



Clinician Wellness

The Four R's of Compassion Fatigue

Alberta College of Social Work Conference 2016

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Welcome Alberta Social Workers!

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and text ASSESSMENT



What you will learn today

- How you can **Recognize** Compassion Fatigue in your life
- How you can **Reduce** your risk factors
- How you can **Restore** your protective factors
- How you can create a personalized Compassion Fatigue Resiliency plan that you can **Review** and adapt regularly.



But First!

Group Practice

Green Cue Cards



Recognizing Compassion Fatigue

- Definitions of Compassion, Compassion Satisfaction, Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue, Empathy and Burnout
- The Compassion Fatigue Trajectory (Framework)
- Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue
- Personal Assessment



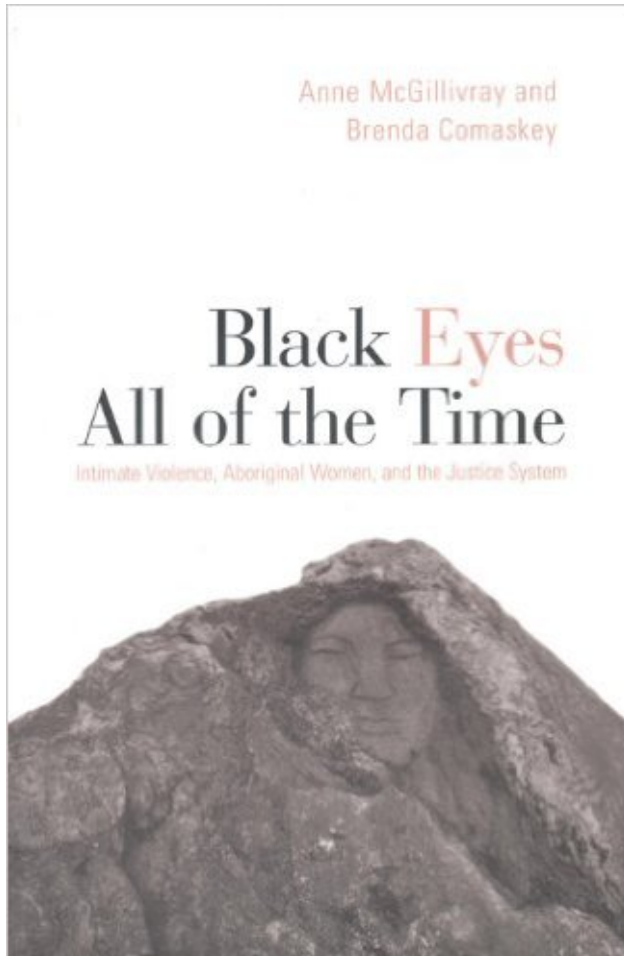
Who am I?

- Behavioural Health Consultant - AHS, Calgary, Calgary Foothills Primary Care Network
- Addictions and Mental Health
- Grief, Trauma, Compassion Fatigue
- Solution Focused, DBT, ACT, MBI and Yoga!
- Online Classes

From Law to Social Work....



Black Eyes All of the Time (1999)



Summary: The impetus for this book arose out of a 1995 Winnipeg study involving twenty-six Aboriginal women. The compelling accounts these women give of the domestic violence they experienced, first as children and later as wives and mothers, make it all too clear that any plan to implement diversionary reforms must first take into account this under-represented group. For survivors of domestic violence, jail terms for abusers allow time for healing, and the threat of criminal prosecution may quell violent outbreaks. Lax responses from an inconsistent criminal justice system often put Native women at risk.



What is Compassion?

”Compassion is defined as the emotional response when perceiving suffering and involves an authentic desire to help” (Seppala, 2013)

“The feeling or emotion, when a person is moved by the suffering or distress of another and by the desire to relieve it; pity that inclines one to spare or to succour” Oxford English Dictionary

Two components: identifying with human suffering and a desire or motivation to do something to relieve this suffering.



Hello Trauma Work!

WOMEN'S CRISIS CENTRE:

30 Days Emergency Shelter

6 Month Transition Program

Follow Up Program

Compassion Fatigue Risk Factor: Not having adequate training.



Compassion Satisfaction

CS 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.



Compassion Satisfaction

“The satisfaction of working with people and expressing your compassion and your empathy. The sense of doing the right thing, helping, people are responding to me. I’m doing the right things”

C. Figley – Overexposed.



Other descriptions Compassion Satisfaction

I really like having people get better. It is really wonderful helping people

I did make a difference, I did make it better. I'm in the right profession. I should be here

The rewards outweigh the challenges by far

There is no other feeling that can compare to really helping someone who is struggling



Rewards of Compassion

Compassion leads to connection, which correlates to:

- Better mental and physical health
- Speeds up recovery of disease
- May lengthen our lifespan
- Strengthens our immune system
- Improves self-esteem
- Lowers anxiety and depression
- Increases empathy, trust and cooperation with others = more connection!



Vicarious Trauma

The transmission of traumatic stress through observation and/or hearing others' stories of traumatic events and results in a shift in your world view and sense of meaning

Similar to PTSD including:

- Intrusive thoughts
- Nightmare
- Avoidance/Arousal
- Change in relationship to self, family and friends

(adapted from Compassion Fatigue: A Crucible of Transformation(2002) Eric Gentry

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Limiting Trauma Input

The more trauma one is exposed to, the more likely they will experience vicarious trauma. One strategy is to limit trauma input.

Limit:

- Number of trauma cases per day
- Informal debriefing with colleagues
- Real trauma in news, TV, internet
- Fictional trauma in TV, movies, books



Signs and Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue

- Lack of excitement for work
- Tired all the time
- Avoidance of family, friends, colleagues
- Calling in sick
- If not trauma then “trivial” and “must be nice factor”
- Emotional Eating
- Excessive TV/sleep
- Zoning out during sessions
- Zombie... Going through the motions to “getter done”.
- Numb. Just don’t care anymore. Lack of empathy
- Loss of hope
- Annoyance with patients/clients



Compassion Fatigue

CF is characterized by a deep physical and emotional exhaustion and a pronounced change in the ability to feel empathy for clients, loved ones and co-workers.

A serious, but natural consequence of working with people who are suffering and traumatized.



Other descriptions of Compassion Fatigue

When you have nothing left to give, you have given so much there is nothing left.

CF occurs when you are overexposed to pain and suffering



Other descriptions Compassion Fatigue

Because of your kindness, compassion and empathy, you start to absorb the emotions and reactions of the people you are helping.

The cumulative toll that we, as individuals, experience as a result of exposure to suffering, hardship, crisis and trauma.



Other descriptions Compassion Fatigue

Too many demands – not enough resiliency. It's a predictable phenomenon

CF is where you are just listening to this stuff and feeling hopeless and helpless and your being there isn't changing anything.



Other descriptions Compassion Fatigue

It's as though I don't have anymore to give emotionally, so I lose empathy for them. I become cynical or disbelieving in what they say.

Dealing with sick people and giving them what they need emotionally... you just give, give, give all the time.

Every time I'm at work, I feel dread. It's hard to fill my bucket.



Burnout

Extreme circumstances. It describes anyone whose health is suffering or whose outlook on life has turned negative because of the impact or overload of their work.

Signs and Symptoms have become chronic and physical illness has developed.

Brief interventions no longer help. Psychological and/or medical assistance is necessary.



Burnout

Associated with feelings of hopelessness and difficulties in dealing with work or 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 environment.

Professional Quality of Life Screening



The Compassion Fatigue Trajectory

- The Zealot Phase
- The Irritability Phase
- Withdrawal Phase
- The Zombie Phase
- Pathology and Victimization VS. Maturation and Renewal



The Zealot Phase

- Committed, involved, available
- Ready to problem solve and make a difference
- Willing to put in extra hours
- Tons of enthusiasm and volunteering
- Willing to go the extra mile “I’ll do that”



The Irritability Phase

- Begin to cut corners – avoid clients – hide
- Mock colleagues or clients
- Unfair talk of medical or mental health problems
- Use of humour is strained
- Daydream or distracted when working with clients
- Oversights, mistakes, hard to concentrate
- Distance ourselves from friends and co-workers



The Withdrawal Phase

- Enthusiasm turns sour – bubble bursts
- Clients become a blur – run together – seen as irritants and not individuals
- Complains made at work and personal life
- Tired all the time – don't want to talk about work or admit our profession (fake job)
- Neglect family – co-workers/friends/clients/self



The Zombie Phase

- Auto pilot
- Not connected to our thoughts and feelings
- Disconnected from colleagues/peers/family/friends
- Lost compassion for clients
- Hear but do not understand, lost our meaning and value as helpers



Pathology + Victimization (Burnout)

OR

Maturation and Renewal (Sustainable Caring)

- Overwhelmed and leave the profession
- Somatic Illness
- Symptoms are perpetual
- OR
- Hardiness
- Resiliency
- Transformation



The Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQuol)

Compassion Satisfaction

Burnout

Secondary Traumatic Stress (Compassion Fatigue)

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Review of Recognizing Compassion Fatigue

- Definitions
- Descriptions
- Signs and Symptoms
- Compassion Fatigue Trajectory
- Professional Quality of Life Scale



Reducing Risk Factors

- Over exposure to trauma – limiting trauma input
- Lack of adequate training – more professional development and specialized training
- Unconscious vs. Conscious Empathy
- Emotional Contagion
- Lack of Self-Care
- Lack of Balance



Empathy

“Empathy allows us to relate to those in our care, to have a sense of what they are feeling. It also helps us put their experience into perspective, understanding how they are being affected by the incidents that we are trying to mediate” (Rothschild, 2006)

“Empathy is the visceral or emotional experience of another person’s feelings...an automatic mirroring of another’s emotions” (Seppala, 2013)



Four Attributes of Empathy

- 1) Get perspective – understand their world
- 2) Non-judgmental
- 3) Understand their feelings
- 4) Communicating the understanding

*Empathy leads to Compassion, which leads to motivation to
alleviate suffering*



Conscious Empathy

Being mindful and present while empathizing. Self-regulation while empathizing.

Conscious empathy is a desirable capacity, making it possible for us to relate to the experiences of others, to 'walk in their shoes' so to speak.

Leads to compassion by giving us an insight into another's state of being.



Unconscious Empathy

Not being mindful or present while empathizing.

“Unconscious empathy is the mechanism of emotional infection”
(Rothschild, 2006).

Catching emotions...



Emotional Contagion

What types of emotions are you exposed to?

How often do you realize that you're body is tense, or you have a heaviness in your body or your heart rate has increased?

Are you self-regulating while being around these emotions?



Self-Regulation

“...refers to the conscious and less conscious management of our physical and emotional impulses, drives and anxieties” (Baker, 2003)

The Resilient Clinician Pg. 124



Practicing Safe Empathy

“The better we take care of ourselves and maintain a professional separation from our clients, the more we will be in a position to be truly empathetic, compassionate and useful to them”
(Rothschild, 2006).



Bones to the Ground Strategy

YOUR CUE CARD!

Practice at home

Practice with clients/patients



Lack of Self-Care or Work/Life Balance

Why I don't spend a lot of time during my 90 minute talks on self-care

Shame associated with self-care?

Is it a lack of time, energy, money, or self-worth.... Or something else?



Reviewing Reduction of Risk Factors

Limiting Trauma Input

Proper training for job

Unconscious Empathy Vs. Conscious Empathy and how to
Practice Safe Empathy

Lack of Self-Care and Work/Life Balance



Restoring Protective Factors

- Increasing personal awareness for conscious empathy
- Basic Self-Care Plan
- Remembering Gratitude
- Professional Passion



Personal Awareness

- Mindfulness Meditation – increase self-awareness, fosters empathy and reduces emotional reactivity to painful stimuli
- Yoga – increases mind/body awareness and triggers relaxation. Helps to move emotions through body
- Behavioural Cues – Cue card, clock, phone... tie to regular behaviour.



Non-Negotiable Self-Care

- Eat
- Sleep
- Move (30)
- Fresh Air (20)
- Connections
- Spirituality



Attitude of Gratitude

Rewards of compassion. Rewards of your work.

Review what went well each day - the small things.

- Write a gratitude list
- Practice gratitude journaling
- Draw/Paint/Collage a Gratitude Board



Passion Projects

How can you bring passion back to your job?

Research, committee work, specialized training, private practice work.

Write a book!



**20 QUICK STRATEGIES
TO HELP PATIENTS OR CLIENTS
MANAGE STRESS**



Brush
Education Inc.

Charlene Richard



Review Restoring Protective Factors

- How to increase personal attunement for conscious empathy
- Non-Negotiable Self-Care Plan
- Attitude of Gratitude
- Passion Projects



Review Your Compassion Fatigue Resiliency Plan

Make a plan for 3 months and include:

One strategy to Reduce Your Risk Factors

One Strategy to Restore Your Protective Factors

Basic Self-Care Plan

Review at 6 months, 9 months and 12 months

If mastered, add a new strategy from each

If not working, either add for another three months or try a new one



Review: The 4 R's of Compassion Fatigue Resiliency

Recognize Compassion Fatigue in your life

Reduce Your Risk Factors

Restore Your Protective Factors

Review Your Personal CF Resiliency Plan



GIVE AWAYS
AND QUESTIONS
AND FEEDBACK FORMS,
OH MY!

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GIVE AWAYS

Caring Safely – April 20th

Beginners Mindfulness – April 27^t

Support for Anxiety – May 4th

Less Stress, More Joy – May 11th

Support for Depression – May 18th

Guided Relaxation for Stress and Anxiety – Immediately



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