Chaplain, Heal Thyself: A limited study in Self-Care

Missouri Hospice and Palliative Care Association

Chaplain Training Track 2

April 17, 2015 – Jefferson City, MO

Presented by: Chaplain Bob Reagan, BS
Past Chair MHPCA Chaplain Committee
Comfort Care Hospice, Cameron, MO
It All Begins with Awareness

http://www.planetperplex.com/en/item/hidden-animals/
Awareness of the condition

• Compassion fatigue has been defined as a combination of physical, emotional, and spiritual depletion associated with caring for patients in significant emotional pain and physical distress (Anewalt, 2009; Figley, 1995).

• As quoted in “Compassion Fatigue: A Nurse’s Primer. Online Journal of Issues in Nursing, January 31, 2011 by Barbara Lombardo, RN and Caryl Eyre, RN
Awareness of danger

• “Unrecognized and untreated compassion fatigue causes people to leave their profession, fall into the throws of addictions or in extreme cases become self-destructive or suicide.

• It is important that we all understand this phenomenon for our own well-being, but also for our colleagues. If you notice a colleague in distress- reach out to them.”

  Angelea Panos, Ph.D. is a therapist that specializes in trauma and grief, she has 20 years of experience in helping survivors.

  http://www.aaets.org/article199.htm
Awareness of limitations

• Why do you adopt someone else’s problem?
• Set Boundaries.
Awareness of Symptoms

• What are the symptoms?
• How do you know when you are stressed out, crossing boundaries and on the way to compassion fatigue?
<table>
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<tr>
<th>WORK RELATED</th>
<th>EMOTIONAL:</th>
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<td>• Avoidance or dread of working with certain patients</td>
<td>• Mood swings</td>
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<td>• Reduced ability to feel empathy towards patients or families</td>
<td>• Restlessness</td>
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<td>• Frequent use of sick days</td>
<td>• Irritability</td>
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<td>• Lack of joyfulness</td>
<td>• Oversensitivity</td>
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– Being Proactive – it will not take care of itself.
  • Identify.
  • Classify.
  • Modify.

– Being Physically Active and healthy normally helps.

– Being Focused on what you want --- how much do you want your life to be influenced by your work (client) in contrast of how much you want to influence your work (client). **BOUNDARIES**

• **Being Mindful** – Mindfulness is living in the “now” so that you will still be able to live in the tomorrow.
Brief Introduction to mindfulness

Kellie Edwards
Meditation teacher and psychologist
www.mindfulness4mothers.com

• “What Is Mindfulness? 10 Answers From 10 Teachers”
  Posted: 10/04/2014 11:08 am EDT Updated: 12/04/2014 5:59 am EST

• “Sometimes I think there are as many ways of describing mindfulness as there are brands of shampoo. This can be confusing.” (Here are some expert comments.)
Mindfulness Described

• **Tara Brach:** "Mindfulness is a pause -- the space between stimulus and response: that's where choice lies."

• **Christine Carter:** "Mindfulness in my own life means putting a little bit of space in between the action and the reaction. Having the ability to slow things down."
Mindfulness Described (continued)

- **Penny Fenner**: "Being attentive to the moment. Not fast-forwarding. Not rewinding. How am I reacting to this? Is this serving me? Is there another choice I could be making right now? And actually finding that kinder, more connected choice, rather than going into my own reactivity."

- **Kristin Neff**: "Mindfulness is a kind of balanced awareness where we see what is happening clearly but we don't exaggerate it -- or avoid it or belittle it. Mindfulness is absolutely core at the foundation of self compassion."

- [www.mindfulness4mothers.com](http://www.mindfulness4mothers.com)
6 Mindfulness Exercises
That Each Take Less Than 1 Minute

• 1. Two mindful bites.
• 2. What one breath feels like.
• 3. Take a mindful moment to give your brain a break instead of checking your email.
• 4. Air on exposed skin.
• 5. Scan your body.
• 6. Do one action mindfully.

https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/in-practice/201302/6-mindfulness-exercises-each-take-less-1-minute
Collecting

—Collecting your Priorities.
What do want to guide your life? Do you have a “final authority” that is your governor? What is your compass? What gives you direction?

—Collecting ideas for what works for you and others.
Stress Management Skills *that can be practiced at any age:*

1. Breathe Deeply and Slowly
2. Practice an Attitude of Gratitude
3. Focus your thoughts on what you can influence
4. Feel your feelings
5. Move your Body
6. Let Go and Let God
7. Laugh

http://www.center4stressmanagement.com/toolbox.html
Collecting your tool box

• Not every tool works for every purpose or person.

• You need what works for you.

• You may need to try many things
  – You may want to have a big tool box.

  – You may be changing your tools often.
Begin to live in the now.
Make preparation TODAY

• What will you do in the next 48 hours to prepare for the stresses that come by just simply doing what you love to do for others.

• You may want to begin with listing the symptoms of compassion fatigue stress and warning signs in your life.
To Keep Giving You must keep Living!

ACTIVE LIVING

MOVE YOUR BODY

BELIEVE

FEEL AMAZING

NOURISH YOUR MIND & BODY