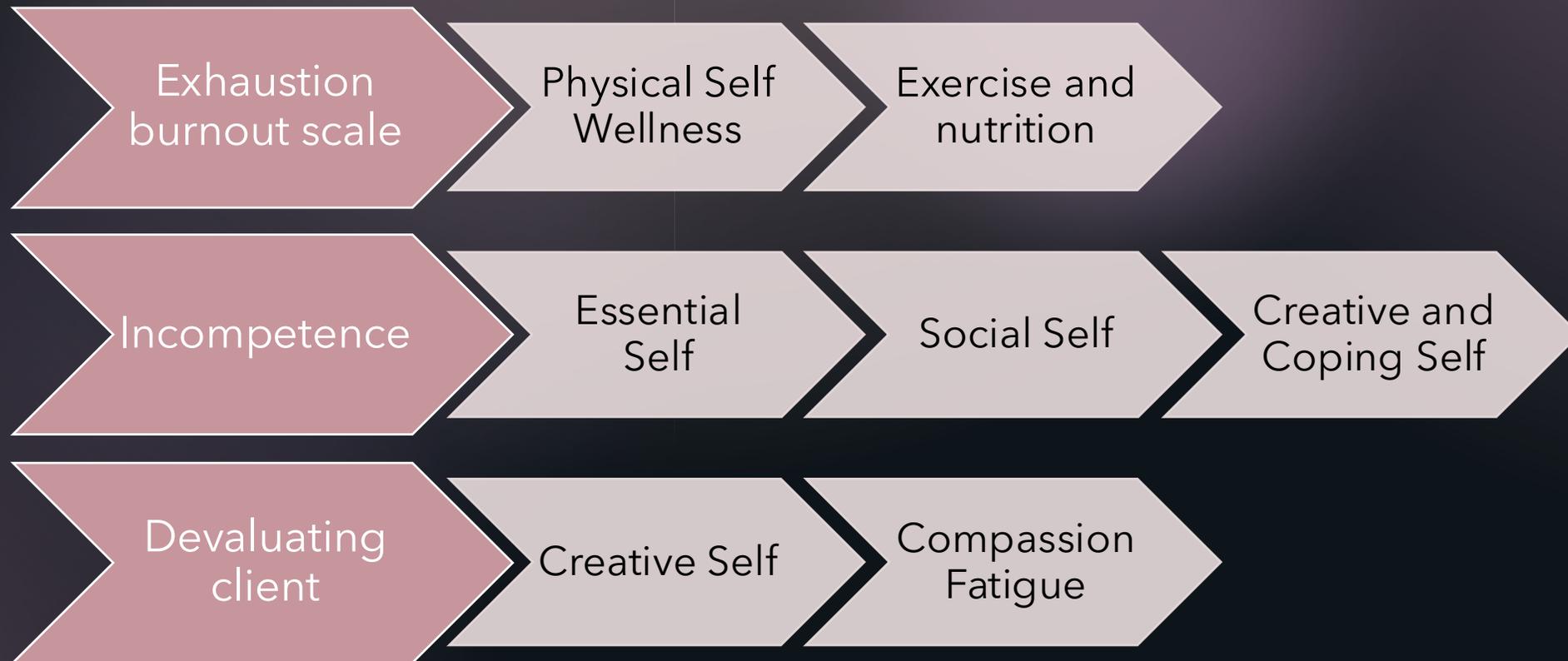
# Key aspects



# It is all connected: job burnout and personal wellness

relationship between job burnout and personal wellness in mental health professionals

Ana Puig, Adrienne Baggs, Kacy Mixon, Yang Min Park, Bo Young Kim, and Sang Min Lee



- Each person might be in a different stage of their lives where self-care might be challenging
- In each stage of our lives, we may need a different type of self-care
- It may not be pleasurable all the time, or naturally coming to you, but it is about intention and self-discipline

And also..



Why  
talking  
about STS  
& burnout?



# What are your top sources of stress in your current role?

- Heavy caseload or unmanageable workload
- High work demands or unrealistic expectations
- Lack of funding or job insecurity
- Challenging workplace dynamics (e.g., microaggressions, poor supervision)
- Emotionally taxing or complex client situations
- Personal life stressors
- Limited opportunities for professional growth
- Feeling isolated or unsupported in your role
- Other (please share in chat)

# STS and burnout among child protection professionals

50% of US physicians suffer burnout: 1 in 15 reported suicidal thoughts during COVID-19

97.8% of social workers indicated their client population experienced trauma (Bride et al., 2007) and 50% of child welfare workers at high risk of STS

70.2% experienced at least one symptom of PTSD and 55% met criteria for a full symptoms cluster (e.g. hyperarousal, irritability, sleep problems, etc.); 15.2% full PTSD diagnosis

20-40% of psychotherapists suffer burnout (O'Connor et al., 2017)

# Predictors of STS/burnout

## Work settings

- Working in independent setting < burnout
- Mixed results about outpatient vs inpatient
- Job demand, workload, support

## Clients' factors

- Suicidal behaviors, complexity, relapse, "difficult personality traits", grief

## Personal factors

# Predictive factors among professionals

MH & trauma history

Psychological distress  
(personal, etc.)

Sense of Competence

Coping style

Race

Age

Educational level

Parental status

# Protective factors

## Personal factors

- Family support
- Self-care

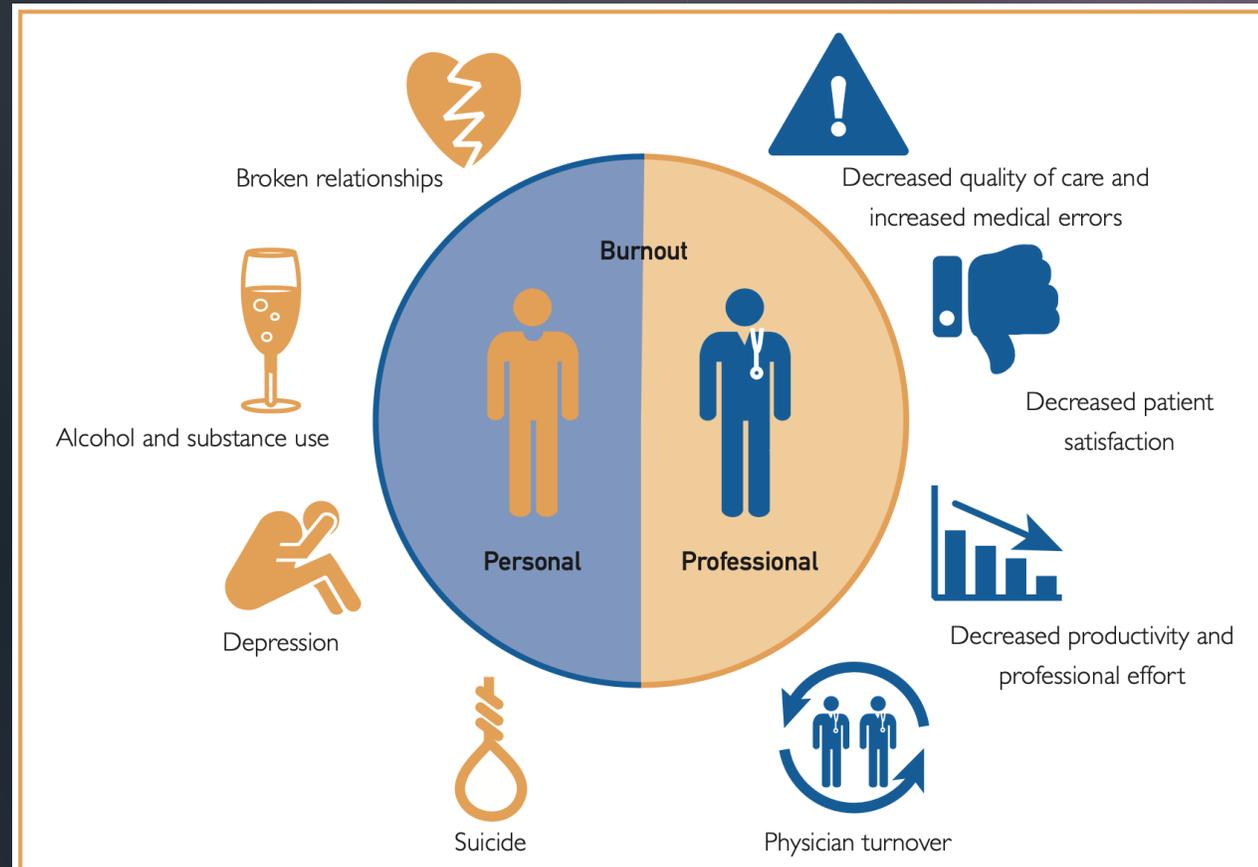
## Professional factors

- Agency acknowledging STS (“Just knowing your supervisor or management knew that the work had impacts on us was huge.” )
- Organizational strategies: job sharing, supervision
- Professional mastery (mitigated STS for 67% of workers)
- High job satisfaction

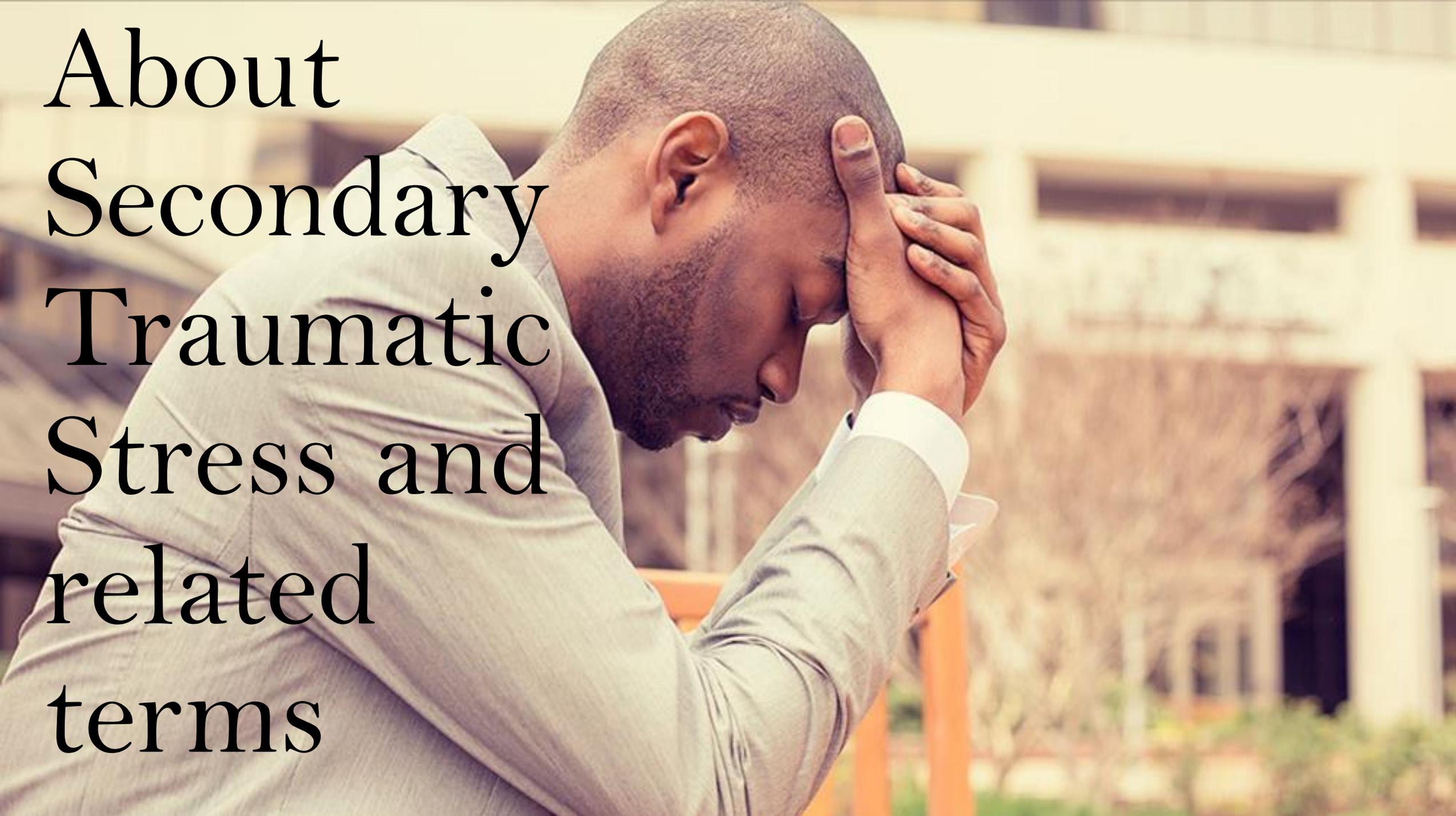
## Peer support

- Need to process stressful experiences with colleagues, peers, friends, partner
- Humor

# Consequences



Shanafelt, T. D., & Noseworthy, J. H. (2017, January). Executive leadership and physician well-being: nine organizational strategies to promote engagement and reduce burnout. In *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* (Vol. 92, No. 1, pp. 129-146). Elsevier.



About  
Secondary  
Traumatic  
Stress and  
related  
terms

# Secondary Traumatic Stress

- Secondary Traumatic Stress is the emotional distress that results when an individual hears (reads, sees) about the firsthand trauma experiences of another.
- For individuals who care for individuals who have experienced trauma and their families, hearing trauma stories can take an **emotional toll**.
- STS symptoms can range from mild to severe, at which point individuals can develop **post-traumatic stress disorder** (PTSD).





# Burnout

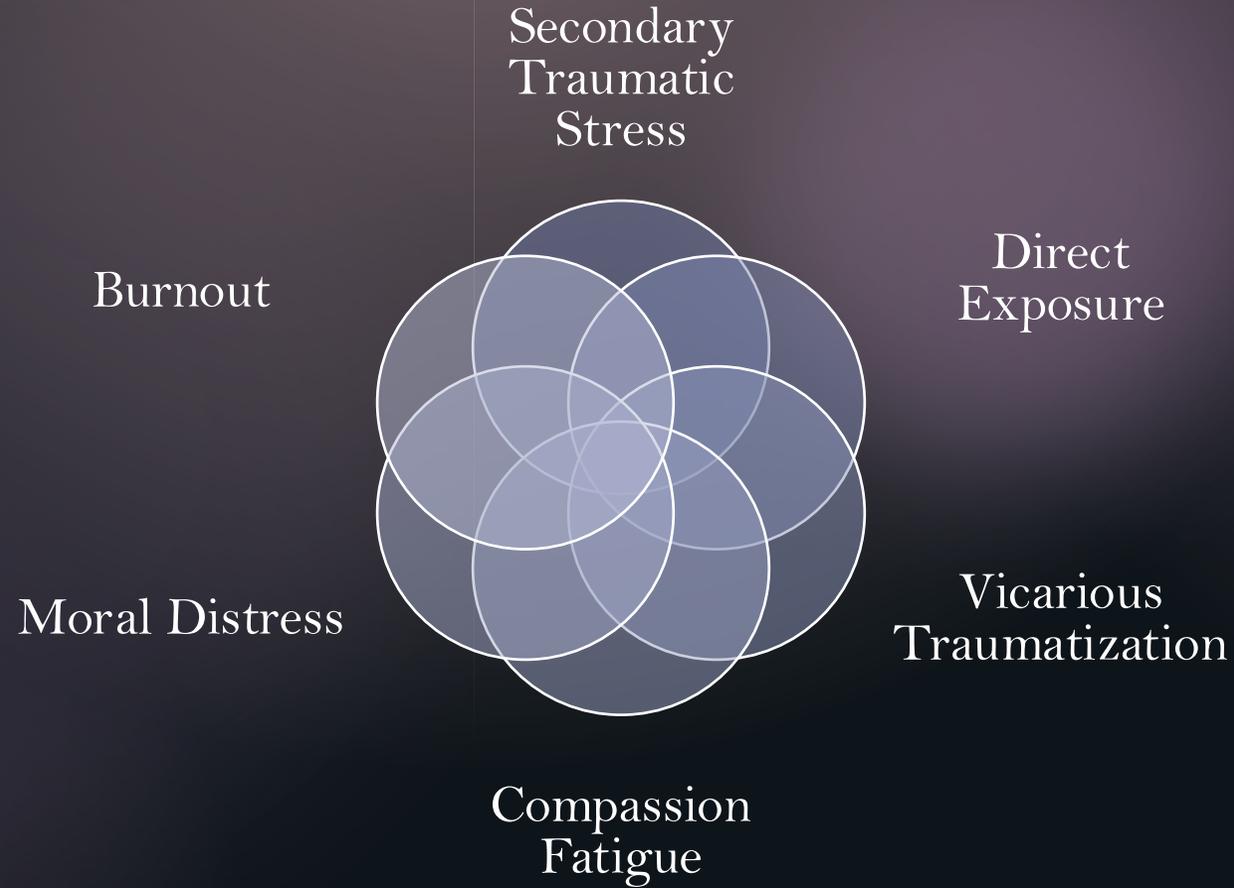
- Emotional exhaustion
- Depersonalization
- Reduced feelings of personal accomplishment

“I began to stop caring about my clients”

*Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1982*

Yang, Y. & Hayes, J. A. (2020). Causes and Consequences of Burnout Among Mental Health Professionals. *Psychotherapy*, 57 (3), 426-436. doi: 10.1037/pst0000317.

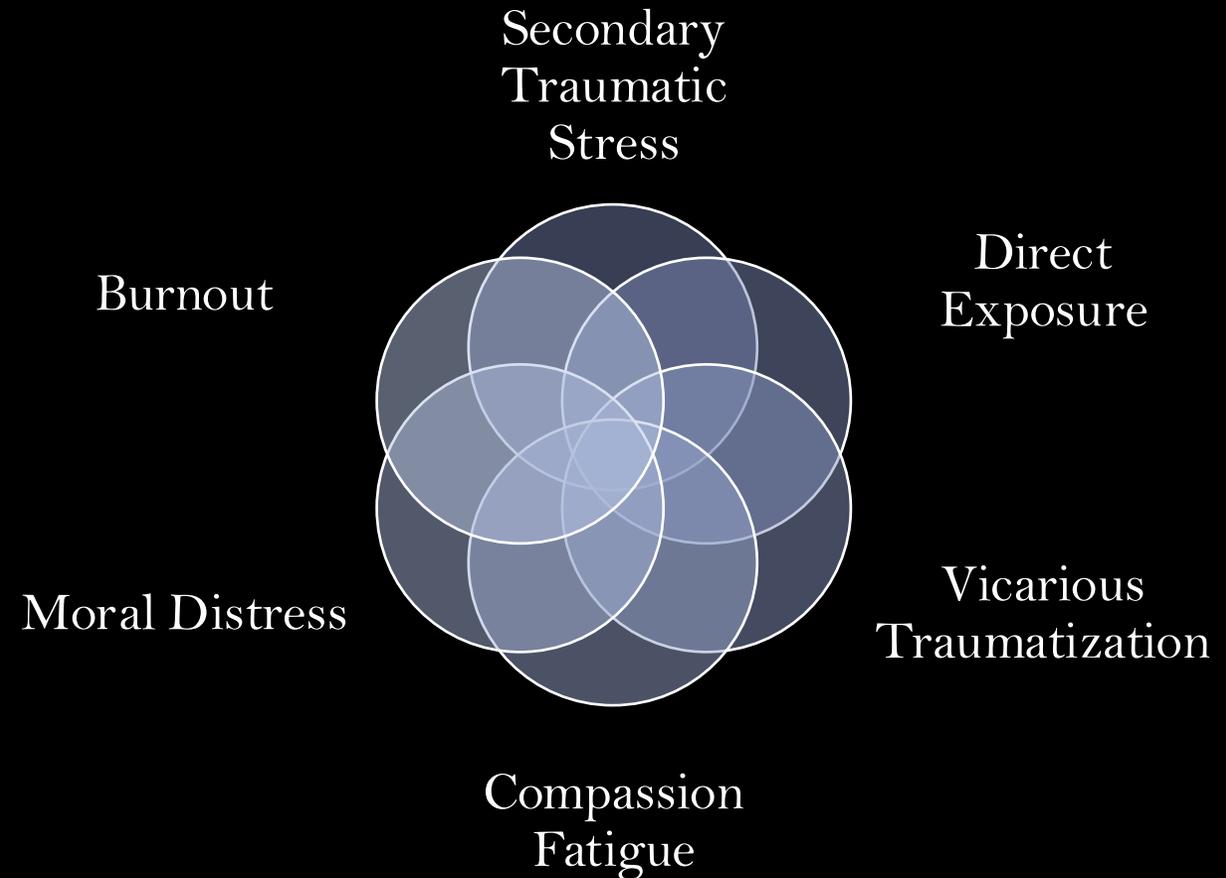
# Related terms



# Related Terms

## Direct Exposure

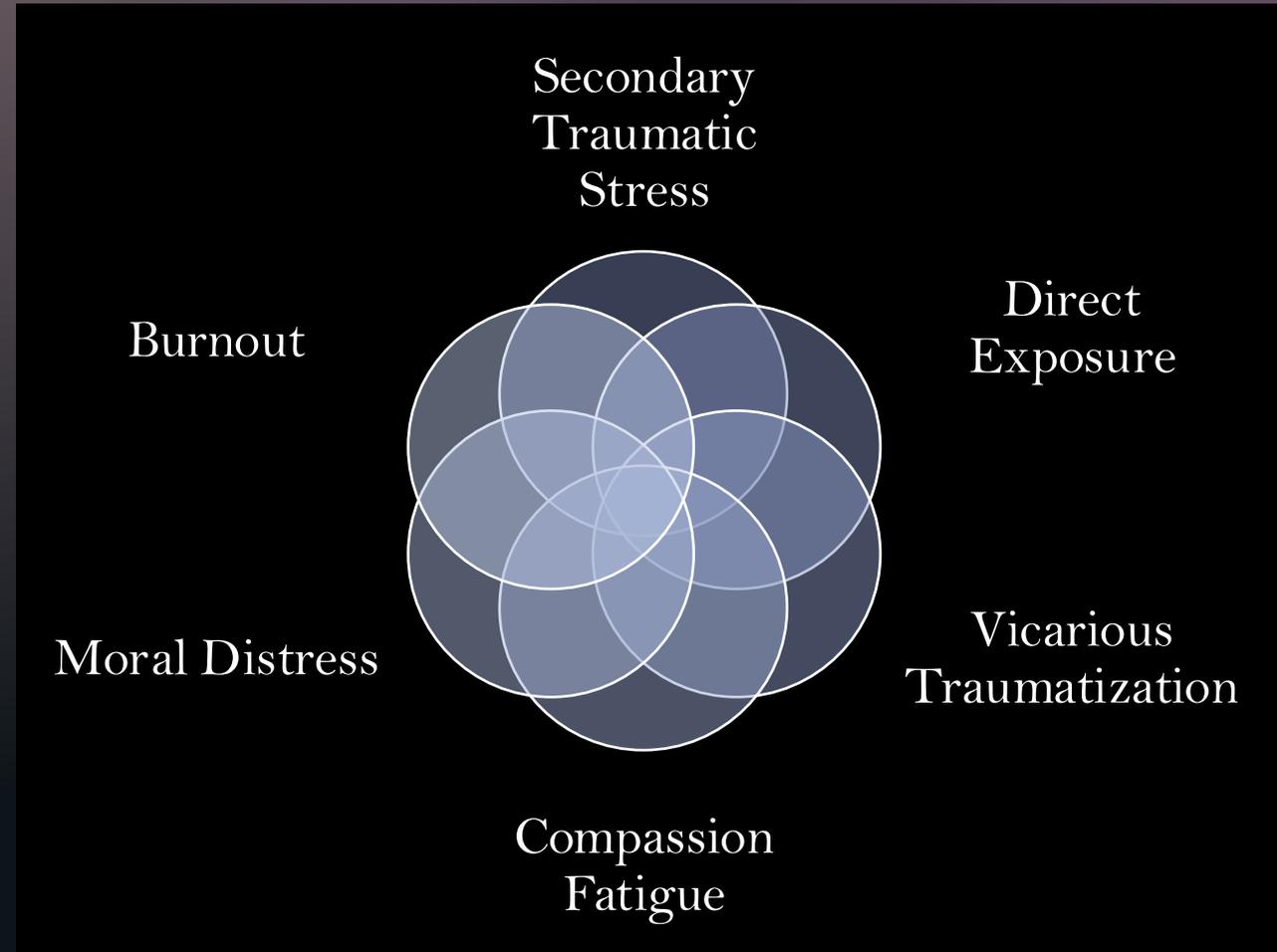
Many child-serving professionals are directly exposed to trauma during the course of carrying out their daily work responsibilities. These are events that involve a direct threat to the provider or witnessing threats to others.



# Related Terms

## Vicarious Traumatization

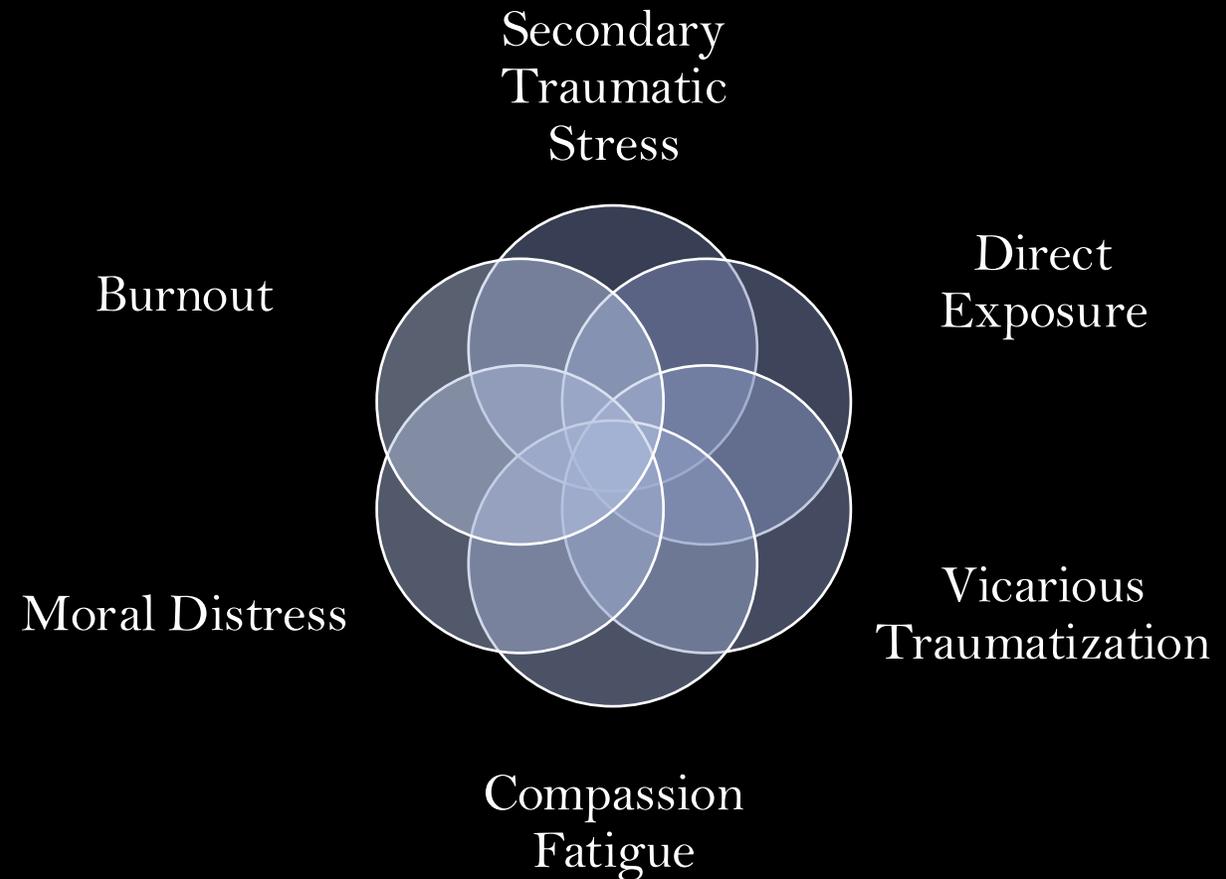
Changes in the *inner experience* of the provider, such as expectations for trust, safety, control, esteem, or intimacy, that result from *cumulative and chronic* exposure.



# Related Terms

## Compassion Fatigue

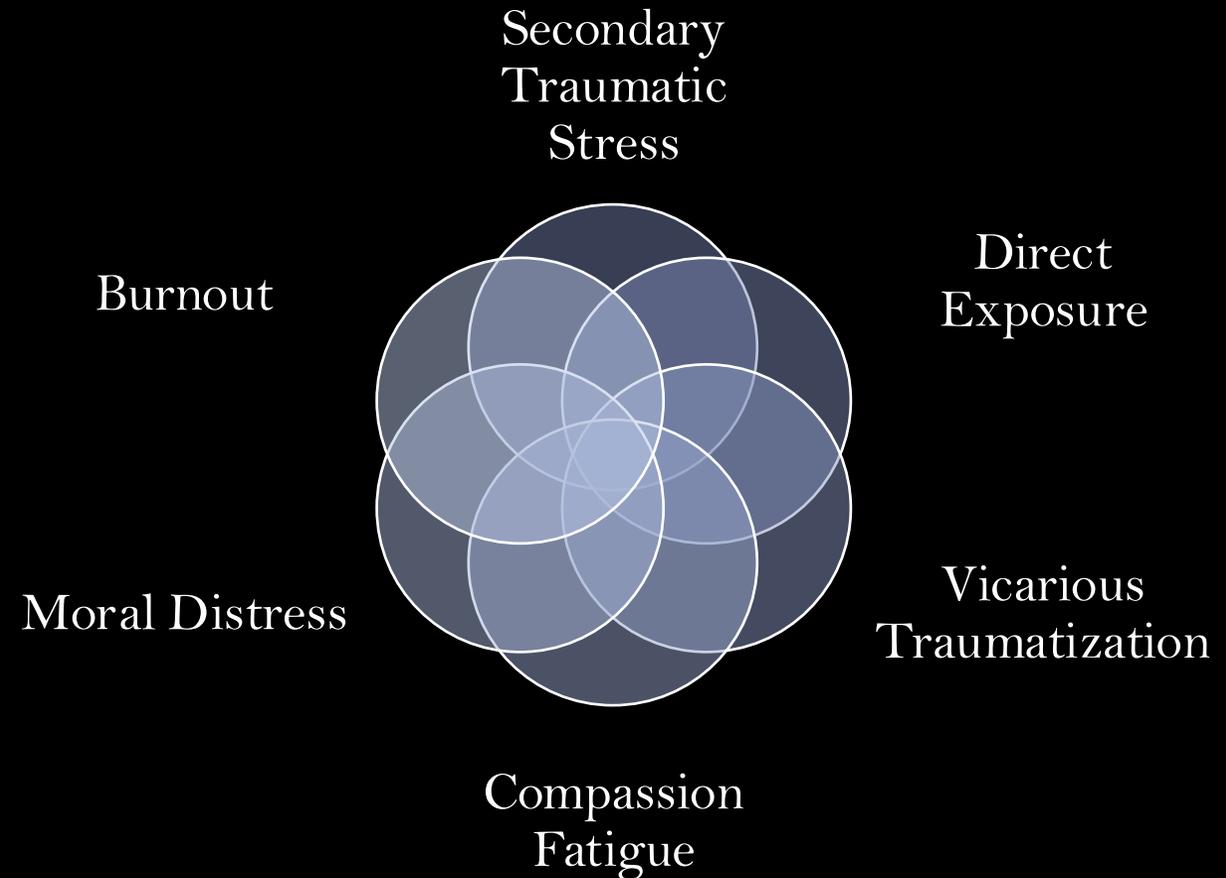
The physical and emotional exhaustion experienced by those who care for others who are in distress. Reduced capacity or interest in being empathic



# Related Terms

## Moral Distress

Stress that occurs when one believes they know the right thing to do, but institutional or other constraints make it difficult to pursue the desired course of action.



# Related Terms

## **Compassion Satisfaction**

- Positive aspects of the work, such as inspiring and rewarding work with students and belief that one's work makes a meaningful contribution to students and society.



# Reflective Exercise

**Consider how these descriptions of STS and related terms resonate with your own experiences.**

- *Can you relate to this?*
- *What is it bringing up for you?*
- *How did you first notice the impact your job was having on you?*

# Signs and symptoms

Hopelessness

Inability to embrace complexity

Inability to listen, avoidance (including of certain clients)

Anger and cynicism

Sleeplessness

Chronic exhaustion and/or physical ailments

Minimizing

Guilt

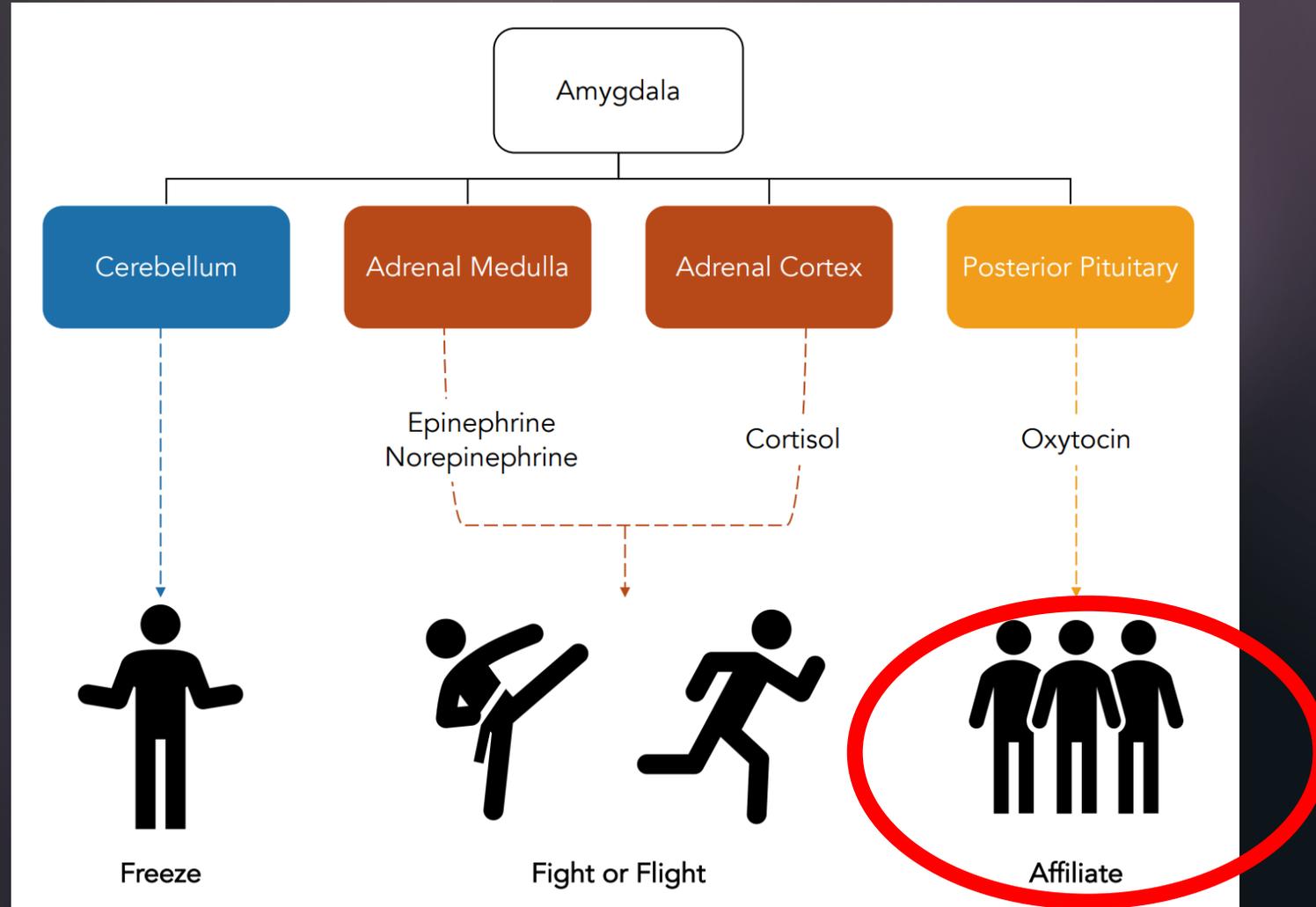
Preoccupation with clients/client stories

Intrusive thoughts/nightmares/flashbacks

Feeling estranged/isolated/no one to talk to

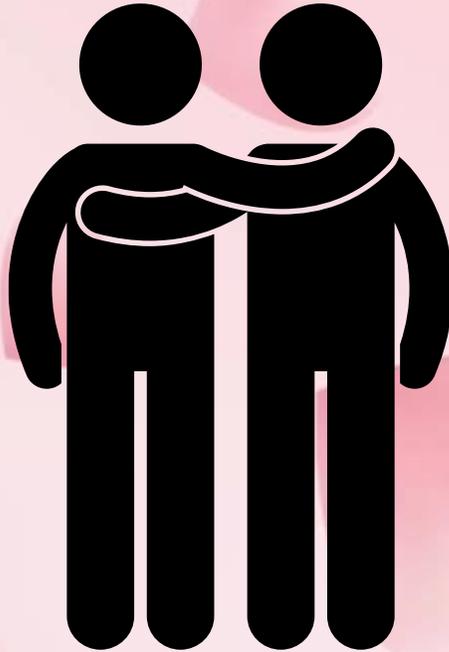
Feeling trapped, "infected" by trauma, inadequate, depressed

# Physiology of the stress response



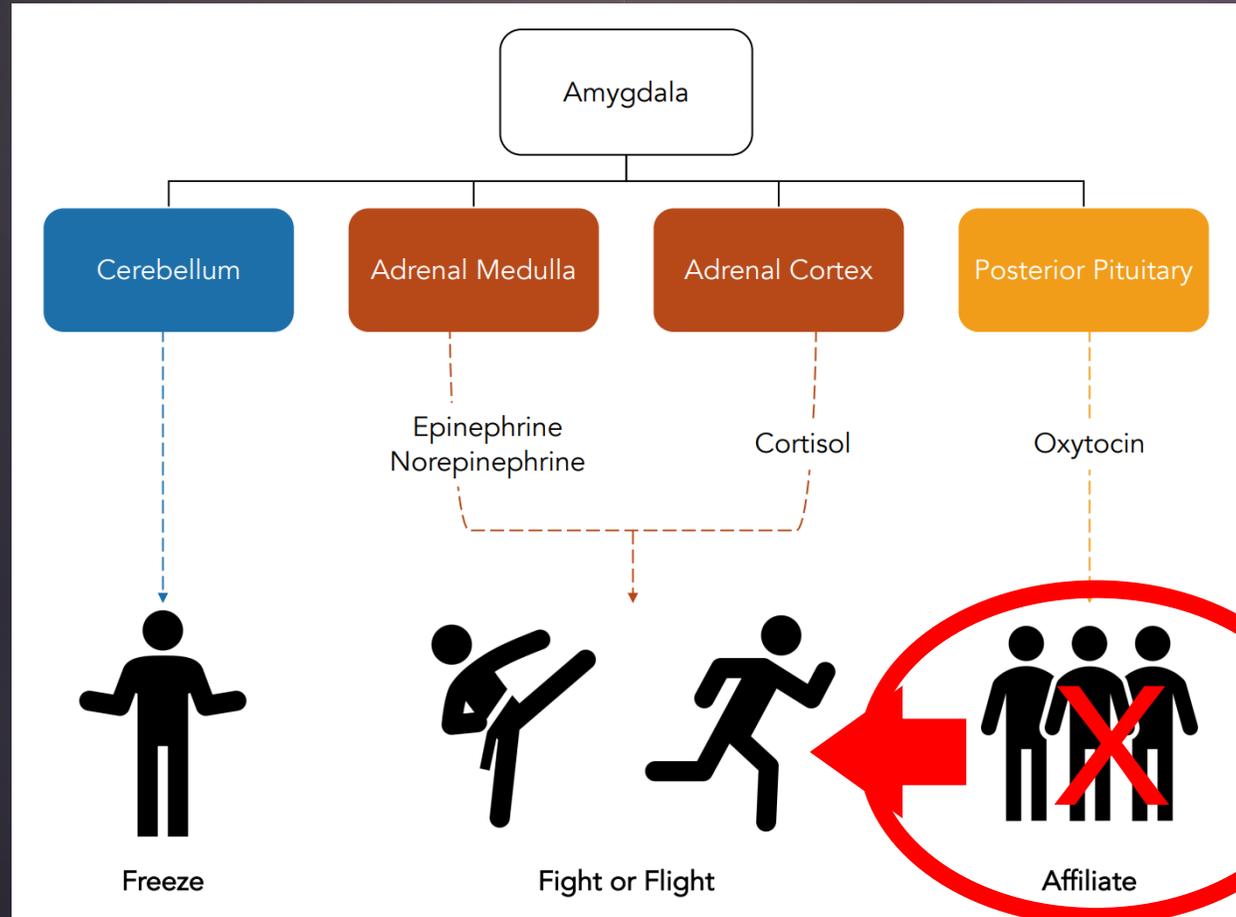
# Or the Friend Response

- Oxytocin - drives social salience, helping to determine who is safe and who isn't
- We are born to connect. Connection is a biological need to survive
- We can connect with others for safety, affection, and to solve problems

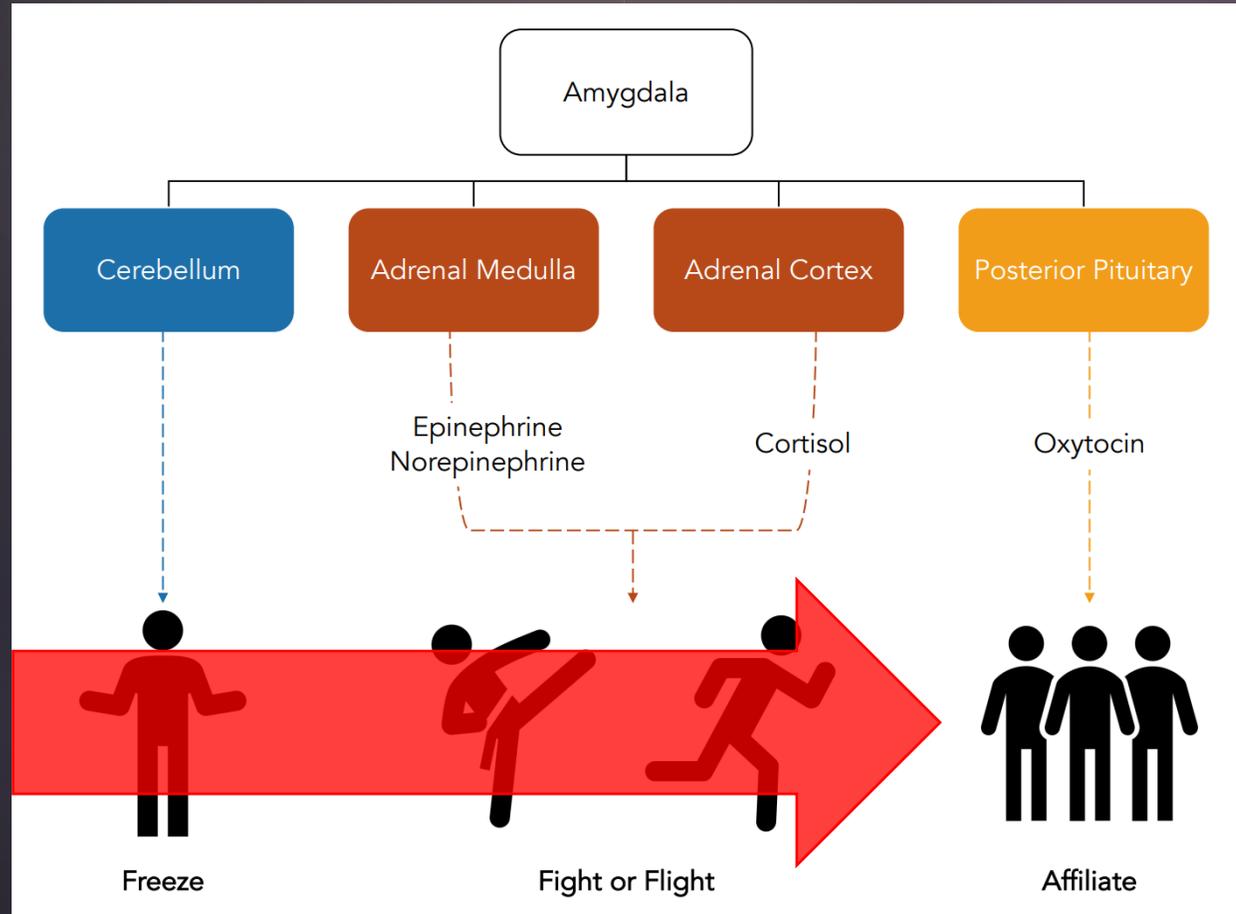


**Oxytocin**

# The affiliate response



# Fostering the affiliate response



“

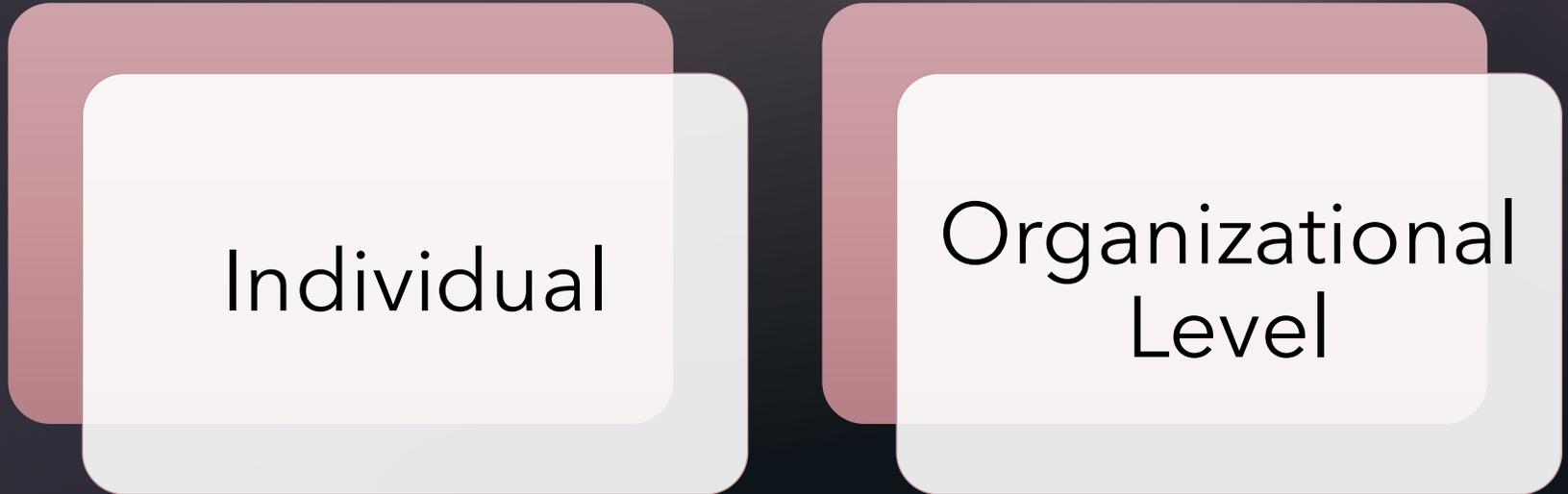
**It is not about  
summing the  
suffering,  
but  
building the  
buffering**



How can we  
build the  
buffering for  
ourselves and  
others?



# Strategies to address STS and burnout



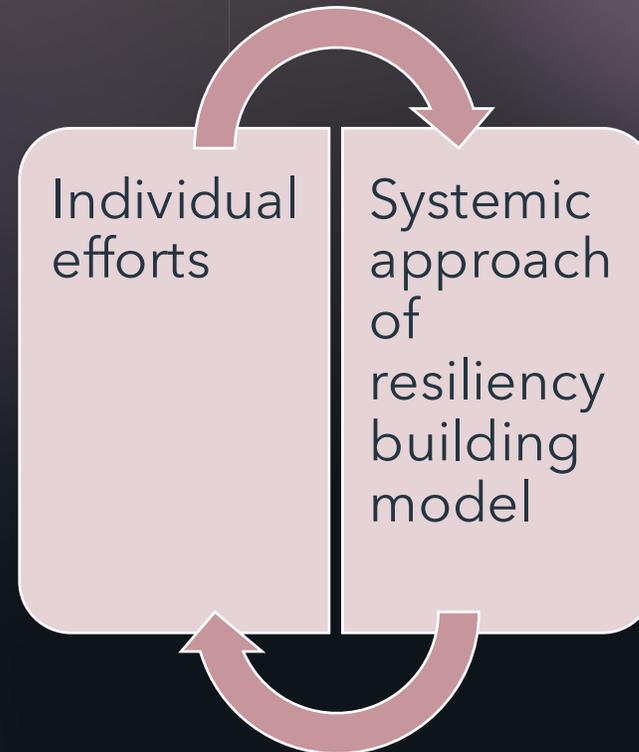
Individual

Organizational  
Level

# Cultural shift within organizations

An exclusive focus on coping strategies for service-providers

**(without acknowledging the organization's role)**  
implies that individuals experiencing STS are at fault!





What can we do?

# Building resilience



Self-awareness



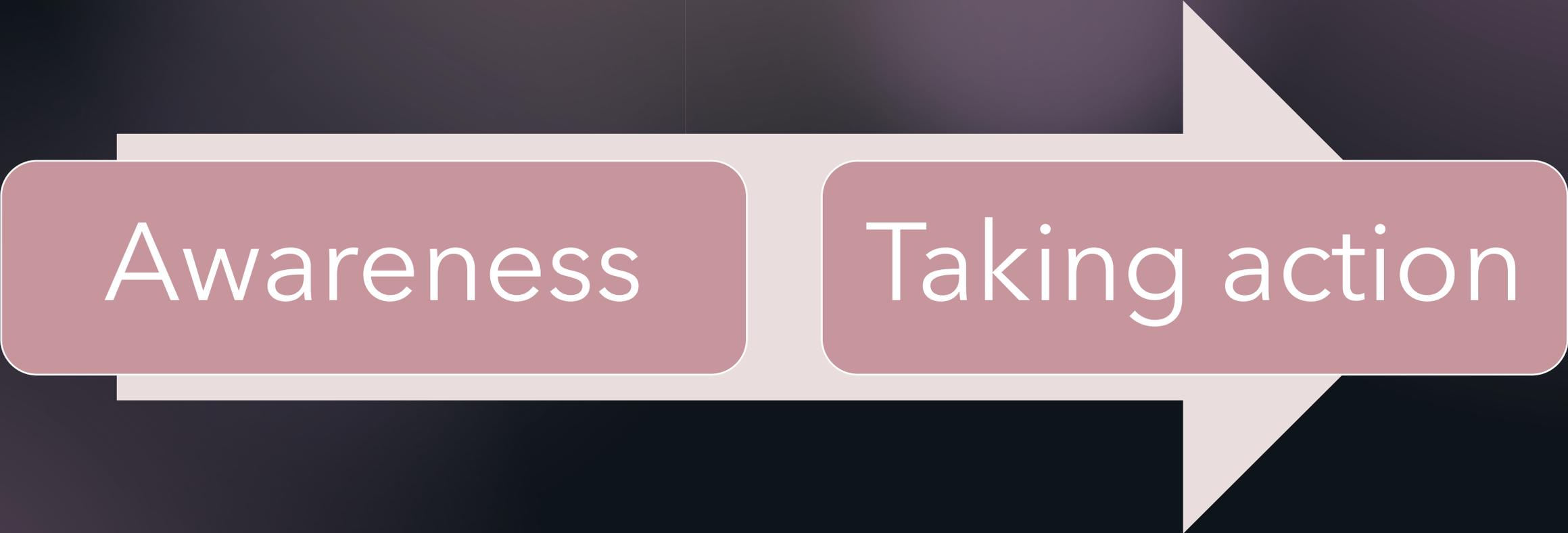
Connectedness



Regulation



Self-care strategies start with



Awareness

Taking action

# Self-awareness

**A heightened, flexible attentiveness** to your environment and internal cues such as bodily sensations, thoughts and feelings.



- People with **higher levels of awareness have higher levels of well-being** and positive emotions
- Distraction, the main detractor from awareness, can impair **executive function** as well as increase **stress** and anxiety, ADHD symptoms, and depression.

A woman with curly hair, wearing a bright yellow sweater, is shown in a meditative pose with her eyes closed and hands raised in a mudra. The background is a soft gradient of light blue and purple. The word "Mindfulness" is written in white serif font on the left side of the image.

# Mindfulness

# What is Mindfulness?

*Paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment and non judgmentally.*



*The power of Mindfulness is giving us a way to be in wise relationship with our inner and outer experience and find a way to be at home in your own skin.*

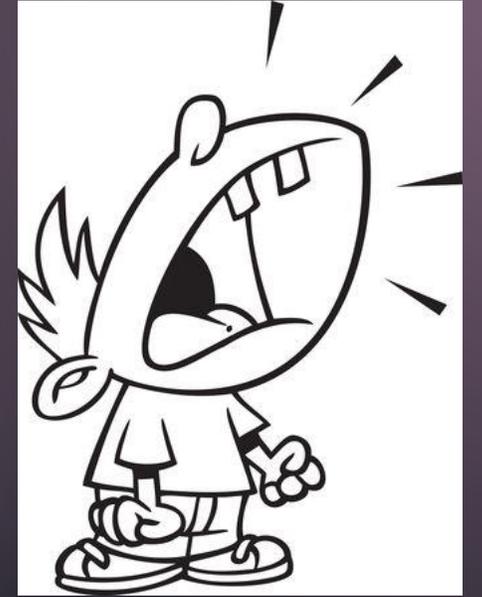
*It is about embodying integrity, wakefulness and heartfulness. It is a way of being. It is dropping in your own essential nature, which is already whole and beautiful.*

# Creating a space

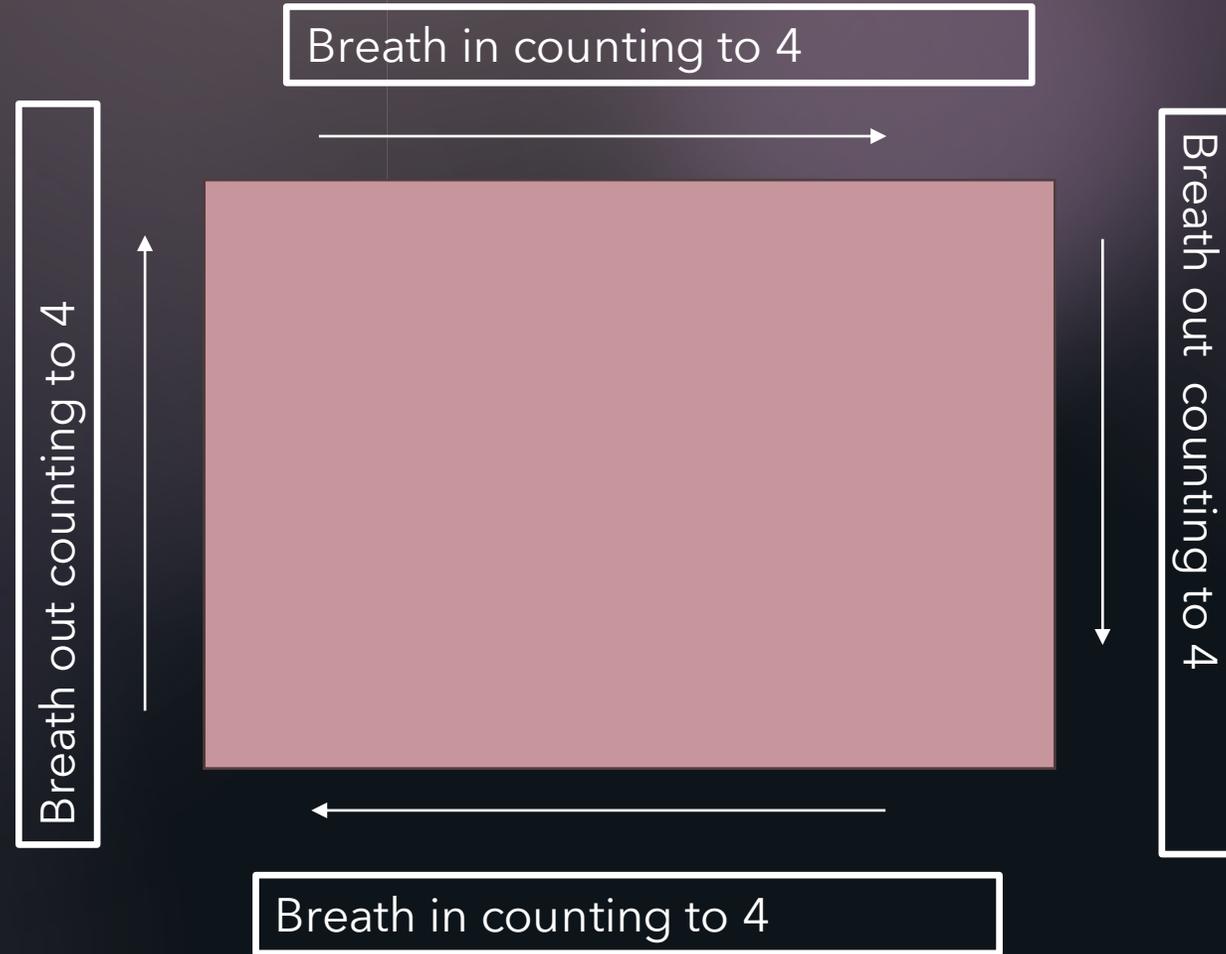
• Becoming aware of thoughts, body sensations and feelings

• Different way to relate to experience

• Being able to choose the most skillful response



# Squared breathing



# Body Scan Meditation



# Mindful listening

- You're at your desk catching up on documentation when your colleague, Sam, knocks lightly and walks in. They sit down without much eye contact and say, "I'm fine. Just a rough day," while rubbing their forehead and keeping their voice unusually flat.

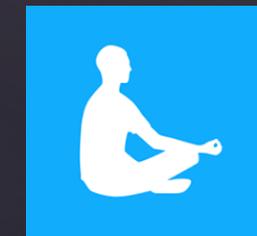
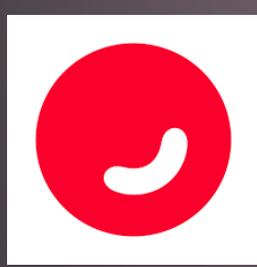
# How to listen and respond mindfully?

- 1. Mindfully listen:** keep a present focus, keep the attention on the emotional experience of the other person
  1. "I hear you say you're fine, but I'm noticing you're looking down and your voice sounds a bit tired. Want to share what's going on?"
- 2. Wait** (hold space): able to tolerate silence, you can count to 10 and give Sam time to answer
  1. Open body language: maintain calm, open body posture
- 3. Emotion-focused questions:** focus on the emotion, rather than on the content itself
  1. "That sounds really intense. Is this pushing on something personal or familiar for you?"
  2. "you seem very energized about this, what is it that is so energizing?"
- 4. Normalize feelings**
  1. "It makes so much sense you'd feel that way. A lot of us feel torn when we can't fix everything, especially when we care deeply."

# How self-aware are you?

- [https://www.mindtools.com/axbwm3m/how-emotionally-intelligent-are-you#google\\_vignette](https://www.mindtools.com/axbwm3m/how-emotionally-intelligent-are-you#google_vignette)

# Apps



## Personal Care

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[Waterlogged](#) — Get reminders to help you drink enough water every day.



[Sleep Genius](#) — Getting enough sleep is an essential part of wellness. This app will track your sleep cycles and support healthy sleep habits.



[Stress Check](#) — Measure, monitor and manage your stress levels.



[Mint Personal Finance](#) — Keeping track of spending and developing a budget can lower stress.

## Mood and Meditation

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[iMoodJournal](#) — Track the ups and downs of your mood to identify triggers and sources of pleasure.



[eCBT Calm](#) — Assess your stress level, learn relaxation skills, and find links to online resources for stress and anxiety.



[Gratitude Journal](#) — Write down five things you're grateful for each day and your life will change forever.



[Take A Break!](#) — Enjoy the deep relaxation, stress relief and benefits of meditation.

## Health and Fitness

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[MyFitnessPall](#) — Track calories and exercise.



[Fooducate](#) — Find healthy and tasty food alternatives that will support your health goals.



[Fig](#) - Your personal wellness guide for body and soul



[Pact](#) — Getting fit and staying healthy are hard. Pact uses cash stakes to help you achieve your health goals, week after week.

## Goal Setting and Organization

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[Lift](#) — Set any goal and Lift will provide coaching, community, and data to help you be your best.



[Brightnest](#) — Helps you tackle important home tasks with easy-to-follow instructions, a personal schedule and helpful reminders.



[HabitMaster](#) — Build good habits in your life! Be it a daily, weekly, or monthly habit, HabitMaster helps you track your progress and maintain your motivation.



<https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health/>

## NHS Apps Library

### Mental health

 **Be Mindful**  
Be Mindful is an online course for reducing stress, depression and anxiety. It guides you ...  
Mental health  
£30.00

 **Beat Panic**  
Beat Panic is designed to guide people through a panic attack or raised anxiety using ...  
Mental health  
£0.99

 **Big White Wall**  
Big White Wall is an online community for people who are [stressed](#), [anxious](#) or feeling ...  
Mental health Online community  
Free

 **Blueelce**  
Blueelce is an evidenced-based app to help young people manage their emotions and reduce urges ...  
Mental health  
Free

 **Calm Harm**  
Calm Harm is an app designed to help people resist or manage the urge to ...  
Mental health  
Free

 **Catch It**  
Learn how to manage feelings like [anxiety](#) and [depression](#) with Catch It. The app will ...  
Mental health  
Free

 **Chill Panda**  
Being tested in the NHS  
Learn to relax, manage your worries and improve your wellbeing with Chill Panda. The app ...  
Mental health  
Free

 **Cove**  
Being tested in the NHS  
Create music to capture your mood and express how you feel with the Cove app ...  
Mental health  
Free

 **Cypher**  
Being tested in the NHS  
Cypher (formerly Silent Secret) is an anonymous peer-to-peer social network. It is a space to ...

 **distrACT**  
The distrACT app gives you easy, quick and discreet access to information and advice about ...  
Mental health  
Free

 **Feeling Good: positive mindset**  
Relax your body and mind with a series of audio tracks designed to help you ...  
Mental health  
Free, with in-app purchases

 **Ieso**  
Ieso is an online course using instant messaging for people with mental health problems. The ...  
Mental health  
Free in some areas

 **MeeTwo**  
The MeeTwo app provides a safe and secure forum for teenagers wanting to discuss any ...  
Mental health Online community  
Free

 **My Possible Self: The Mental Health App**  
Take control of your thoughts, feelings and behaviour with the My Possible Self mental health ...  
Mental health  
Free with in-app purchases

 **MyCognition Home**  
MyCognition Home is a brain training app for the entire family to help them think ...  
Mental health  
Free, with in-app purchases

 **SilverCloud**  
SilverCloud is an online course to help you manage stress, anxiety and depression. You work ...  
Mental health  
Free

 **Sleepio**  
Sleepio is an online sleep improvement programme, clinically proven to help you fall asleep faster ...  
Sleep Mental health  
Free

 **Stress & Anxiety Companion**  
Stress & Anxiety Companion helps you handle stress and anxiety on-the-go. Using breathing exercises, relaxing ...  
Mental health  
Free, with in-app purchases

 **Thrive: Feel Stress Free**  
Thrive: Feel Stress Free helps you prevent and manage stress, anxiety and related conditions. The ...  
Mental health  
Free

# Resources

- Umass Center for Mindfulness
  - [https://www.ummhealth.org/center-mindfulness-LP?gclid=Cj0KCQiAlbW-BhCMARIsADnwasoCktz2MrlWq6jC\\_GS44iNu9jtRjGaMi-d-G2AxKWBlI5DQNXGiaZUaAksZEALw\\_wcB](https://www.ummhealth.org/center-mindfulness-LP?gclid=Cj0KCQiAlbW-BhCMARIsADnwasoCktz2MrlWq6jC_GS44iNu9jtRjGaMi-d-G2AxKWBlI5DQNXGiaZUaAksZEALw_wcB)
- Tara Brach guided meditations
  - <https://www.tarabrach.com/guided-meditations/>
- Inside Meditation Society
  - <https://www.dharma.org>
- UCLA Mindful
  - <https://www.uclahealth.org/uclamindful/free-guided-meditations>

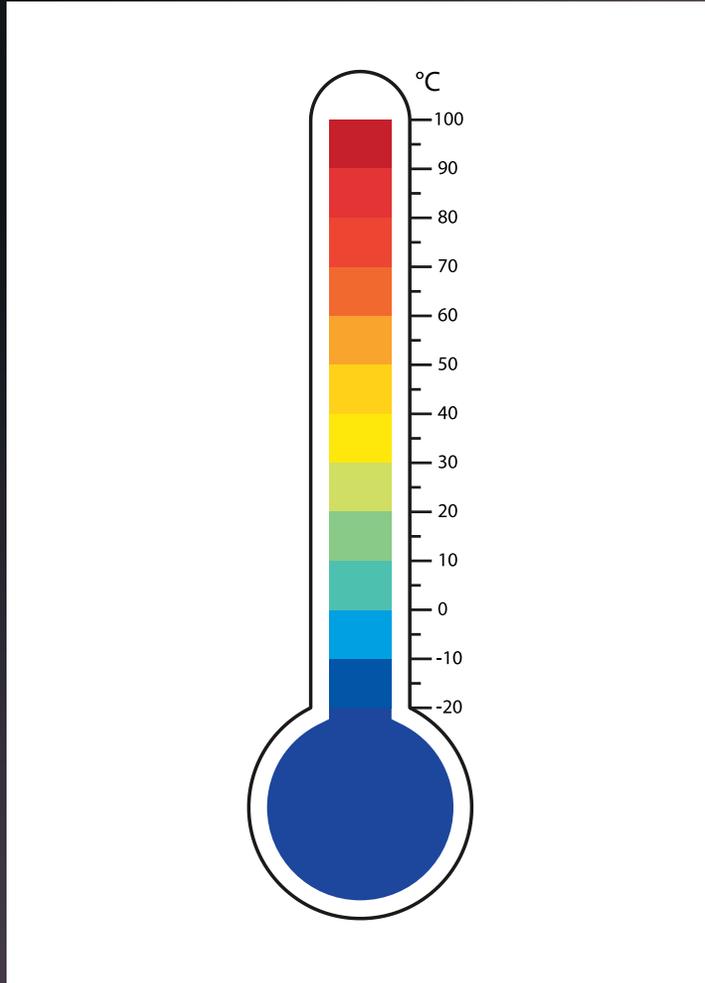
# Saying No and keeping boundaries

- Saying No feels uncomfortable
  - Will they be upset?
  - Will they think less of me?
- No doesn't need a justification ("I am sorry, but..")
- Every No is a Yes to something else: yes to rest, to presence, to integrity
- No may not be accepted the first time, so you need to be consistent
- Practicing No with nervous system in mind
  - Take a few deep breaths
  - Feel your feet on the ground
  - Check in with your body, rather than with your fear



*Adapted from: Lisa Conrady, LLC*

# How do I look under stress?



- Irritability
- Reactive and impulsive
- Increased heart rate
- Moodiness
- Anxiety
- Rumination
- Loss or increase in appetite and sleep
- Withdrawn
- Shut down
- Isolating
- Using alcohol, substances, etc.



Down-regulation  
(mindfulness,  
relaxation, etc.)



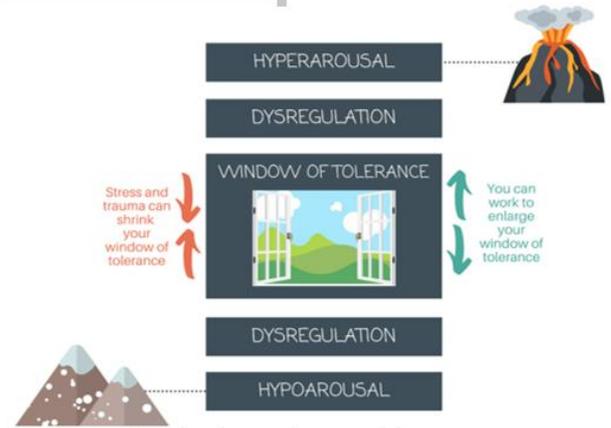
Up-regulation  
(exercise,  
behavioral  
activation, etc.)

# Window of tolerance: Action Plan

**ACTION PLAN**  

Trauma, Stress, and Caregiver Wellbeing

**Part 1 – The Window of Tolerance**



HYPERAROUSAL

DYSREGULATION

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

Stress and trauma can shrink your window of tolerance

You can work to enlarge your window of tolerance

DYSREGULATION

HYPOAROUSAL

What are the triggers that might make your window even smaller?

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What am I like when I am stressed, upset or overwhelmed:

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What are my hyper arousal symptoms?

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What are my hypo arousal symptoms?

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# How do I look like under stress?

- Keep pushing through and ignore the signs
- Become irritable or easily overwhelmed
- Withdraw or isolate from others
- Feel physically exhausted or get headaches
- Struggle to concentrate or stay organized
- Feel emotionally numb or disconnected
- Become hyper-focused and overly controlling
- Catastrophize – assume the worst-case scenario
- Other (feel free to share in chat)

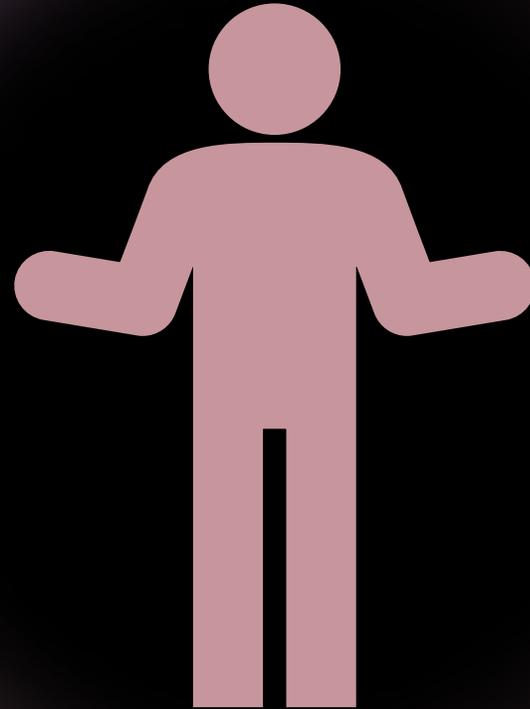
# Recognizing that we are all different..

- Some people need to process stress right away
- Others need their own space and time to reflect
- Some people may become initially anxious/reactive
- Other may withdraw



# What do you need in the moment?

- Humor
- Someone who is able to hear me and listens to me
- Being left alone
- Distraction
- Meeting with my supervisor



## PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)

### COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION 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.

STS

BURNOUT

COMPASSION  
SATISFACTION

## YOUR SCORES ON THE PROQOL: PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCREENING

Based on your responses, place your personal scores below. If you have any concerns, you should discuss them with a physical or mental health care professional.

### Compassion Satisfaction \_\_\_\_\_

Compassion satisfaction is about the pleasure you derive from being able to do your work well. For example, you may feel like it is a pleasure to help others through your work. You may feel positively about your colleagues or your ability to contribute to the work setting or even the greater good of society. Higher scores on this scale represent a greater satisfaction related to your ability to be an effective caregiver in your job.

If you are in the higher range, you probably derive a good deal of professional satisfaction from your position. If your scores are below 23, you may either find problems with your job, or there may be some other reason—for example, you might derive your satisfaction from activities other than your job. (Alpha scale reliability 0.88)

### Burnout \_\_\_\_\_

Most people have an intuitive idea of what burnout is. From the research perspective, burnout is one of the elements of Compassion Fatigue (CF). It is associated with feelings of hopelessness and difficulties in dealing with work or in doing your job effectively. These negative feelings usually have a gradual onset. They can reflect the feeling that your efforts make no difference, or they can be associated with a very high workload or a non-supportive work environment. Higher scores on this scale mean that you are at higher risk for burnout.

If your score is below 23, this probably reflects positive feelings about your ability to be effective in your work. If you score above 41, you may wish to think about what at work makes you feel like you are not effective in your position. Your score may reflect your mood; perhaps you were having a “bad day” or are in need of some time off. If the high score persists or if it is reflective of other worries, it may be a cause for concern. (Alpha scale reliability 0.75)

### Secondary Traumatic Stress \_\_\_\_\_

The second component of Compassion Fatigue (CF) is secondary traumatic stress (STS). It is about your work related, secondary exposure to extremely or traumatically stressful events. Developing problems due to exposure to other’s trauma is somewhat rare but does happen to many people who care for those who have experienced extremely or traumatically stressful events. For example, you may repeatedly hear stories about the traumatic things that happen to other people, commonly called Vicarious Traumatization. If your work puts you directly in the path of danger, for example, field work in a war or area of civil violence, this is not secondary exposure; your exposure is primary. However, if you are exposed to others’ traumatic events as a result of your work, for example, as a therapist or an emergency worker, this is secondary exposure. The symptoms of STS are usually rapid in onset and associated with a particular event. They may include being afraid, having difficulty sleeping, having images of the upsetting event pop into your mind, or avoiding things that remind you of the event.

If your score is above 41, you may want to take some time to think about what at work may be frightening to you or if there is some other reason for the elevated score. While higher scores do not mean that you do have a problem, they are an indication that you may want to examine how you feel about your work and your work environment. You may wish to discuss this with your supervisor, a colleague, or a health care professional. (Alpha scale reliability 0.81)

## WHAT IS MY SCORE AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

In this section, you will score your test so you understand the interpretation for you. To find your score on **each section**, total the questions listed on the left and then find your score in the table on the right of the section.

### Compassion Satisfaction Scale

Copy your rating on each of these questions on to this table and add them up. When you have added them up you can find your score on the table to the right.

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
12. \_\_\_\_\_  
16. \_\_\_\_\_  
18. \_\_\_\_\_  
20. \_\_\_\_\_  
22. \_\_\_\_\_  
24. \_\_\_\_\_  
27. \_\_\_\_\_  
30. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

The sum of my Compassion Satisfaction questions is	And my Compassion Satisfaction level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

### Burnout Scale

On the burnout scale you will need to take an extra step. Starred items are “reverse scored.” If you scored the item 1, write a 5 beside it. The reason we ask you to reverse the scores is because scientifically the measure works better when these questions are asked in a positive way though they can tell us more about their negative form. For example, question 1. “I am happy” tells us more about

\*1. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
\*4. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
10. \_\_\_\_\_  
\*15. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
\*17. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
19. \_\_\_\_\_  
21. \_\_\_\_\_  
26. \_\_\_\_\_  
\*29. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

You Wrote	Change to
	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1

the effects of helping when you are *not* happy so you reverse the score

The sum of my Burnout Questions is	And my Burnout level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

### Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale

Just like you did on Compassion Satisfaction, copy your rating on each of these questions on to this table and add them up. When you have added them up you can find your score on the table to the right.

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
9. \_\_\_\_\_  
11. \_\_\_\_\_  
13. \_\_\_\_\_  
14. \_\_\_\_\_  
23. \_\_\_\_\_  
25. \_\_\_\_\_  
28. \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

The sum of my Secondary Trauma questions is	And my Secondary Traumatic Stress level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

# Organizational awareness: acknowledge and assess the problem

The **Secondary Traumatic Stress Informed Organizational Assessment (STSI-OA)** is a 40-item measure that categorizes STS *prevention* and *intervention* activities into 6 domains by self-rating the degree to which the organization:

- Promotes resilience-building activities.
- Promotes physical and psychological safety.
- Has STS-relevant policies.
- Exhibits STS-informed leadership practices.
- Exhibits STS-informed organizational practices.
- Evaluates and monitors STS policies/practices in workplace.

You can request a free copy at:

<http://www.uky.edu/CTAC/STSI-OA>.

# More resources: National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)

NCTSN The National Child Traumatic Stress Network



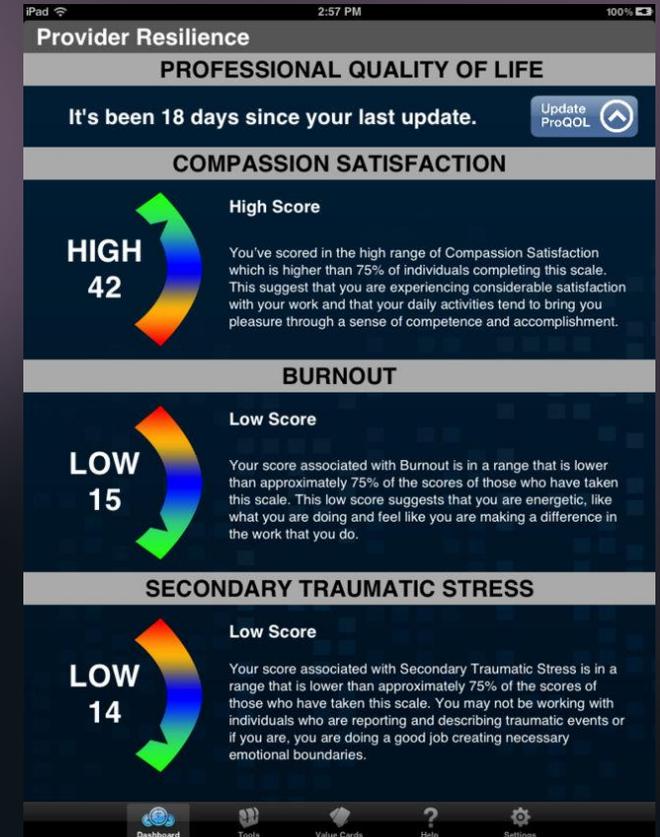
“...We are stewards not just of those who allow us into their lives but of our own capacity to be helpful...<sup>1</sup>”



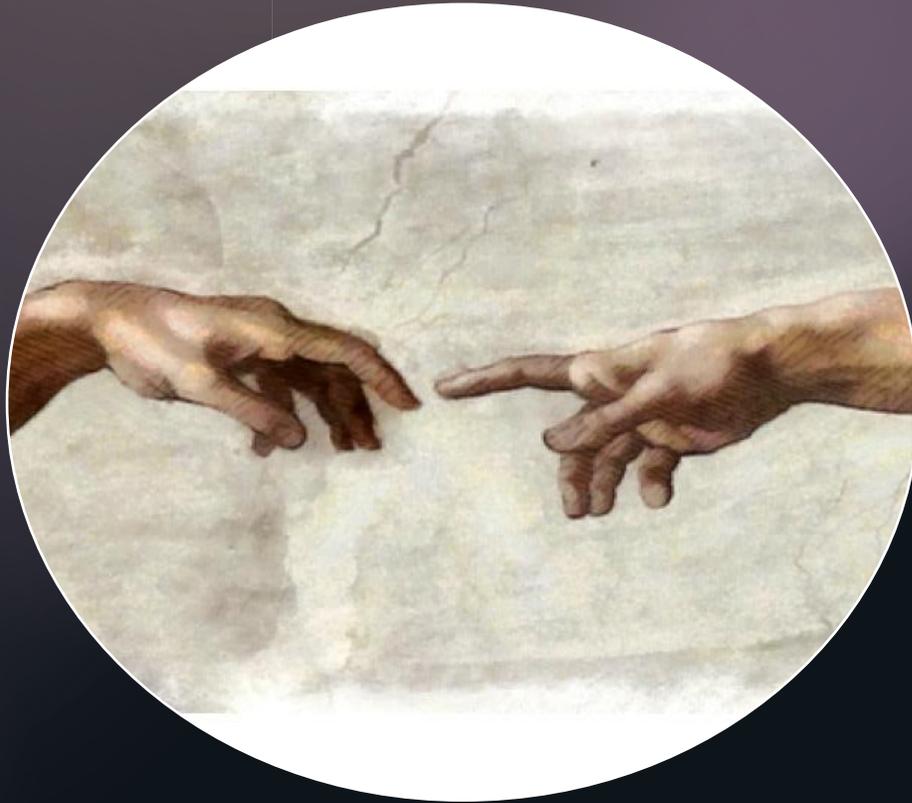
[https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/secondary\\_traumatic\\_stress\\_child\\_serving\\_professionals.pdf](https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/secondary_traumatic_stress_child_serving_professionals.pdf)

# Provider Resilience App

- **Quick snapshot of user's overall resilience**
- **Reminder clock showing last time you took a day off**
- **Compassion satisfaction, burnout and STS ratings can be viewed in automatically generated apps**
- **Features stress-busting and compassion satisfaction-building tools**

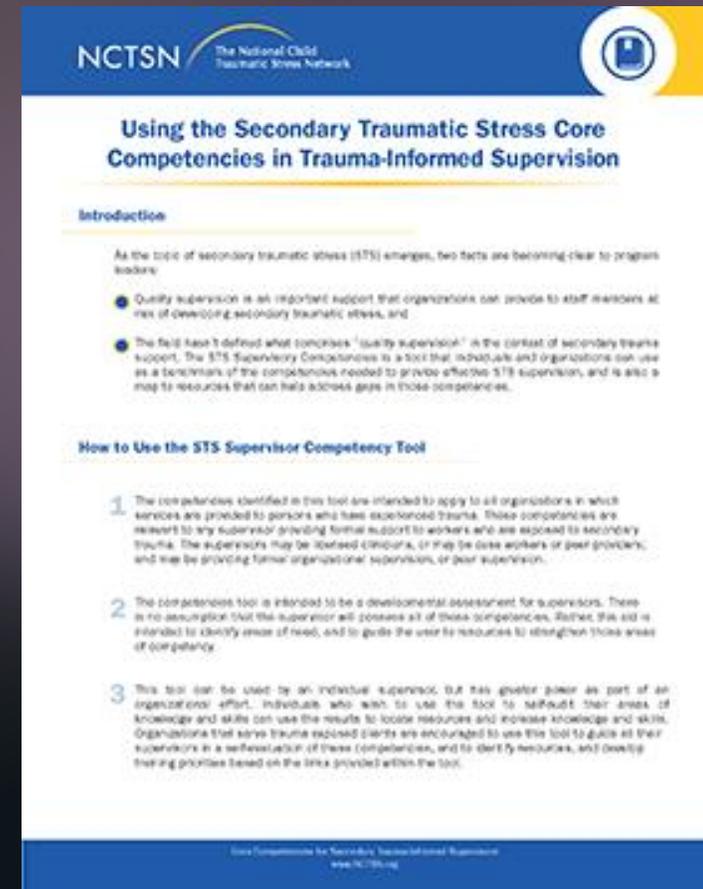


# Connectedness



# Reflective supervision

- How did you feel? What did you notice in yourself?
- Did you have any strong reactions during this interaction?
- How do you think *[other person in interaction]* was feeling? What was their perspective?
- What did you think was going to happen? Why do you think it did or didn't go as planned?
- What do you think was driving your stress reaction?
- Are there aspects of the interaction that remind you of your own experiences or history? How might this have influenced you?



# Praise

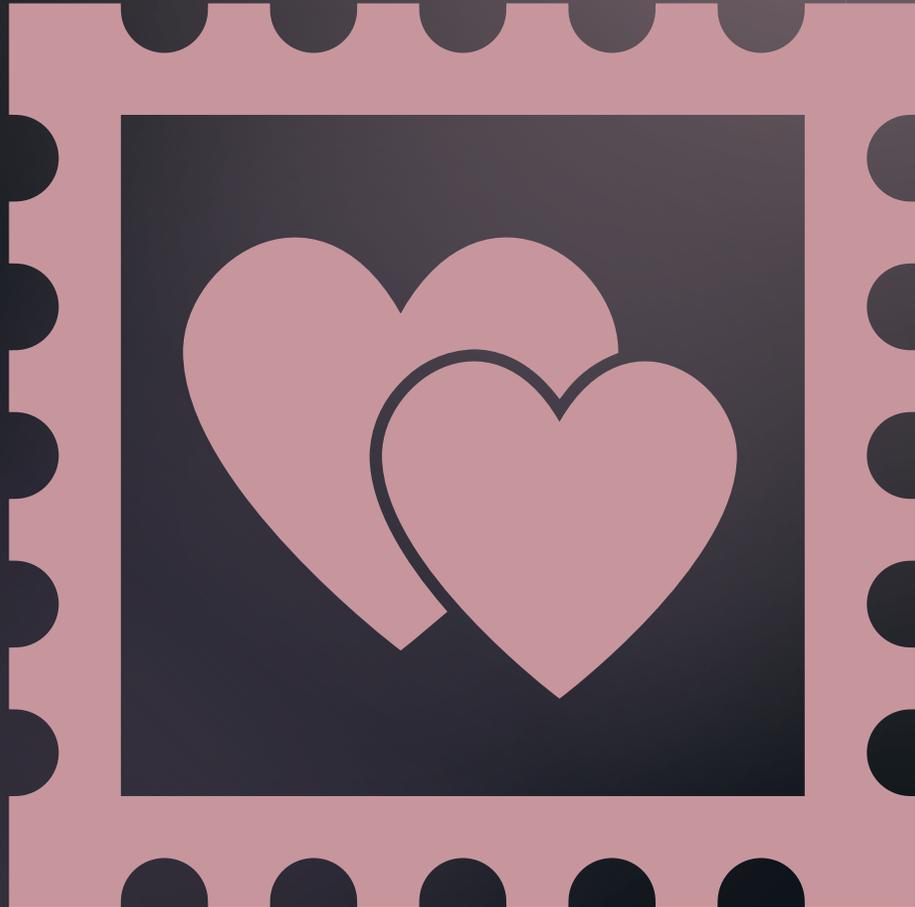
- **P**urely positive praise works better, praise should NOT include sarcasm or negative tags (e.g., "I like how you \_\_\_\_, why don't you do it all the time?")
- **R**epeat praise predictably and immediately after the positive behavior occurs
- **A**cknowledge small steps (don't wait for perfection)
- **I**ntermittent or occasional praise is preferable once the new behavior is established
- **S**pecifically describe positive effort in detail ("I like the effort you put into this project" vs "Good job")
- **E**nthusiasm is key to effective praise. Increase enthusiastic reactions to positive behaviors



# Affirmation circle

- Write your name on your index card
- Pass it to the next person
- The person receiving the index card should write a positive affirmation and appreciation to that person ("Your kindness and generosity makes everyone so heard and understood". "Thank you for your incredible work")
- Take some time at the end to read your affirmations

# Positive mantras



- I am enough
- I know how to overcome obstacles
- Things will get better - nothing lasts forever
- I am worthy of happiness
- I am stronger than my fears
- I know my worth
- I trust \_\_



# Books that encourage positive self-talk

- Ready for Anything! By Keiko Kasza
- Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch by Eileen Spinelli
- The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper (originally by Platt & Munk)
- The Can Do Duck by Ducktor Morty

# Identify what type of support do you need and who can provide it





# Asking what the other needs

- Do you need me to listen to you or you need an advice?

# If you have:

## 2 minutes

Smile  
Sit quietly, relax  
Breathe deeply  
Stretch  
Thank someone  
Tell a joke to a co-worker  
Have a 2 minute dance party

## 10 minutes

Plan a party to celebrate an accomplishment or milestone  
Write down your thoughts  
Clean up your locker/workspace  
Do a wellness activity with your co-worker(s)  
Sit outside, take in 5 senses

## 5 minutes

Get coffee, tea, or water  
Have a snack  
Have a conversation with someone who you don't usually talk to at work  
Do a mindfulness practice  
Listen to music  
Tell a story to a co-worker

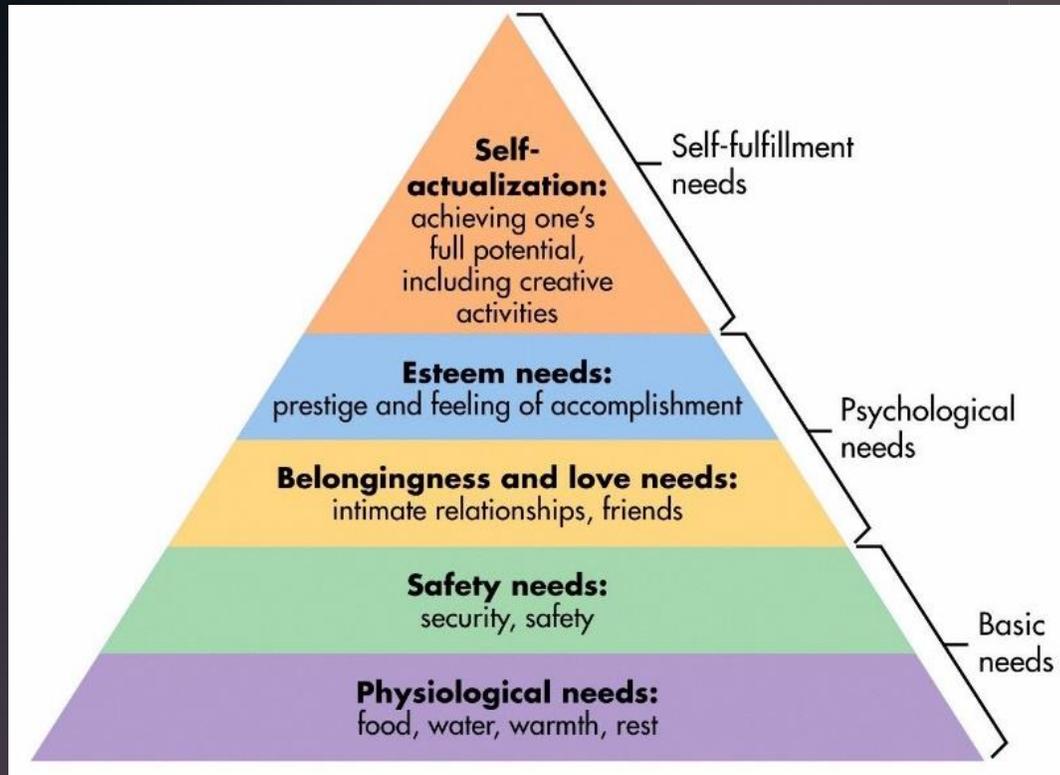
## 30 minutes

Eat lunch with your co-worker  
Take a walk outside  
Mindful movement  
Assess your wellness plan  
Debrief with a co-worker about something stressful  
Complete a task that has been nagging at you

The background is a vibrant, abstract pattern of swirling colors. It features a mix of deep reds, bright blues, and purples, with lighter, almost white, highlights that create a sense of movement and depth. The colors are blended together in a fluid, organic way, reminiscent of marbled paper or liquid paint.

# Regulation & Reflection

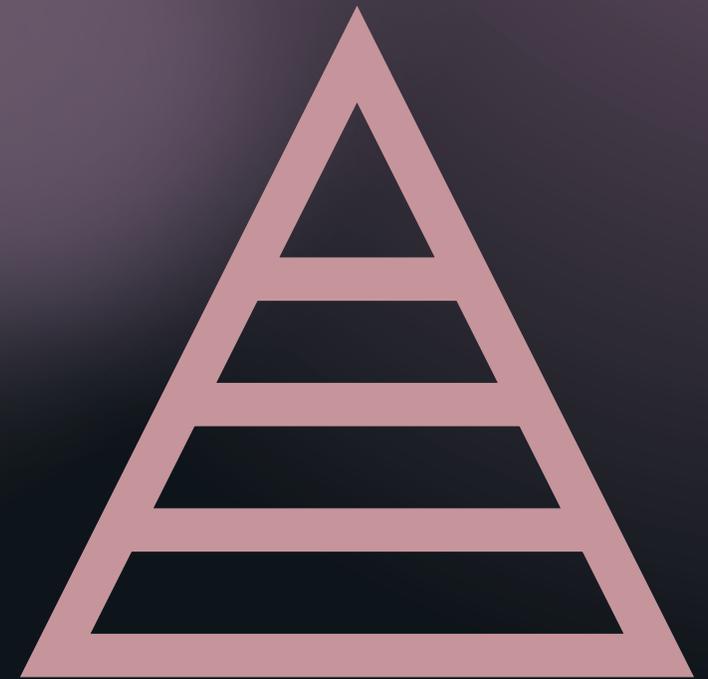
# Regulation starts from the basics



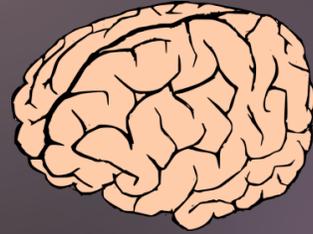
- Get enough sleep
- Eat well
- Be physically active
- Use alcohol in moderation, or not at all
- Take regular breaks from stressful activities
- Laugh every day
- Express yourself
- Let someone take care of you

# Top down and bottom-up strategies

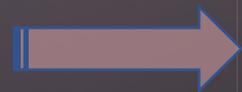
- Cognitive: identifying and modifying unhelpful thoughts
- Using music
- Processing thoughts through writing/narration
- Positive mantras
- Drawing
- Sensory: essential oils, lotions, visuals, sound
- Gentle stretching
- Vagal nerve activation: cold water, warm cloth, frozen orange
- Mindfulness
- Relaxation



# The cognitive triangle



Situation



Thoughts

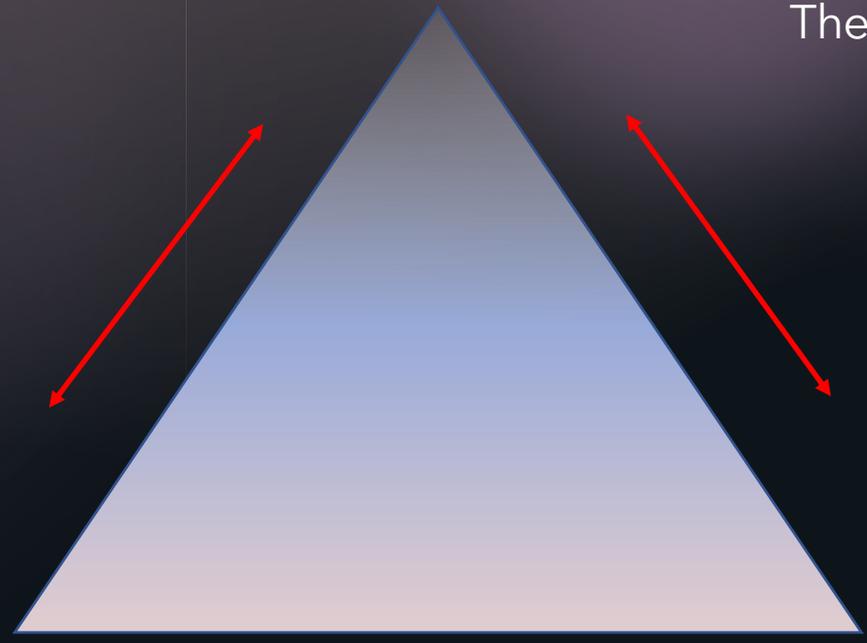
They are talking bad about me  
They are ignoring me

Seeing two friends talking between them and not saying hi



Behavior

Withdrawn, isolate, confront



Emotions

Angry, upset, sad

# Example of practice



<b>What are your feelings?</b>	<b>What are your thoughts/saying to yourself?</b>	<b>Are your thoughts accurate and helpful? What would be a more helpful or alternative way of thinking?</b>	<b>What are your feelings now?</b>
<i>Anxious, insecure</i>	<i>I am not going a good job presenting, people are bored</i>	<i>I have done this many times and I know how to provide helpful information in an engaging way</i>	<i>Relieved, more secure</i>

# Remembering Your Whys

**We all have bad days at work, but there are also moments that remind us why we do this work.**

- Why do you do this work?
- *Think about a rewarding moment at your job.*
- *What are the things that you love/enjoy about your job?*
- *Think about people whose lives you've touched.*
- *What are some compliments you have received from your co-workers, or things you think you do well?*

# Commitment plan

- What is your personal reason to practice self-care? What is your Why?
- Choose a mindful practice
- What part of the day would be the best to build it in?
- What might be some barriers?
- Put a reminder on your phone for 1 month from now on what was your initial personal reason to practice
- Check-in in a month

<https://padlet.com/kostovazlatina/my-fitment-plan-46qpmsb3jxck7xlv>

# Who are your affiliates?



# Take away

- STS/burnout is not an abnormal condition, but a normal reaction to a stressful environment
- Self-care and well-being requires awareness and intentional steps
- Self-awareness, regulation and connectedness
- Well-being is a question of balance: emotional, physical, social, spiritual





# Resources

# Citations

- Bride, B. E. (2007). Prevalence of Secondary Traumatic Stress among Social Workers. *Social Work*, 52(1), 63–70.
- Caringi, J. C., Hardiman, E. R., Weldon, P., Fletcher, S., Devlin, M., & Stanick, C. (2017). Secondary traumatic stress and licensed clinical social workers. *Traumatology*, 23(2), 186.
- Bell, H., Kulkarni, S., & Dalton, L. (2003). Organizational prevention of vicarious trauma. *Families in Society*, 84, 463–470. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.131>
- Yang, Y. & Hayes, J. A. (2020). Causes and Consequences of Burnout Among Mental Health Professionals. *Psychotherapy*, 57 (3), 426-436. doi: 10.1037/pst0000317.
- O'Connor, K., Neff, D. M., & Pitman, S. (2018). Burnout in psychotherapists: A systematic review and meta-analysis of prevalence and determinants. *European Psychiatry*, 53, 74–99. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.eurpsy.2018.06.003>
- Yang, Y. & Hayes, J. A. (2020). Causes and Consequences of Burnout Among Mental Health Professionals. *Psychotherapy*, 57 (3), 426-436. doi: 10.1037/pst0000317.

# NCTSN Resources

- **NCTSN STS Fact Sheets**
  - For Child-Serving Professionals
  - For Community Violence Workers
  - For CAC Workers
  - Guidance for Supervisors and Administrators
- **STS Supervisor Competencies**
  - Supervisory Competencies
  - Supervisor Self-Rating Tool

All resources can be accessed at:

<https://www.nctsn.org/trauma-informed-care/secondary-traumatic-stress>

# NCTSN Webinars

- Secondary Traumatic Stress Series:
  - [https://www.nctsn.org/resources/secondary-traumatic-stress?utm\\_source=spotlight&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=nctsn-spotlight](https://www.nctsn.org/resources/secondary-traumatic-stress?utm_source=spotlight&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=nctsn-spotlight)
- Cultural Implications of Secondary Traumatic Stress:
  - English: <https://learn.nctsn.org/enrol/index.php?id=234>
  - Spanish: <https://learn.nctsn.org/course/view.php?id=233>
- Trauma-Informed Care: Understanding and Addressing the Needs of Unaccompanied Children. NCTSN 4-Part Webinar series, Part 4 on STS:
  - English: <http://bit.ly/unaccompanied-children-english>
  - Spanish: <http://bit.ly/unaccompanied-children-spanish>
- Emotional Challenges and Self-Care for Those Working with Young Traumatized Children:
  - <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/emotional-challenges-and-self-care-those-working-young-traumatized-children>

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Lifeline for Kids [www.umassmed.edu/lifelineforkids](http://www.umassmed.edu/lifelineforkids)



LINK-KID referral system



Lifeline for Families [www.umassmed.edu/lifelineforfamilies](http://www.umassmed.edu/lifelineforfamilies)

