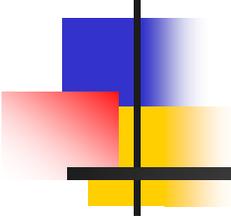


How to Prevent and Cope with Stress & Vicarious Trauma and Prevent Burnout



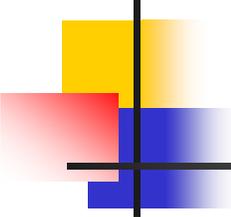
Presented by:

ANNE SEYMOUR

National Crime Victim Advocate

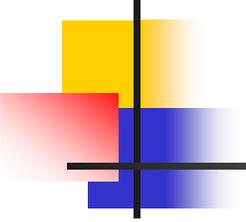
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Learning Objectives

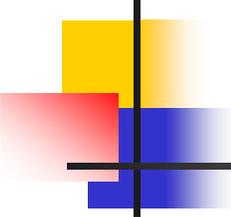
- Describe the conceptual building blocks of vicarious trauma and burnout
- Identify factors unique to justice and victim assistance professionals that cause stress
- Describe effective measures to cope with stress and prevent burnout and vicarious trauma



Vicarious Trauma

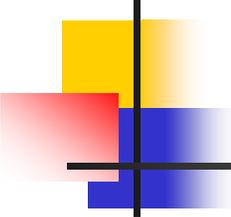
Conceptual Building Blocks

- Countertransference.
- Burnout
- Secondary trauma stress



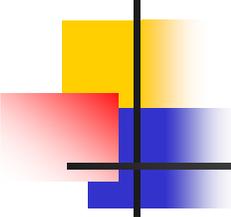
Countertransference

- The feelings a professional has toward a client.
- Reactions to a client's transference toward the professional.
- Professional's transference toward a client.
- Client's behavior make evoke conflicts relating to unresolved situations in the professional's life.



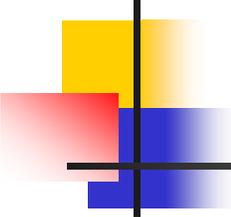
Burnout

- Emerged from studies of worker discontent.
- “A state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by a long-term involvement in emotionally demanding situations.”



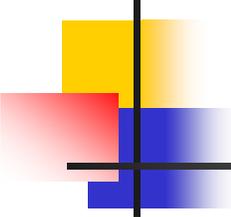
Secondary Trauma Stress

- The natural consequent behaviors and emotions resulting from knowing about a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other, and the stress resulting from helping or wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person.
- Also called “compassion fatigue.”



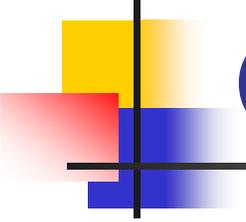
Compassion Fatigue

- “The cost of caring.”
- Characterized by losing your sense of self to the people you serve.
- Emotional residue of exposure to working with the suffering.
- Must contend not only with normal work stress, but with the emotional and personal feelings for the suffering.



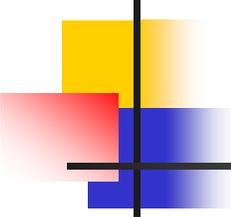
Compassion Fatigue (cont.)

- State of tension and preoccupation with the individual or cumulative trauma of clients.
- With CF, you are absorbing the trauma through the eyes and ears of your clients.



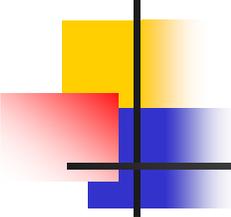
Human Costs of Compassion Fatigue

- Job performance goes down.
- Mistakes go up.
- Morale drops.
- Personal relationships are affected.
- Home lives and personality starts to deteriorate.
- Can lead to overall decline in health.



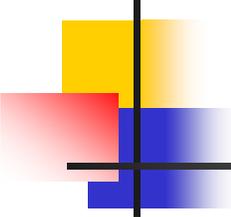
Understanding One's Ability to Tolerate Stress

- Past victimization.
- Past life experiences.
- Personal values and attitudes.
- Sense of control.
- Personality.
- Residual stress level.
- General state of health.



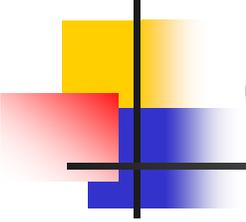
Signs & Symptoms

- No time or energy for self (chronic fatigue)
- Disconnection from loved ones & social withdrawal
- Increased violence sensitivity
- Increased pessimism/cynicism
- Loss of compassion



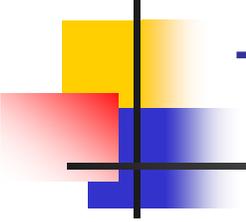
Why the Work Impacts Us

- We function outside the range of “normal” in our work.
- Exposure to cruelty and graphic info
- Exposure to the impact of crime on victims and communities
- Ongoing awareness of the possibility of crime and victimization
- Isolation



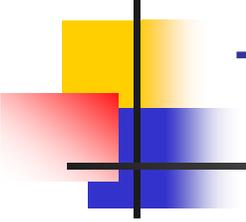
Why the Work Impacts Us (*cont.*)

- We may be the targets of manipulation, abuse and threats
- Responsibility for community safety.
- We may have to be distrustful to do our jobs well.
- Exposure to the anger and distrust of others who are angry at us.



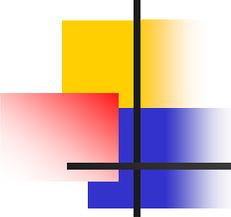
Organizational/External Factors That Contribute to Stress

- Work overload.
- Family conflicts.
- Job conflict or ambiguity.
- Interpersonal conflicts.
- External agency conflicts.



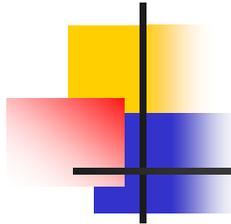
Organizational/External Factors That Contribute to Stress (*cont.*)

- Organizational culture.
- Insufficient resources.
- Inadequate job training.
- Changes in organizational structure or vision.



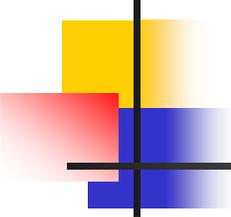
Taking Charge of Stress

- Accept
- Avoid
- Alter
- Adapt



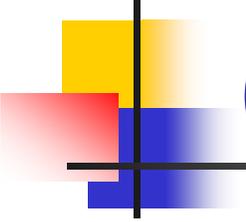
Post-traumatic Growth (PTG)

WHEN A PERSON AFFECTED BY
TRAUMA LEARNS NEW COPING
STRATEGIES OR GAINS
A NEW PERSPECTIVE
BY FACING THE PROBLEM



PTG Changes *(Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006)*

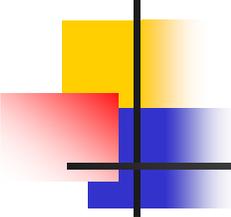
- In how one sees oneself
 - Personal strength
 - New possibilities
- In how one relates to others
 - Connection and compassion
- In life philosophy
 - Appreciation of life
 - Spiritual change



Resilience

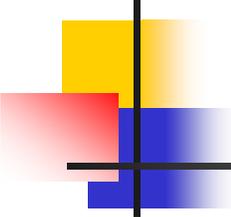
(Dr. Kevin O'Brien, NCVV)

Is the power to cope with
adversity and adapt to
challenges or change.



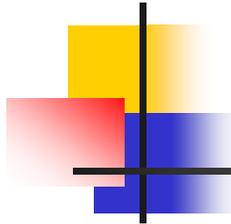
Being Resilient Means:

- Finding ways to cope with problems.
- Taking care of yourself and those around you.
- Emerging stronger than before.



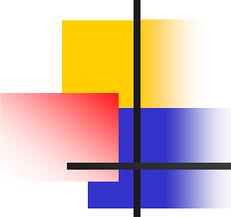
Vicarious Trauma & Resilience

- Happens to workers who allow themselves to be touched by the work that they are doing.
- Says more about the work being done, than the personality of the workers.



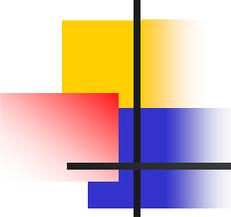
Empathy

- *Includes:* compassion; imagination; memory; experience and knowledge.
- Is the vehicle for affecting change in our clients.
- Increases our risk for developing distress.
- Opens us to *enrichment*.



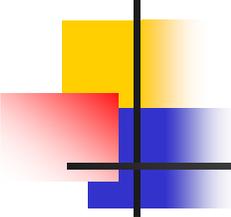
What Are Some Ways That.....

-you can build resilience?
- you cope with stress?



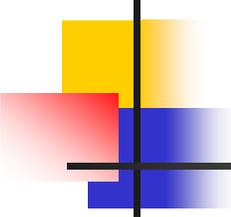
Consider Your Own Therapy!

- Find the ideal therapist FOR YOU.
- Consider joining a support group.
- Be as committed to your own growth & healing as you are to those you serve.
- Set realistic goals for self.
- Inventory your current lifestyle choices & make necessary changes.



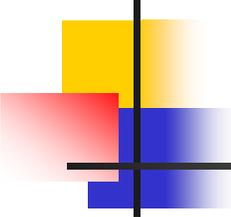
JOURNALING

- Can improve emotional & physical health
- Recent research (SMU & Ohio State):
 - Increased T-cell production
 - Drop in doctor visits
 - Fewer absentee days
 - Generally improved physical health
- JAMA recommends 20 min. / day writing:
 - “Writing about stressful events seems to help people change how they view them.”



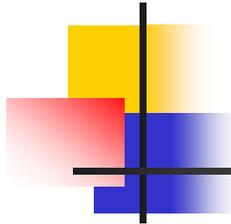
Some Journaling Basics

- Choose something to write in or on.
- Choose something to write with.
- Record context: time/ date/ any details.
- Don't put restrictions on your writing.
- Don't worry about spelling or grammar.
- Take a break when you finish.
- Can be private or for sharing.



Humor & Laughter

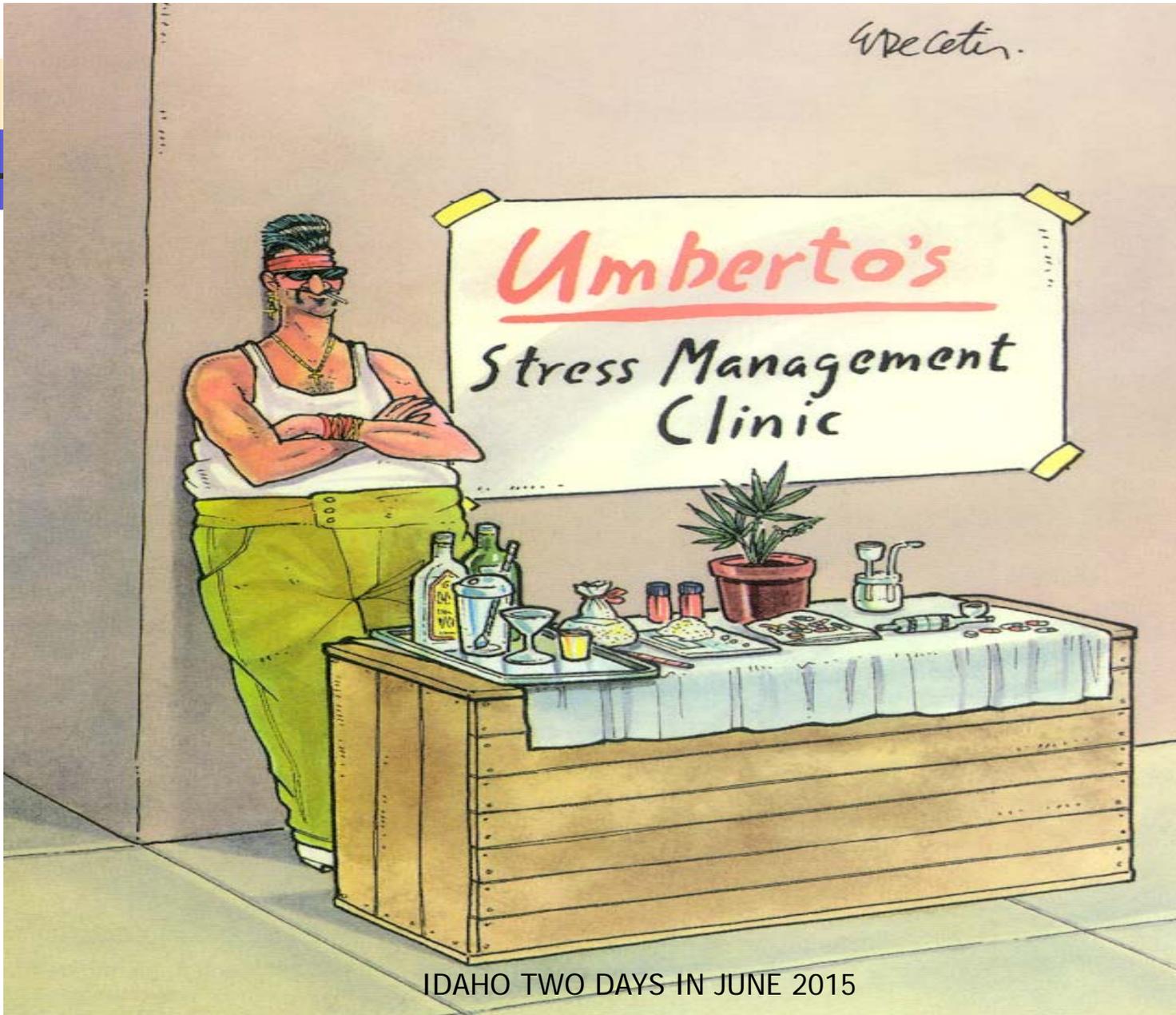
- Makes a person feel better.
- Laughing 100 times = 10 min. of rowing or 15 min. of biking
- Increases creativity and reduces stress.
- Puts problems in perspective.
- Clears out emotions.
- Shared laughter creates bonds.



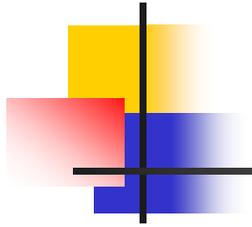
Humor.....

“Blessed are those who can laugh at themselves, for they shall never cease to be amused!”

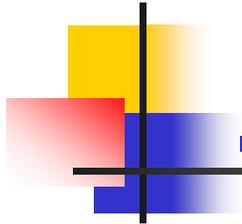
Umberto's Stress Management Clinic



IDAHO TWO DAYS IN JUNE 2015

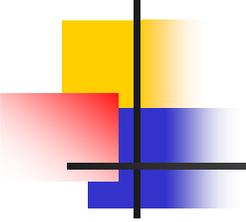


The “ABCs” of Managing Vicarious Trauma and Job Stress



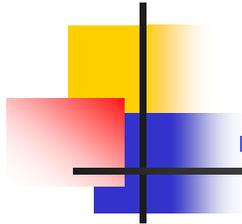
Awareness

- Be self aware; know your own trauma map
- Take care of yourself
- Create a self-care list and post it prominently in your home or office
- Inventory your current lifestyle choices and make necessary changes



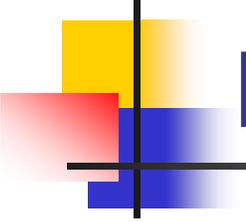
Sample Self-Care List

- Be creative
- Get “away”
- Get outside, appreciate the weather
- Enjoy other environments
- Have fun
- Socialize with people who aren't criminal!



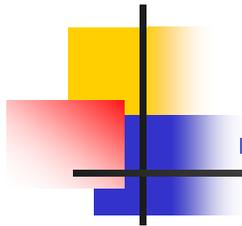
Balance

- Give self permission to fully experience emotional reactions
- Maintain clear work boundaries
- Set realistic goals for self
- Seek out new leisure activity (non-job related)



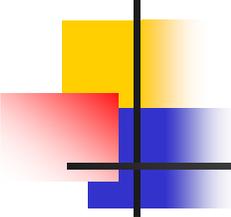
Tips for Achieving Balance

- Know your limits and accept them
- Learn and practice time management skills
- Avoid overtime
- Avoid “staff infection”
- Recognize negative coping skills and avoid them



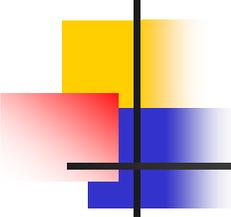
Connection

- Listen to feedback from colleagues, friends and family members
- Avoid professional isolation
- Remember your spiritual side
- Develop support systems



Tips for Achieving Connection

- Seek training to improve job skills and capacity
- Have a family member or friend conduct periodic “pulse checks”
- Debrief after difficult cases
- Start an informal peer support group
- *Seek* a mentor, and/or *be* a mentor



For More Information

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Monday Mentoring Missives Listserv:

To join, send a **BLANK** email to:

MondayMissives-subscribe@yahogroups.com