Enhancing Emotional Resilience to Avoid Compassion Fatigue and Burnout

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2016 Midwest ACE Summit
• Promote the right of all children to live happy, safe, and healthy lives

• Ensure children receive quality medical care from pediatricians and other healthcare providers

• Assess and serve the needs of its membership
CHILD DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

• Provide interprofessional education, resources, and technical assistance

• Support advocacy and systems improvement issues

• Connect providers and families to community resources
The Changing Face of Pediatrics

• Medical community moved from care of child to care of family to care of community

• Partnering with extended family and community

• Not all remedies are exclusively medical

• Recognizing that even for medical providers there is a cost to caring-burnout
HealthPartners

- **Integrated** health care delivery and health care financing system
- **Founded** in 1957 in Minnesota’s Twin Cities as a cooperative
- **Largest** consumer-governed, non-profit health care organization in the nation
- Founded to make healthcare affordable
HealthPartners

» 22,500 employees

» 1,500,000 members

» 1,000,000 patients
Our Hospitals

Regions
454-bed, level 1 trauma
Methodist
426-bed, acute care
Lakeview
97-bed, acute care
Hudson
25-bed, critical access
Westfields
25-bed, critical access
Amery
25-bed, critical access

Our Clinics

1,700 physicians

50 primary care locations

28 Urgent Care locations

8 Urgency Room level of care

9 Urgent Care + Retail Clinic level of care
Objectives

- The theory and process of stress, burnout and compassion fatigue for all helping professions

- Specific impact of compassion fatigue on our work and impact on other parts of our life

- Use of self-care inventory

- Strategies and skills for self care
The Foundation of a Successful Society is Built in Early Childhood

- Successful Parenting of Next Generation
  - Educational Achievement
  - Economic Productivity
  - Responsible Citizenship
  - Lifelong Health

Strong Communities  Healthy Economy

HEALTHY CHILD DEVELOPMENT
Burnout

“Violating my own nature in the name of nobility.”

Parker Palmer
Responding to Trauma

SUGGESTIONS for us all
What does it mean to be Trauma-informed?

The Four R’s
Being trauma-informed

• Realization
• Recognition
• Responding
• Resist re-traumatizing
What does stress look like?

- Adrenal response
- Cardiovascular changes
- Immune activation
- Energy supply
Stress is a storm
Burnout is like a forest fire
Compassion fatigue is a barren land
Punished by the wind and rain of the storm which is stress?

Consumed by the wildfire that is burnout?

Desolate from the bleakness of compassion fatigue?
Stress is normal.
We are Always on the Continuum

Stress  Burnout  Compassion Fatigue

Our obligation is to **know** where we are and **take action** to get ourselves into a better zone.
Burnout Characteristics & Stages

The compulsion to prove oneself
• Ambitious and driven

Working harder
• Trying to be irreplaceable

Neglecting personal needs
• Making little time for self care, personal enjoyment, family or friends

A classic book exploring a theory of burnout
• Psychologist Herbert Freudenberger
• Burnout: The High Cost of High Achievement, 1980
Burnout Characteristics & Stages

Displacement of conflicts
• Ignoring needs to the point of physical consequences

Revision of values
• Devaluing self care, personal enjoyment, family or friends, becoming numb

Denial of emerging problems
• Becoming moody and intolerant or irritable, while blaming bad moods on work pressure

Withdrawal
• Social isolation sometimes using alcohol or drugs for relief from obsessive work
Understanding and Taking Action

Burnout Characteristics & Stages

Obvious behavioral changes
• Coworkers, family and friends see behavior changes

Depersonalization
• Loss of hope, feeling of “going through the motions”

Inner emptiness
• Compensatory acts such as overeating, excessive use of alcohol or sex mask feelings of emptiness

Depression
• Characterized by exhaustion, hopelessness, indifference, and belief that life has no meaning

Burnout syndrome
• Physical and emotional collapse
Three Levels of Stress

• **Positive**
  Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels

• **Tolerable**
  Serious, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships

• **Toxic**
  Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships
Life as a caring professional

- Are exposed to or are aware of the trauma of the child or children to whom you are assigned

- Find yourself up and against at least one system, perhaps more you are dealing with the resistance of defense attorney, family, social service provider, or others as you advocate for this child

- May be living with your own “ghosts in the nursery,” or other trauma that triggers difficult memories for you

- Also have a life that might be perfect, but is probably offering some challenges
If we just stop to think about all of these factors, we might feel like this...
Know limits

Grant me
the Courage to change the things I can
the Serenity to accept the things
I cannot change
the Wisdom to know the difference
Traits of caring people

- Altruistic and compassionate / burn out and depression
- Perfectionistic / frustration and insecurity
- High achievers / unrealistic expectations and effort
- Independent / loss of perspective, isolation
- Gratification delay / lack of self-monitoring
Red Flags of Compassion Fatigue
STRESS!
Red flags in our professional life

- Increased irritability or impatience
- Difficulty planning for court dates, reports, or personal tasks
- Decreased ability to concentrate
- Denying that traumatic events impact children or families you serve
- Feeling numb or detached
- Intense feelings and intrusive thoughts, that don’t lessen over time
- Dreams about the traumas of children or families you serve
Red Flags in other parts of life

• Increased irritability or impatience
• Difficulty planning work or personal tasks
• Decreased ability to concentrate
• Denying that traumatic events impact us
• Feeling numb or detached
• Intense feelings and intrusive thoughts, that don’t lessen over time
• Dreams about the traumas of children or families you serve
Adaptive coping

- Helps solve or deal with the issue
- Improves you

Maladaptive coping

- Avoids or compounds the issue
- Undermines your health
Reduce Maladaptive Coping & Increase Adaptive Coping

How to achieve a healthy lifestyle

- Knowledge + practice - becomes automatic habit
- 10-40 days to make a habit
- Result:
  Ability to cope with expected or unexpected stress, situations, demands or responsibilities
QUIZ
TIME
Adaptive or Maladaptive?
Adaptive or Maladaptive?
Adaptive or Maladaptive?
Adaptive or Maladaptive?
Healthy Lifestyle

• Physical Activity:
  • Minimum 30 minutes walking 5 or more days per week

• Nutrition: 5 – 8 servings fruits and veggies
  • 1 serving = 2.8 oz = small banana, medium apple or small carrot

• Avoid Tobacco:
  • And tobacco exposure

• Avoid Alcohol Misuse:
  • Upper limits of low risk drinking:
    • Men 4 drinks on any single day / 14 total in a week
    • Women 3 drinks on any single day / 7 total in a week

• Adequate, Restful Sleep:
  • 7 to 9 hours

• Healthy Thinking:
  • Reduce negative self-talk and substitute statements that are literally true
Self-care inventory
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<th>Physical Self-Care</th>
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<td>Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner)</td>
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<td>Eat healthy foods</td>
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<td>Exercise consistently</td>
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<td>Get regular medical care for prevention</td>
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<td>Get medical care when necessary</td>
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<td>Take time off when sick</td>
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<td>Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing or do some other physical activity that is enjoyable to self</td>
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<td>Take time to be sexual</td>
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<td>Get enough sleep</td>
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<td>Take vacations</td>
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<td>Wear clothes you like</td>
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<td>Take day trips or mini-vacations</td>
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<td>Make time away from telephones</td>
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<td>Psychological Self-Care</td>
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<td>Make time for self-reflection</td>
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<td>Engage in personal psychotherapy</td>
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<td>Write in a journal</td>
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<td>Read literature that is unrelated to work</td>
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<td>Do something in which you are not an expert or in charge</td>
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<td>Cope with stress in personal and/or work life</td>
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<td>Notice inner experience (e.g. listen to and recognize thoughts, judgments, beliefs, attitudes and feelings)</td>
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<td>Provide others with different aspects of self (e.g. communicate needs and wants)</td>
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<td>Try new things</td>
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<td>Practice receiving from others</td>
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<td>Improve ability to say “no” to extra responsibilities</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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<td>Emotional Self-Care</td>
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<td>Allow for quality time with others whose company you enjoy</td>
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<td>Maintain contact with valued others</td>
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<td>Give self affirmations and praise</td>
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<td>Love self</td>
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<td>Reread favorite book or review favorite movies</td>
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<td>Identify and engage in comforting activities, objects, people, relationships and places</td>
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<td>Allow for feeling expression (laugh, cry, etc....)</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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<td>Spiritual Self-Care</td>
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<td>Allow time for reflection</td>
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<td>Spend time with nature</td>
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<td>Participate in a spiritual community</td>
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<td>Open to inspiration</td>
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<td>Cherish own optimism and hope</td>
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<td>Be aware of nonmaterial aspects of life</td>
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<td>Cultivate ability to identify what is meaningful and its place in personal life</td>
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<td>Meditate/pray</td>
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<td>Contribute to causes in which you believe</td>
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<td>Read inspirational literatures (lectures, music, etc.)</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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<td>Workplace or Professional Self-Care</td>
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<td>Allow for breaks during the workday</td>
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<td>Engage with co-workers</td>
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<td>Provide self quiet time/space to complete tasks</td>
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<td>Participate in projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding</td>
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<td>Set limits/boundaries with clients and colleagues</td>
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<td>Balance workload/cases</td>
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<td>Arrange work space for comfort</td>
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<td>Maintain regular supervision or consultation</td>
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<td>Negotiate needs (benefits, bonuses, raise, etc.)</td>
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<td>Participate in peer support group</td>
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Strategies for self-care
Ways to be your own best care-giver
Recognize compassion fatigue as an occupational hazard
Healthy Thinking:

- Evidenced based
- Easy habit to make
- Part of a healthy lifestyle
Negative self talk

- Subtle
- Prevalent
- Pervasive
- High achievers may be at risk
Building Healthy Thinking Skills

- Based on Cognitive Behavior Therapy
- Works for **all** ages, **all** roles, **all** levels of expertise
- Negative self talk is **just a habit**
- Can be learned and practiced

Skill building:
- Awareness
- Practice
- Mutual support
- Personal action plan
When healthy thinking replaces negative self talk

• Reduced stress
• Less irritation
• Reduced anxiety
• Less anger
• Less sadness
Impact of Negative Self Talk

*What we think* has a major impact on *how we feel*

Under *stress* we experience *negative self talk*

*Negative self talk* is just a *habit* but it creates *more stress*
What do you say when you’re stressed?
Negative self talk
Let’s Practice Together!

Stop  
Ask  
Replace

Literally true
Remember!!!!

• Increased irritability or impatience with families, patients, clients, students, or colleagues

• Decreased concentration

• Denying that traumatic events impact those we serve, or feeling numb or detached

• Intense feelings and intrusive thoughts, that don’t lessen over time, about someone else’s trauma
Take care of yourself

• Don’t go it alone

• Recognize compassion fatigue as an occupational hazard

• Seek help with your own traumas

• Guard against your work becoming the only activity that defines who you are

• Address your physical, psychic, and spiritual needs
Never H.A.L.T.

- Hungry
- Angry
- Lonely
- Tired
A little homework
Questions for self awareness

• What brings out your best?
• What part of your work rejuvenates you?
• What can you share?
• What do you need help with?
• What threatens you? Why?
• What are realistic expectations?
• What can you change? Where will you start?
Take Home Points

• Caring providers are people too!

• Working in systems can be toxic

• There are often high expectations (sometimes self-imposed) on caring professionals

• Lack of self-care is epidemic, dangerous, and can’t be ignored
Aha!
Thank You!

Questions and Comments?

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