

# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: SECONDARY TRAUMA



**\*Disclaimer - The information contained in this IMPACT WV product is not necessarily evidence or practiced based, but rather peer informed.**

## Topic

The Community of Practice (CoP) was developed through a partnership with IMPACT WV and the WV Home Visiting Program to help participants exchange technical information and share experiences about self care, burnout, resiliency and secondary trauma related to serving clients currently experiencing or who have past experiences with substance use and neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS).

## Aim

The purpose of this Community of Practice (CoP):

- **Compare and contrast burnout, secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma**
- **Describe eight elements of resilience**
- **Identify character strengths that when put into practice mitigate the impact of secondary traumatic stress**
- **Model self care practices to promote a supportive work environment**

## General Info

**IMPACT WV** – Dr. Lesley Cottrell, IMPACT Principal Investigator

**WV Home Visiting Program (WVHVP)** – Jackie Newson, Director of West Virginia Home Visitation Program, Michelle Rollyson, Coordinator, West Virginia Infant/Toddler Mental Health Association and Michelle Romanek, CQI Consultant for the WVHVP

Barbara Rubel, MA, B.C.E.T.S., D.A.A.E.T.S. - a nationally recognized keynote speaker and trainer on vicarious trauma is the author of the book, ***But I Didn't Say Goodbye: Helping Families After a Suicide*** (3rd edition) and the 30-hour continuing education course book for nurses; ***Loss, Grief and Bereavement: Helping Individuals Cope*** (4th edition). Barbara is a consultant with the Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime and co-wrote their training curriculum, Compassion Fatigue/Vicarious Trauma. Her story was featured in the Emmy award-winning documentary *Fatal Mistakes: Families Shattered by Suicide*. Barbara received a BS in Psychology and a MA in Community Health. She is a board-certified expert in traumatic stress, and diplomate with the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress. Her website is [www.griefworkcenter.com](http://www.griefworkcenter.com)



# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: SECONDARY TRAUMA



## General Info Continued

### Ways you or your clients might be at risk for burnout, secondary trauma or compassion fatigue

- Compassion and empathy for clients can result in burnout and traumatic stress without coping mechanisms and self-care
- Burnout self-assessment: Burnout can be caused by client issues, organizational issues, work load, co-workers and supervisors.
- What is trauma? lasting adverse effects
- Need for traumatic bereavement informed care
- Because of individual trauma, you may experience second hand trauma because of exposure to first hand trauma

### Signs you or your clients may be experiencing burnout, secondary trauma or compassion fatigue

Experiencing secondary trauma can lead to burnout or negative approaches for providers.

Establishing boundaries for providers

Secondary traumatic stress

### What to do about burnout, secondary trauma and compassion fatigue

Understanding what secondary traumatic stress is and realizing if you have been impacted

Addressing how to prevent or cope with traumatic stress for providers.

Need to build resilience in providers for coping and continuing career through difficult, traumatic support care.

#### Addressing vicarious trauma

- Trauma in mothers can contribute to a provider's overwhelming secondary trauma from listening to stories
- Listening to stories can also contribute to vicarious resilience

#### Focusing fabulous resilience

- Focusing on connecting meaning to loss
- Providers have built resilience from training and education for career

#### Flexibility

- Incorporate self-care strategies into lifestyle, accepting thoughts and emotions and not letting them sabotage your goals

- Name and manage your thoughts to stay focused on what is important and positive in your life.
- Focusing on individual strengths to be flexible, and while thinking about solutions to traumatic or stressful thoughts

#### Attitude

- Understanding what you are grateful for and how to apply it to your work experience
- Addressing factors of a bad attitude (lack of support, etc.)
- Understanding what strengths you have to push through a bad attitude when working with clients

# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: SECONDARY TRAUMA



## **Boundaries**

- Ethical boundaries, what you allow, what you stop and what you enforce
- Understanding what boundary issues you are facing right now and address solutions
- List possible boundary violations that happened when dealing with clients or moms, and learn ways to avoid them in the future

## **Understanding of job satisfaction**

- Work needs to be satisfactory, environment should be positive, needs should be recognized and supported
- Child welfare workers have statistically significant higher burn out
- Recognition from supervisors to foster positive work environment
- Compassion satisfaction, keeping in mind that you want to continue working and be satisfied with the kindness shown to others
- Choosing a personal strength to understand why you experience job satisfaction and how to continue applying that strength

## **Laughter**

- Sense of humor and incorporating fun into the workplace can be a morale booster and stress reliever
- Strengths can help you maintain a sense of humor in the work place

## **Optimism**

- Perspective on how you see your career (i.e. wounding and exhausting vs rewarding and fulfilling)
- Choose your individual strength that can help you remain optimistic in the workplace

## **United**

- Connections with others, ties with those outside of your community and sharing information with other networks
- Forming relationships with others can help foster better experiences for moms and providers
- When working with others that do not share your same values or morals, use self-care practices to avoid showing anger in the workplace
- Finding your “rock” to create a healthy environment in and outside of the workplace

## **Self-compassion**

- Thinking about how to balance work and difficult experiences to make meaning of work and life
- Realizing strengths to enhance coping, keeping a positive attitude and using others strengths to empower others
- Be kind to yourself as you practice self-care in the office or workspace
- Understanding how you can change from listening to stories of those experiencing trauma and grief and how this secondary experience impacts you
- Make personal health a priority

# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: SECONDARY TRAUMA



## RESOURCES

Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Test (CSFT)  
[http://www.practicenotes.org/vol10\\_n3/Stamm.pdf](http://www.practicenotes.org/vol10_n3/Stamm.pdf)

Professional Quality of Life (ProQoL) scale (assesses burnout, secondary traumatic stress and compassion satisfaction)  
[http://www.proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL\\_5\\_English.pdf](http://www.proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_5_English.pdf)

Compassion Fatigue Self Test (CFST)  
<http://psychink.com/intest.htm>

Office for Victims of Crime  
<https://vtt.ovc.ojp.gov/what-is-vicarious-trauma>

1. Bride, B.E., Robinson, M.R., Yegidis, B., & Figley, C.R. (2004). Development and validation of the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale. *Research on Social Work Practice, 14*, 27-35.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019). Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences: Leveraging the Best Available Evidence. GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
3. Engstrom, Hernandez, & Gangsei. 2008. Vicarious Resilience: A Qualitative Investigation Into Its Description. *Traumatology 14*(3), 13–21
4. Kashdan, T., & Rottenberg, J. (2010). Psychological flexibility as a fundamental aspect of health. *Clinical Psychology Review, 30* (7), 865-878
5. Keller, A.C. & Semmer, N.K. (2013). Changes in situational & dispositional factors as predictors of job satisfaction. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 83*(1), 88-98.
6. Letson, M.M., Davis, C. Sherfield, J., Beer, O.W.J., Phillips, R., & Wolf, K.G. (2019). Identifying compassion satisfaction, burnout, & traumatic stress in Children's Advocacy Centers, *Child Abuse and Neglect, the International Journal*.
7. Lineham, M.M. (2014). *Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DPT) Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets* (2nd ed.). Guilford Publications.
8. Neff, K. D. (2016). The Self-Compassion Scale is a valid and theoretically coherent measure of self-compassion. *Mindfulness, 7*, 264 – 274.
9. Peebles-Kleiger, 2000; Bride, 2007; Stamm, 2010; Klaric, et al., 2013
10. Rubel, B. (2000). Grief Magazine. *Surviving Suicide: The many colors of grief.* 28-29.
11. Rubel, B. May 2010. *Building Resiliency: Preventing burnout and compassion fatigue in professionals.* EAPinSIGHT. 1(1). 1-6. Impact Publications.
12. Rubel, B. (2015). The FABULOUS Principle©: What Woman Entrepreneurs Know About Loss and Triumph. In J. Herrmann (Ed). *Keys to a Good Life: Wisdom to unlock your power within.*
13. Rubel, B (2019) *Loss, Grief, and Bereavement: Helping individuals cope.* MA: Western Schools

## Tips:

**F**lexibility

**A**ttitude

**B**oundaries

**U**nderstanding  
of job satisfaction

**L**aughter

**O**ptimism

**U**nited

**S**elf-compassion

## Case Study:

You are the case study! Use your strengths to help set boundaries!

This Appalachian Rural Health Integration Model (AHRIM) Program is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$600,000 with 0 percentage financed with nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government. All printed materials are available in alternate formats upon request. WVU is an EEO/Affirmative Action Employer – Minority/Female/Disability/Veteran.