



# Self-Care & Secondary Traumatic Stress

*Presented by  
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*Thank You for your participation  
and partnership!*



## *Lindsey Greene, MSW*



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# *Self-Care & Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)*



# Secondary Traumatic Stress & Self-Care

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# Secondary Traumatic Stress & Self-Care

- Balancing your plate
- Defining the terms
- Exposure to other's trauma
- Organizational trauma
- Understanding self care



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# Balance Your Plate

## The Healthy Mind Platter



*The Healthy Mind Platter, for Optimal Brain Matter*

(Rock & Siegel, 2011)

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# Self-Care for Helping Professionals

- Self Care is more than a to-do list of the things you are supposed to do to take care of your mind and body.
- It's also how you manage the stress of the empathetic nature of the work.



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# Secondary Traumatic Stress & Related Conditions



**Secondary Traumatic Stress** refers to PTSD related symptoms caused by indirect exposure to traumatic material.

Other terms capture elements of this definition *but are not all* interchangeable.

- The compassion satisfaction/fatigue continuum
- Vicarious trauma
- Burnout

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# Check-in

- Any clarifying questions so far?
- Any thoughts to share?



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# Activity- PROQOL

- Complete the PROQOL assessment.
- Answer the poll.
- Break out room discussion.



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# Breakout Room Discussion

- How did you score in each area?
- Did anything surprise you?
- Do you think your scores are similar to other people in your organization?



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# *Exposure to Other's Trauma*

- What someone tells you
- Play, drawings, written stories
- Witnessing trauma responses
- Media coverage
- Case reports



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# Exposure to Secondary Trauma may cause:



## Avoidance/Withdrawal

- Emotional numbing
- Feeling disconnected from friends/family

## Hyper arousal

- Nervousness or jumpiness
- Difficulty concentrating or taking in information

## Re-experiencing

- Intrusive images
- Nightmares/insomnia

## Thoughts/Feelings

- Changes in your worldview
- Feelings of hopelessness and/or helplessness
- Anger



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# When Your Client's Trauma is a Reminder

## You may:

- React as you would to any trauma reminder
- Have trouble differentiating your experience from your client's
- Expect your client to cope the same way you did
- Respond inappropriately or disproportionately
- Withdraw from your client



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# Break

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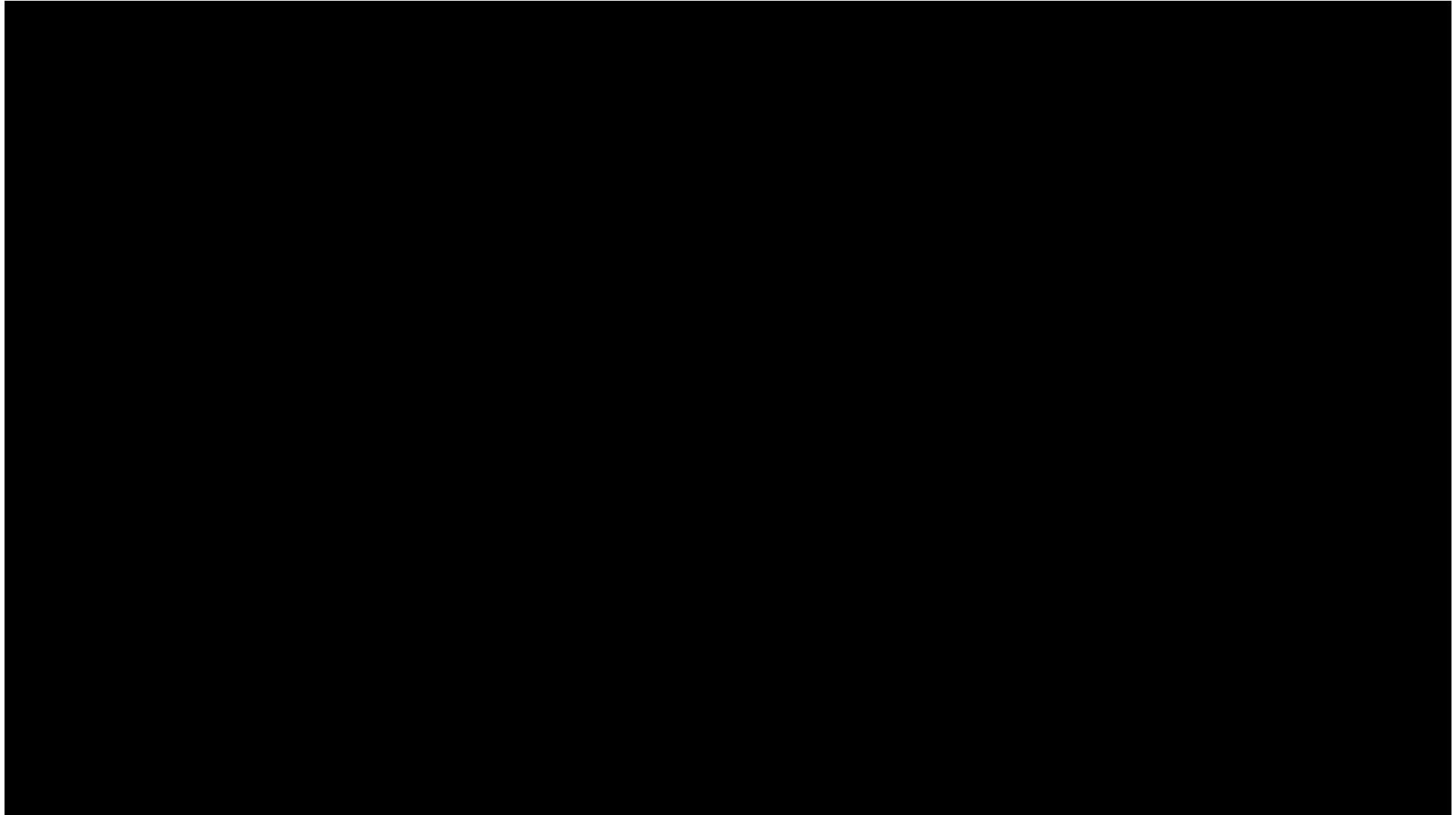
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# Laura van Dernoot Lipsky: Trauma Stewardship



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# Break Out Room Discussion

- What trauma exposure responses do you see in your self and in your organization?



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# Breakout Room Share Back

- Select one person from your breakout room to share back with the larger group just one theme that emerged in your group discussion.



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# Organizational Stress



- Types of organizational stress (or trauma) include: layoffs, mergers and acquisitions, violence in the workplace, empathetic nature of the work, natural disaster, major reorganizations, the turnover of senior leadership or sudden loss of key talent.
- Direct or indirect, sudden or cumulative, organizational trauma typically has the following qualities:
  - A breakdown in communication
  - A breakdown in trust
  - A breakdown in productivity
  - Workers feel powerless
  - A shake up in roles and responsibilities
  - A sense of loss
  - Stress and anxiety contagion

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# Who is Responsible for Your Self-Care?



You



Co-workers



Supervisors



Organization



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# Getting Past Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)

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- Use Supervision to Address STS
- Increase Self-Awareness of STS
- Maintain Healthy Work-Life Balance
- Implement Plans to Increase Personal Wellness
- Use Employee Assistance Programs
- Utilize Accountability Buddy System or Co-Care
- Practice Self-Care
- Stay Connected
- Counseling Services
- Use Vacation Time



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# Getting Past Secondary Traumatic Stress - Organizational

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- Clinical Supervision
- Trauma Case Load Balance
- Enhance Physical safety of staff
- Incorporate STS Training for Staff
- Partner with STS Intervention Providers
- Ongoing Assessment of Staff Risk and Resiliency
- Reflective Supervision
- Workplace Self-Care Group
- Flextime Scheduling



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# Break

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# Organizational Health



## Defining Organizational Health

*An organization's ability to function effectively, to cope adequately, to change appropriately, and to grow from within.*

## Trauma Informed Care

First and secondhand exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences and the effects of toxic stress is prevalent in the workplace.

Through Trauma Informed Care, organizational health improvements can be achieved by focusing efforts on building an inclusive and resilient workforce.

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# Organizational Benefits of Trauma Informed Care

## Organizational Resilience

Staff feel safe & connected to do their best work

## Increased Morale & Satisfaction

Staff feel valued

## Higher Productivity

Less absenteeism

## Higher Retention

Turnover rates decrease



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# Organizational Resilience

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## Co-Care ultimately leads to Resiliency

- Proactive approach to safety and harm-reduction
- Reduces re-traumatization of staff and clients
- Organizational support encourages healing
- Builds resilience against secondary traumatic stress
- Mutual peer support environment



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# Self Care Group Activity

**Why is self care important in each of these areas?**

- Physical
- Psychological
- Emotional
- Spiritual
- Personal
- Professional

**What are you currently doing?**

**What would you like to try?**



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# Committing to Self-Care



## Make a Plan

- Maintain a balance between work and relaxation, self and others.
- Include activities purely for fun.
- Include regular stress management physical activity, meditation, yoga, prayer, etc.
- Notice your strengths and areas for growth on the self assessment.

# Make a Plan



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# References

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National Childhood Traumatic Stress Network

<http://www.nctsn.org/resources/topics/secondary-traumatic-stress>

Compassion Fatigue Charles R Figley 1995

[https://www.drdansiegel.com/resources/healthy\\_mind\\_platter/](https://www.drdansiegel.com/resources/healthy_mind_platter/)



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A person is silhouetted against a bright, golden sunset. The person's arms are raised in a gesture of triumph or joy. They are standing in a field of tall grass. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong glow and long shadows. The sky is filled with soft, golden light and some wispy clouds. The overall mood is one of hope, achievement, and reflection.

*Reflection &  
Journaling*