



# Resiliency Strategies

Navigating in a Post-Pandemic World

Sarah Sistrunk, LPC, MAC, CPCS

# Resiliency Strategies – Learning Objectives

- ✓ Identify basis or “cause” of need for resilience
  - Trauma or traumatic event?
- ✓ Recognize the signs and symptoms of vicarious trauma
  - Compassion Fatigue
  - Burnout
- ✓ List screening and assessment tools that address trauma and resilience
- ✓ Develop strategies/coping skills to build resilience
  - Clients versus Staff

# How did we get here?

- Depends on who you ask!!
- For our clients:
  - Trauma/Traumatic Experiences
  - Lack of resources
  - Poor coping skills
  - Poor support system
- For the professional worker:
  - May be a result of the same issues above, but also include the following:
    - Exposure to client's traumatic experiences
    - Shared trauma (pandemic)



# What exactly *IS* “Here”?

- PTSD?
- Situational (work/life imbalance)?
- Pandemic Induced?
- “Here” is considered any position or place where you feel stuck or unmotivated
- Today’s focus will be on vicarious trauma or shared experiences



# Trauma Defined.....

While there are many ways to identify trauma, for the purpose of today, we will define trauma as:

”Trauma can be defined as....an individual’s perception of an event as threatening to oneself or others.” (Elaine Miller-Karas, p.2)

# COVID-19....Shared Trauma??

- The COVID pandemic has impacted literally every single human being on Earth.
- Despite your political affiliation, SES, race, gender, geographical location, you were impacted by the virus and the consequences.
- Depending on your current situation/circumstances, as well as your previous protective features/coping skills, you may have started out in the pandemic normal.
- In time, we have become weary to the enduring consequences we are facing, which creates vicarious trauma.
- The impact of vicarious trauma will depend on the amount of trauma endured during this time period.



# Signs of Vicarious Trauma and Burnout

What to look for?

# Vicarious Trauma and Burnout

## VT symptoms

- Empathic Strain
- Countertransference
- Poor Boundaries
- Compassion Fatigue
- Anger/Hostility

## Burnout

- Avoidance
- Lack of focus
- Withdrawal
- Compassion Fatigue
- Depression





# Screening and Assessment Tools

- Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale (STSS):  
(Bride, B.E., 2004)
- Professional Quality of Life Scale (PROQOL):  
Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Self-Test  
for Helpers (B. Stamm, 2009-2011)
- PTSD checklist for DSM-V (PCL-C or PCL-5)  
Dep. Of Veteran Affairs, 11 April 2018)
- Self Care Assessment (Saakvitne, Pearlman, &  
Staff of TSI/CAAP, 1996)

# Vicarious Resilience Scale (VRS)

- Developed for professionals working with trauma survivors
  - Useful for determining if a staff/team member is experiencing burnout or VT
  - Assesses negative impact of prolonged exposure to trauma work/clients
  - Created 7 dimensions of Vicarious Resilience
1. Changes in life goals and perspectives
  2. Client-inspired hope
  3. Increased self-awareness and self care practices
  4. Increased capacity for resourcefulness
  5. Increased recognition of clients' spirituality as a therapeutic resource
  6. Consciousness about power and privilege relative towards clients' social location
  7. Increased capacity for remaining present while listening to trauma narratives

# So how do we manage burnout??

Help for the helper!



# What to understand about resilience....

- Having resilience does NOT mean you will not experience a traumatic event or situation
- Resilience is a process.....which means it will NOT be rainbows and unicorns for most of the journey
- As a result, your resilience may experience ebbs and flows, depending on external circumstances
- Building resilience is much like a muscle, which takes exercise and practice to build and maintain
- Resilience strategies benefit staff just as much, if not more, than the clients
- How do you build resilience???

# Building Resilience.....

- Consider the ABC's method of self care and identification of VT
  - Awareness: self awareness; recognize the signs and symptoms
  - Balance: maintain a healthy balance between your personal life and professional work
  - Connect: seek relationships or connections with positive sources and people



# Building Resilience...cont.

## Build Your Connections

- Prioritize your relationships

- Join a group

## Foster Wellness

- Avoid negative outlets

- Take care of your body

- Practice mindfulness

## Seek Professional Help

# Building Resilience...cont.

## Find Purpose

Be proactive

Help others

Move towards your goals

Look for opportunities for self-discovery

## Embrace Healthy Thoughts

Accept change

Keep things in perspective

Maintain a hopeful outlook

Learn from your past





*“If your compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete.”*

-Jack Kornfield







## Questions?

Sarah Sistrunk, LPC, MAC, CPCS

Clinical Director, FCAC

404-612-4925 Phone

[sarah.Sistrunk@fultoncountyga.gov](mailto:sarah.Sistrunk@fultoncountyga.gov)  
Email

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