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Caregiver Compassion Fatigue

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This material is based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Office of Family Policy, Children and Youth, U.S. Department of Defense under Award Numbers 2010-48869-20685 and 2012-48755-20306.

**Welcome to the
Military Families Learning Network**

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professional development
through engaged online communities.

eXtension.org/militaryfamilies



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POLL

How would you best describe your current employer?

Military Families Learning Network Military Caregiving



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Available Resources



<https://learn.extension.org/events/1604>

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Evaluation & CE Credit Process

The Military Caregiving Concentration team will offer 1.00 CE credit hour from NASW.

To receive CE credit please complete the evaluation and post-test found at:
https://vte.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9uYbDQY1ElgyQXH

**Must pass post-test with an 80% or higher to receive certificate.*

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Caregiver Compassion Fatigue

August 20, 2014

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- Professor and Director, School of Social Work
Georgia State University
- Editor-in-Chief, *Traumatology: An International Journal*
- Developer of the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale

Agenda

- Definitions and Conceptual Clarity
- Risk and Protective Factors
- Strategies for Addressing Compassion Fatigue

Negative Effects of Exposure to Traumatized Populations: What do we call it?

- Indirect trauma
- Emotional contagion
- Savior Syndrome
- Cost of caring
- Secondary victimization
- Secondary traumatic stress
- Compassion fatigue
- Vicarious traumatization
- Burnout

Who is Vulnerable?

- Family Members
 - Spouses/Partners
 - Children
 - Parents
 - Any other family or friends
- Service Providers
 - Social workers
 - Nurses
 - Domestic/sexual violence
 - Physicians
 - Emergency responders

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS): What is it?

- “The *natural*, consequent behaviors and emotions resulting from knowledge about a stressful event experienced by a significant other.” (Figley, 1999, p.11)
- “A syndrome of symptoms nearly identical to *PTSD* except that exposure to a traumatizing event experienced by one person becomes a traumatizing event for the second person.” (Figley, 1999, p.11)

Compassion Fatigue (CF)

- Conceptually identical to Secondary Traumatic Stress.
- Introduced as a potentially less stigmatizing term.
- Sometimes used to refer to the combination of secondary traumatic stress and burnout.

CF/STS Symptoms

- Exposure
- Intrusion
- Avoidance
- Hyperarousal
- Distress/Impairment

Intrusion Symptoms

- Recurrent and intrusive recollections of the event.
- Recurrent distressing dreams of the event
- Acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring
- Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.
- Physiological reactivity on exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.

Avoidance Symptoms

- Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma.
- Efforts to avoid activities, places or people that arouse recollections of the trauma.
- Inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma.
- Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities.
- Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others.
- Restricted range of affect.
- Sense of a foreshortened future.

Arousal Symptoms

- Difficulty falling or staying asleep.
- Irritability, frustration, or anger.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Hypervigilance
- Exaggerated startle response

Distress and Impairment

- Significant Distress
- Impaired Functioning
 - Family
 - Social
 - Occupational

Definition of Vicarious Traumatization

- The transformation in the inner experience of the *therapist* that comes about as a result of empathic engagement with traumatic material (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995, p.31)
- Profound disruptions in the *therapist's* frame of reference, that is, his basic sense of identity, world view, and spirituality. Multiple aspects of the *therapist* and his life are affected, including his affect tolerance, fundamental psychological needs, deeply held beliefs about self and others, interpersonal relationships, internal imagery, and experience of his body and physical presence in the world. (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995, p. 280).

Burnout

- Burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, determined by the dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001)

Prevalence of CF/STS in Service Providers

- Social Workers (Bride, 2007; Bride & Lee, 2012)
 - 48 - 55% met at least one of the core criteria for PTSD
 - 24% scored above the clinical cutoff.
 - 11 - 15% met the core criteria for PTSD.
- Substance Abuse Counselors (Bride et al., 2009; Bride & Roman, 2011)
 - 54 - 57% met at least one of the core criteria for PTSD.
 - 26% scored above the clinical cutoff.
 - 13 - 19% met the core criteria for PTSD.
- Domestic/Sexual Violence Social Workers (Choi, 2011)
 - 66% met at least one of the core criteria for PTSD.
 - 21% met the core criteria for PTSD.
- Child Welfare Workers (Bride, Jones, & MacMaster, 2007)
 - 92% experienced some symptoms of STS.
 - 34% met core criteria for PTSD.

Summary of Prevalence Studies

- Most service providers experience some symptoms of STS.
- Most service providers have low levels of STS.
- A significant amount of service providers have relatively high levels of STS.

Risk and Protective Factors

- Demographic variables
 - age
 - experience
 - gender
 - trauma history

Risk and Protective Factors

- Empathy
 - Affective Sharing
 - Capacity for an automatic or unconscious affective response to others, which may include sharing emotional states.
 - Perspective Taking
 - A cognitive capacity to take the perspective of another.

Risk and Protective Factors

- Empathy cont'd
 - Self-Other Awareness
 - The capacity for temporary identification between self and other that ultimately avoids confusion between self and other.
 - Emotional Regulation
 - The ability to change or control one's own emotional experience.

Risk and Protective Factors

- Social Support
 - Helpfulness
 - Discussion
 - Satisfaction
 - Reliable Alliance/Cohesion

Compassion Satisfaction & Resilience

- Increased empathy, insight, and tolerance
- Appreciation of life
- Personal growth
- Appreciation of relationships
- Improved spousal relations
- Improved parenting skills

Self-Care for Compassion Fatigue

■ Awareness

- Recognize and identify CF/STS symptoms
- Monitor changes in symptoms over time
- Recognize and monitor changes in functioning

■ Balance

- Make personal life a priority
- Attend to physical health
- Seek therapy/counseling

■ Connection

- Make relationships with family and friends a priority
- Honor connection to community
- Revitalize sense of life's purpose and meaning

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Military Caregiving Upcoming Event...

Give Care. Take Care.

Date: September 17, 2014

Time: 11:00 a.m. Eastern

Location: <https://learn.extension.org/events/1636>

For more information on MFLN–Military Caregiving go to:

<http://www.extension.org/pages/60576>

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<http://www.extension.org/62581>

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