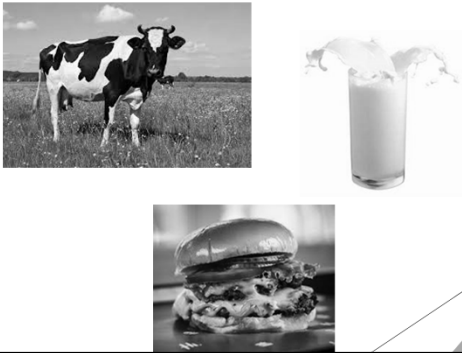


**Burnout
Vicarious Trauma
and the
Professional Life of a Magistrate**

Judge Ty Hands
**Magistrate's Conference
September 11, 2018**







WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

DEFINE:

- ❖ VICARIOUS TRAUMA
- ❖ COMPASSION FATIGUE
- ❖ BURNOUT

DISCUSS:

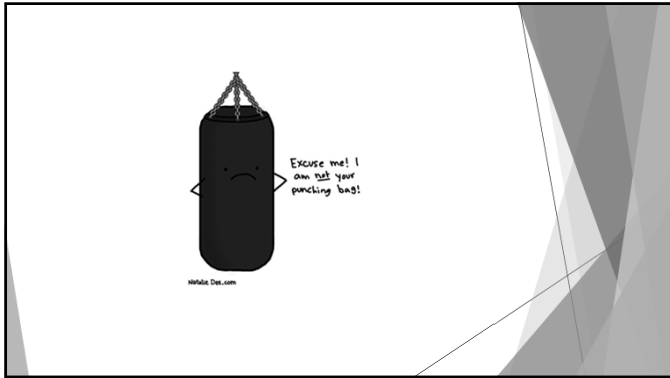
- ❖ SYMPTOMS
- ❖ IMPACT
- ❖ RISK FACTORS

ENCOURAGE:

- ❖ SELF CARE

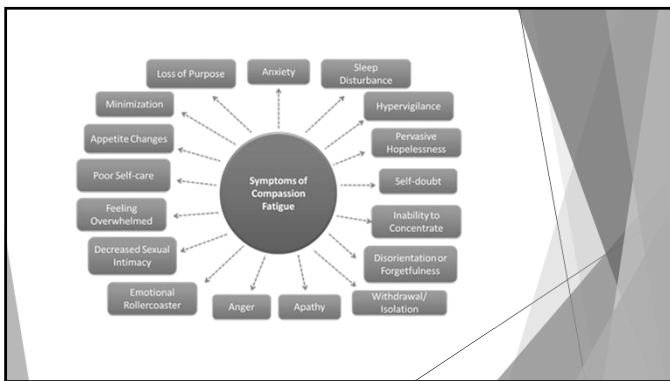
Magistrates . . .

**You think you have problems?
I have 100 people's problems!**



Compassion Fatigue

Someone who regularly hears/witnesses very difficult and traumatic stories begins to lose their ability to feel empathy for their clients, loved ones and co-workers. This deep physical and emotional exhaustion has been described as “having nothing left to give” and “an occupational hazard”.



Vicarious trauma

- "The transformation that occurs within the trauma worker as a result of empathetic engagement with the client's trauma experiences. Such engagement includes listening to graphic descriptions of horrific events, bearing witness to peoples' cruelty to one another, and witnessing and participating in traumatic reenactments"

■ Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995

VICARIOUS TRAUMA

Over time, this process can lead to changes in your psychological, physical and spiritual well-being.

-Headington Institute

Symptoms of vicarious trauma

- No time, no energy
- Disconnection (depersonalization)
- Social withdrawal
- Sensitivity to violence
- Cynicism
- Despair and hopelessness
- Sleep problems
- Disrupted frame of reference
- Diminished self-efficacy (e.g., inability to trust your own decisions)
- Alterations in sensory experiences

Other terms . . .

- Vicarious traumatization
- Secondary post traumatic stress reaction
- Secondary traumatic stress
- Secondary traumatic stress disorder
- Compassion fatigue
- Compassion stress
- Soul sadness
- Empathic Strain
- Contact victimization

It is not a matter of "If" it is a matter of "When"

Vicarious Trauma

Empathy

• When you identify with the pain of people who have endured terrible things, you bring their grief, fear, anger, and despair into your own awareness and experience.

- What sort of problems or people do you find it easy (or difficult) to empathize with?
- What are some ways that caring about people who have been hurt affects you?

Vicarious Trauma

"There is a soul weariness that comes with caring. From daily doing business with the handiwork of fear. Sometimes it lives at the edges of one's life, brushing against hope and barely making its presence known. At other times, it comes crashing in, overtaking one with its vivid images of another's terror with its profound demands for attention; nightmares, strange fears, and generalized hopelessness."

B. Hudnell Stamm, Ph.D.

Burnout

- Burnout is not vicarious trauma
- Burnout refers to a response to the work environment which may be too demanding, stressful, or unrewarding.
- Behaviors characteristic of burnout include lack of motivation, poor work performance, time problems, and general dissatisfaction with the job.

Progression of Burnout

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    graph TD
      A[Compassion] --> B[Empathy]
      B --> C[Vicarious/Secondary Trauma]
      C --> D[Compassion Fatigue]
      D --> E[Burnout]
  
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Burnout

- "Physical & emotional exhaustion as a result of prolonged stress and frustration"
- Depleted ability to cope with work demands
- Sense of powerlessness to achieve goals
- Does not necessarily alter our view of the world, but our view of the workplace
- Can happen in any occupation

Risk Factors


- Helper's personal history
- Type of client/victim
- Level of trauma experienced by the victim
- Helper's attempts to cope
- Environment
 - Supportive or non-supportive
 - High traffic with high pressure

Actions to prevent or assist in reducing vicarious trauma

- Journaling
- Develop personal rituals/routines
- Mindfulness
- Find balance (work, play, family, others)
- Extend identity beyond work
- Diversify caseload
- Seek consultation on difficult cases
- Take breaks during the day
- Gain competence
- Modify work schedule as needed with case severity/load

How does this affect YOU?

- Anger
- "triggered"
- Overly jaded
- Avoidant
- Distant (conveyor belt mentality)
- Guilty
- Exasperated
- Irritable
- Self destructive
- Sad/depressed



Did IT Really Happen?

- ▶ False allegations
- ▶ Distinguish entirely fabricated from exaggeration, loss of memory, revising history, lack of physical evidence
- ▶ Possibility of reluctance, ambivalence, refusal, recantation





"Whoever fights monsters should look to it that he/she does not become a monster. For when you gaze long into an abyss, the abyss also gazes into you."

-Friedrich Nietzsche



"It's a new anti-depressant—instead of swallowing it, you throw it at anyone who appears to be having a good time."

Breathing

Slow breathing
"Breathe in, 1 2 3; Breathe out, 1 2 3"

Deep breathing
Stomach expands as diaphragm moves to pull in more air

Let your body breathe (the air is breathing me)

Breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth

What can we do?

- Identify personal biases
- Let go of supreme responsibility
- Don't go it alone
- Switch batters, if possible
- Take regular breaks, recesses, VACATION
- Debrief and regroup
- EAP/Counseling
- Take care of YOU

The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.

— Naomi Rachel Newman

