

Taking Care of Teachers

Why it's important and how to do it well

What we will cover...

- ▶ Introduction to your speakers
- ▶ Challenges for School Corporations
- ▶ Challenges for Faculty
- ▶ What is Sustainable Caring
- ▶ How can I encourage my staff in Self-Care

What has this school year been like for you?

- ▶ What are the top 3 words you would use to describe your experience last school year?
- ▶ How is this year starting out?
- ▶ What are your top challenges in regard to your faculty and staff?

Challenges for School Systems

- ▶ System-Wide Challenges
- ▶ Administrator Challenges
- ▶ Staff and Faculty Challenges

Some of the things we got wrong...

- ▶ Trauma-Informed Training
- ▶ Institutionalized Stressors

Some things we can do right...

- ▶ Helping Staff to Cope Ahead
- ▶ Quality Professional Development
- ▶ Be in Charge
- ▶ Teach Delegation Strategies
- ▶ Crisis and Support Teams
- ▶ Share Resources

Culture is Everything!

- ▶ Culture is led from the top
- ▶ Allow mistakes
- ▶ The default is...

Practical Tools for Schools

- ▶ Why Self-Care is important at the ground level
- ▶ How it can be incorporated

“ Self-care is not selfish or self-indulgent. We cannot nurture others from a dry well. We need to take care of our own needs first, then we can give from our surplus, our abundance.

Jennifer Loudon

Sustainable Caring

- ▶ Caring—things that are done to keep someone healthy and safe.
- ▶ Sustainable—being able to be used without being completely used up or destroyed.
- ▶ Sustainable Caring—being able to consistently provide compassionate care, with resilience, to the pain and suffering of others.

Where do you find yourself today on this compassion continuum?

- ▶ **Compassion**—identifying with the suffering of another human and having a desire to relieve this suffering.
- ▶ **Compassion Satisfaction**—the pleasure you derive from the work of helping others.
- ▶ **Compassion Fatigue**--deep physical and emotional exhaustion and a pronounced change in the ability to feel empathy for clients, loved ones and co-workers.
- ▶ **Vicarious Trauma**—the transmission of traumatic stress through observation or hearing others' stories of traumatic events that results in a shift in your world view and your sense of meaning.
- ▶ **Burnout**--extreme circumstance where your health is suffering or outlook on life has turned negative due to impact/overload of work.
- ▶ **Vicarious Post-Traumatic Growth**--refers to significant positive symptoms derived from trauma work and the impact this has on the personal growth of the worker.
- ▶ **Sustainable Caring**--being able to consistently provide compassionate care, with resilience, to the pain and suffering of others.

How do I know where I'm at on the continuum?

Compassion Fatigue Signs and Symptoms

Behavioural	Physical	Spiritual	Interpersonal
Losing Things	Rapid Heart Rate	Questioning the meaning of life	Withdrawn
Snippy/sarcastic/dark humour	Difficulty Breathing	Loss of purpose	Decreased interest in intimacy or sex
Withdrawn	Aches and Pain	Lack of self-satisfaction	Mistrust
Increased outburst of anger	Headaches	Pervasive hopelessness	Isolation from family/friends
Sleep Disturbances	Stomach aches	Anger at God	Impact on parenting (protectiveness)
Appetite Changes	Loss of Appetite	Questioning prior religious beliefs	Projection of anger/blame
Accident proneness/clumsy	Dizziness	Not engaging in spiritual self-care	Intolerance
Dreaming about clients/patients	Poor Immune System	Letting go of yoga/meditation practice	Loneliness
Hyper Vigilance	Never feeling rested	No longer feeling connected to others/earth	Lowered functioning in non-professional situations
Negative Coping (smoking/alcohol/substances/shopping)	Difficulty relaxing		Difficulty separating work from personal life

More Signs and Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue

Emotional	Cognitive	Work Related	
Moody	Hard to concentrate	Feeling less competent	
Irritable	Distracted	Dread of working with certain people	
Powerlessness	Loss of meaning	Transference/counter transference in work	
Anxiety	Decreased self-esteem	Less sense of purpose	
Anger/Rage	More judgemental of self/others	Less enjoyment with career	
Survivor Guilt	More critical of self/others	Dreading "Mondays"	
Shutdown/Numbness	Rigid thinking patterns	Wanting to call in sick	
Fear	Whirling/Rapid thoughts	Thinking of leaving the field	
Helplessness/Hopelessness	Perfectionism	Dark Humour with colleagues	
Sadness	Preoccupation with trauma	"Not making a difference"	
Hypersensitivity	Indecisive	"Why bother"	
Emotional roller coaster	Decision Fatigue	Pessimism with colleagues	
Overwhelmed	Second guessing self	Disconnect from colleagues	
Depleted	Intrusive thoughts/images of trauma		

GROWTH/burnout

What is your current experience—input vs. output?

Your daily life roles and responsibilities:

OUTPUT--In a given day, what are all the tasks you need to accomplish in order to fill your roles and responsibilities both personally and professionally?

Your daily life nourishing activities:

INPUT—In a given day, what are all the activities you have that *Nourish* you personally and professionally?

Something to Consider...

Your current experience—is it SUSTAINABLE?

Considering your current input vs. output...

Is it manageable?

Is it manageable for a long period of time?

Is this the way you want your daily life and quality of life to be?

Would you recommend someone else strive to maintain this lifestyle?

Your current signs/symptoms are a result of your current experience. These signs/symptoms and the cost of managing them are the cost of caring for YOU.

Why?

‘Compassionate curiosity’ has lead you to your current daily life roles, responsibilities and tasks.

Something has reinforced this lifestyle. It probably appeared SUSTAINABLE, once upon a time, but it could be causing harm. No judgement...just AWARENESS.

Beliefs developed in childhood, praise for taking care of others, expectations to be selfless, perception of religious beliefs, perfectionism, not feeling worthy...

Key

- ▶ If we can develop awareness as to why we make the choices we make, then we can recognize and work to change the ones that are contributing to compassion fatigue.
- ▶ No judgements about how compassion fatigue develops. Just start by bringing awareness to what your experiences are and what's contributing to them so you can be open to strategies that lead to SUSTAINABLE CARING, even if they are uncomfortable at first.
- ▶ Getting comfortable with being uncomfortable will be easier if you can draw on your foundation of VALUES and what you want your FUTURE QUALITY OF LIFE to be. ***It's more effective to work towards something positive than to try escaping something negative.***

Value-Based Living Increases Compassion Satisfaction and Builds a Foundation for Sustainable Caring

Values Inventory

Accountability	Equality	Money/Profit
Achievement	Excellence	Optimism
Adaptability/flexibility	Faith	Patience
Ambition	Family	Prestige
Being liked	Fantasy	Productivity
Caring	Friendship/ belonging	Quality
Collaboration/ cooperation	Generosity	Relaxation
Community	Honor	Respect
Competition	Honesty/integrity	Responsibility
Control/order	Independence	Safety
Creativity	Individuality	Self interest
Discipline	Innovation	Sharing
Education	Interdependence	Success
Efficiency	Intimacy	Team work
Empathy	Justice	Technology
Endurance	Knowledge	Tradition
Environmental responsibility	Leisure/play/ recreation	Truth
	Loyalty	(Others)

Five Most Important Values to Me:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

How do you make decisions throughout your day?

What things am I saying/doing that are not helping me meet my long-term goals or live by my values?

(Examples: Work early or late, Expecting perfection, Procrastination, etc.)

What are yours?

What things am I saying/doing that are helping me meet my long-term goals and live by my values?

(Examples: Taking proper breaks, Professional development, Connection with others, etc.)

What are yours?

Things I think/feel that are unpleasant?

(Examples: Troublesome thoughts, painful memories, etc.)

What are yours?

Things I think/feel that are pleasant—MY VALUES?

(Examples: Family, Friends, Faith, Health, etc.)

What are yours?

Tracking the Positive and Gratitude for Change

Mindfully, purposefully LOOKING for positive events and opportunities for gratitude...

In this work, we see the negative, bad news, over and over and over...

We have to “balance” this out with seeing the positive events and gratitude, for the small stuff.

It’s a shift of thinking and energy for your brain and body!

Share these with others, post them around to see!

Use the tracking tool 😊

The “Happy” Tracker

Positive Events and Gratitude

Day	Positive Events	Gratitude
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Non-Negotiable Self-Care

What will you do?

- ▶ Body Movement (30 minutes)
- ▶ Focus on Breathing
- ▶ Nutrition
- ▶ Connection
- ▶ Nature (20 minutes)

“Everything is Figure-Out-Able”

--Marie Forleo

References and Follow-Up

- ▶ Charlene Richard, BSW, RSW, MSW
 - ▶ Founder of Caring Safely
 - ▶ Compassion Fatigue Expert

For More Social/Emotional Resources, please visit Youth First's website.

- ▶ www.youthfirstinc.org/selmaterials/
- ▶ Today's presenters from Youth First, Inc.
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