

Psychological Effects of Trauma Work and Strategies for Enhancing Wellness



**JEAN M. LAFAUCI SCHUTT, PH.D., LPC, NCC, ACS
FEONA DAVIS, M.A., LCPC
WALTER H. STAMP II, B.A.**

**THE CHICAGO SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING
WASHINGTON, DC CAMPUS**

**ASSOCIATION FOR ADULT DEVELOPMENT & AGING CONFERENCE
JULY 25, 2014
ARLINGTON, VA**

Program Outline



I. Psychological effects of trauma work

a. Negative

b. Positive

II. Self-Assessment

III. Resources: Selected Measures

IV. Discussion

a. Reflective Practice

b. Self Care

V. Resources: Strategies & Wellness Models

VI. Resources: Literature

Potential Psychological Effects of Trauma Work



- **Negative Effects:**
 - **Burnout**
 - **Compassion fatigue/Secondary Traumatic Stress**
 - **Vicarious Trauma**
- **Countertransference**
- **Positive Effects:**
 - **Compassion Satisfaction**
 - **Vicarious Post traumatic Growth**
 - **Vicarious Resilience**

Burnout



- no one definition
- general syndrome of physical and mental exhaustion that builds up over time through working in a draining environment (Collins & Long, 2003)
- Examples: *physical* sxms such as fatigue, *emotional* sxms such as irritability, *behavioral* sxms such as pessimism, *work-related* sxms such as tardiness, *interpersonal* sxms such as withdrawal & dehumanization
- Maslach et al. (1996) defines burnout components as: *emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment*
- often results in hopelessness and difficulties in job performance (Stamm, 2005)

Compassion Fatigue/ Secondary Traumatic Stress



- “The natural and consequent behaviors and emotions resulting from *knowledge* about a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other. It is the stress resulting from *helping or wanting to help* a traumatized or suffering person” (Figley, 1995, p. 10).
- compassion fatigue/STS usually has a quick onset, and includes psychological distress, cognitive changes, behavioral and physical symptoms, and relational difficulties (Collins & Long, 2003; Figley, 1999)
- some view STS as the same as PTSD except exposure is through another individual

Vicarious Trauma

(McCann & Pearlman, 1990; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995)



- “transformation in the inner experience of the therapist that comes about as a result of empathic engagement with the client’s traumatic material” (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995, p. 31)
- may include identity alterations, changes in beliefs (e.g., safety, trust, intimacy, control) or worldview

Countertransference



- counselor's emotional reaction toward client or client material (e.g., over-identification, caretaking role) as a result of the counselor's own experiences
- *Traumatic counter transference*- range of emotional reactions to client and trauma such as helplessness (rescue role), feeling powerful, anger, mourning, guilt (Herman, 1992)
- *Recognized (+)*: help understand & identify dynamics of client's experience (Walker, 2004)
- *Unrecognized (-)*: potentially damaging to treatment process and/or client (Walker, 2004)
- empathic identification or countertransference reactions towards individuals who have experienced a trauma may cause empathic strain and dysregulation of affect which may lead to "traumatoid states" such as compassion fatigue, STS, and vicarious trauma (Wilson & Thomas, 2004, p. 175)

Compassion Satisfaction



- fulfillment or pleasure gained from assisting other individuals and the feeling of having done your job well (DePanfilis, 2006; Stamm, 2002, 2005)
- CF/STS and Burnout often negatively related to compassion satisfaction; however potential to co-exist (LaFauci Schutt & Marotta, 2011)

Posttraumatic Growth

(Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995, 1996, 2004)



“positive psychological change experienced as a result of the struggle with highly challenging circumstances” (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004, p. 1)

Examples: enhanced relationships, view of self, changes in life philosophy

Growth areas:

- relating to others
- personal strength
- appreciation for life
- spiritual change

PTG/Vicarious Posttraumatic Growth



- Research examining PTG & VPTG in clinicians (e.g., Arnold et al., 2005; Barrington & Shakespeare-Finch, 2013; Bauwens & Tosone, 2010; Tosone, 2011)
- *Vicarious Posttraumatic Growth* necessitates exposure to client's growth following trauma (Cohen & Collens, 2013)
- PTG may include increased value of work, increased compassion in clinical relationships, protection of personal time (Tosone, 2011)
- VPTG may include increased empathy, tolerance, appreciation for resilience, spiritual reflection (Arnold et al., 2005), positive schema changes & becoming involved in social justice issues (Cohen & Collens, 2013)

Vicarious Resilience

(Hernández, Engstrom, & Gangsei, 2007, 2010)



- “characterized by a unique and positive effect that transforms therapists in response to client trauma survivors’ own resiliency” (2007, p. 237)
 - Examples: reflection on self healing, reevaluation of personal challenges, increased hope, and awareness of community healing
- meaning-making (+) and changes in counselor following exposure to client’s resilience in coping with trauma (2010)

Resources: Selected Measures



- **Burnout, Secondary Traumatic Stress, & Compassion Satisfaction**
 - ❖ *Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL Version 5)* (Stamm, 2009); www.proqol.org
 - ❖ Burnout and Secondary Traumatic Stress conceptualized as components of Compassion Fatigue (Stamm, 2010)
 - ❖ **SELF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY**
- **Vicarious Trauma**
 - ❖ *Trauma and Attachment Belief Scale* (Pearlman, 2003)
 - ❖ Assesses beliefs in safety, trust, esteem, intimacy, control
- **Posttraumatic Growth**
 - ❖ *Posttraumatic Growth Inventory* (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996)
 - ❖ *PTGI Short Form* (Cann, Calhoun, Tedeschi, Taku, Vishnevsky, Triplett, & Danhauer, 2010)
 - ❖ Factors: new possibilities, relating to others, personal strength, spiritual change, appreciation of life
- **Others**
 - ❖ *Clinicians' Trauma Reaction Survey* (Thomas & Wilson, 1996; Thomas, 1998): intrusive preoccupation with trauma, avoidance & detachment, over-involvement & identification, professional alienation, professional role satisfaction
 - ❖ *Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale* (Bride et al., 2004): intrusion, avoidance, & arousal

Discussion



- Reflective Practice Discussion
- Self-care
 - What works
 - Challenges

Top 5 career sustaining behaviors of counselors (Lawson, 2007)



- Maintain sense of humor
- Spend time with partner/family
- Maintain balance between professional & personal lives
- Maintain self-awareness
- Maintain sense of control over work responsibilities

Self Care & Resilience Building

(LaFauci Schutt, 2011)



- ◆ Know yourself: signs of being “unbalanced”, identify personal and professional goals
- ◆ Reframe balance into integration - consider how aspects of our personal and professional lives interact and support our growth
- ◆ Schedule time for family, friends, fitness- find ways to combine if time is scarce
- ◆ Cost-benefit analysis of new task or responsibility: review goals, current responsibilities, and effect of time with family & friends
- ◆ Schedule activities to balance out the heaviness of clinical work : exercise, pleasure reading, mindfulness or meditation
- ◆ Use mentors and colleagues
- ◆ Learning what works for you may be a period of trial and error as you move through various career and family life cycle stages
- ◆ Set boundaries in terms of both clinical practice and personal commitments
- ◆ Engage in ongoing reflection, supervision, or consultation

Resources:

Strategies and Wellness Models



BASIC ID (Lazarus, 2000)

- ◆ Behaviors, Emotions, Sensations, Cognitions, Interpersonal, Biological

Wheel of Wellness (Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000; Sweeney & Witmer, 1991; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992)

- ◆ **Spirituality
- ◆ Self-Direction: sense of self worth, sense of control, realistic beliefs, emotional awareness, problem solving & creativity, sense of humor, nutrition, exercise, self-care, stress management, gender identity, cultural identity
- ◆ Work
- ◆ Leisure
- ◆ Friendship
- ◆ Love

Indivisible Self (Myers & Sweeney, 2005)

- ◆ Essential Self (e.g., spirituality, self care, identity), Creative Self, Coping Self, Social Self, Physical Self
- ◆ Self interacts with local, global, institutional, chronometrical contexts

Resources: Literature



- Allen, J.K., Bracken, S., & Dean, D.R. (Eds.) (2006). *The balancing act: Gendered perspectives in faculty roles and work lives*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publications.
- Baker, E. K. (2003). *Caring for ourselves: A therapist's guide to personal and professional well-being*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Basset, R.H. (Ed.). (2005). *Parenting and professing: Balancing family work with an academic career*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Halpern, D.F., & Murphy, S.E. (Eds.) (2005). *From work-family balance to work-family interaction: Changing the metaphor*. Mahwah, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Kottler, J.A. (1999). *The therapist's workbook: Self-assessment, self-care, and self-improvement exercises for mental health professionals*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Norcross, J. C. (2000). Psychotherapist self-care: Practitioner-tested, research-informed strategies. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 31, 710-713.
- Norcross, J.C., & Guy J.D. (2007). *Leaving it at the office: A guide to psychotherapist self care*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Skovholt, T., & Trotter-Mathison, M. (2010). *The resilient practitioner: Burnout prevention and self-care strategies for counselors, therapists, teachers, and health care professionals* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Van Dermont Lipsky, L., & Burk, C. (2009). *Trauma stewardship: An everyday guide to caring for self while caring for others*. San Francisco: Berret-Koehler.
- Wicks, R.J. (2008). *The resilient clinician*. New York: Oxford University Press.

References



- Arnold, D., Calhoun, L.G., Tedeschi, R.T., & Cann, A. (2005). Vicarious posttraumatic growth in psychotherapy. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 45*, 239-263. doi: 10.1177/022167805274729
- Bauwens, J., & Tosone, C. (2010). Professional posttraumatic growth after a shared traumatic experience: Manhattan clinicians' perspectives on post-9/11 practice. *Journal of Loss and Trauma, 15*, 488-517. doi: 10.1080/15325024.2010.519267.
- Barrington, A. & Shakespeare-Finch, J. (2013). Working with refugee survivors of torture and trauma: An opportunity for vicarious post-traumatic growth. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly, 26*(1), 89-105. doi. 10.1080/09515070.2012.727553
- Bride, B.E., Robinson, M.M., Yegidis, B., & Figley, C.R. (2004). Development and validation of the secondary traumatic stress scale. *Research on Social Work Practice, 14*(1), 27-35.
- Calhoun, L.G., & Tedeschi, R.G. (Eds.). (2006). *Handbook of posttraumatic growth: Research and practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Cann, A., Calhoun, L. G., Tedeschi, R. G., Taku, K. Vishnevsky, T., Triplett, K. N., & Danhauer, S. C. (2010). A short form of the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping, 23*, 127-137.
- Cohen, K., & Collens, P. (2013). The impact of trauma work on trauma workers: A metasynthesis on vicarious trauma and vicarious posttraumatic growth. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 5*(6), 570-580. doi: 10.1037/a0030388
- Collins, S., & Long, A. (2003). Working with the psychological effects of trauma: Consequences for mental health-care workers- A literature review. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, 10*, 417-424.

References



- DePanfilis, D. (2006). Compassion fatigue, burnout, and compassion satisfaction: Implications for retention of workers. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 30(10), 1067-1069.
- Figley, C. (1995). Compassion fatigue: Toward a new understanding of the costs of caring. In B.H. Stamm (Ed.), *Secondary traumatic stress: Self-care issues for clinicians researchers & educators* (pp. 3-28). Lutherville, MD: Sidran Press.
- Figley, C.R. (1999). Police compassion fatigue (PCF): Theory, research, assessment, treatment, and prevention. In J.M. Violanti & D. Paton (Ed.), *Police trauma: Psychological aftermath of civilian combat* (pp. 37-53). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
- Herman, J. (1992). *Trauma and recovery*. Basic Books: New York
- Hernández, P. Gangsei, D., & Engstrom, D. (2007). Vicarious resilience: A qualitative investigation into a description of a new concept. *Family Process*, 46, 229-241.
- Hernández, P., Engstrom, D., & Gangsei, D. (2010). Exploring the impact of trauma on therapists: Vicarious resilience and related concepts in training. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 29(1), 67-83.
- LaFauci Schutt, J.M. (2011). Work-life balance and integration. *Trauma Psychology American Psychological Association Newsletter*, 6(1), 5-7.

References



- LaFauci Schutt, J.M., & Marotta, S.A. (2011). Personal and environmental predictors of post traumatic stress in emergency management professionals. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 3(1), 8-15. doi: 10.1037/a0020588
- Lawson, G. (2007). Counselor wellness and impairment: A national survey. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development*, 46, 20-34.
- Lazarus, A.A. (2000). Multimodal replenishment. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 31(1),93-94.
- Maslach, C., Jackson, S. E., & Leiter, M. P. (1996). *Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (3rd ed.)*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- McCann, I.L., & Pearlman, L.A. (1990). Vicarious traumatization: A framework for understanding the psychological effects of working with victims. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 3(1), 131-149. doi.org/10.1007/BF00975140
- Myers, J.E., Sweeney, T.J., & Witmer, J.M. (2000). The wheel of wellness counseling for wellness: A holistic model for treatment planning. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 78, 251-266.
- Myers, J.E., & Sweeney, T.J. (2005). The indivisible self: An evidence-based model of wellness. *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 61(3), 269-279.
- Pearlman, L.A. (2003). *Trauma and Attachment Belief Scale*. Los Angeles, CA: Western Psychological Services.

References



- Pearlman, L. A., & Saakvitne, K. W. (1995). *Trauma and the therapist: Countertransference and vicarious traumatization in psychotherapy with incest survivors*. New York: Norton.
- Stamm, B.H. (2002). Measuring compassion satisfaction as well as fatigue: Developmental history of the compassion satisfaction and fatigue test. In C.R. Figley (Ed.), *Treating compassion fatigue* (pp. 107-119). New York: Brunner-Routledge.
- Stamm, B.H. (2005). *The ProQOL manual: The professional quality of life scale*. Baltimore, MD: Sidran.
- Stamm, B.H. (2009). *Professional Quality of Life: Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Version 5 (ProQOL)*. /www.isu.edu/~bhstamm or www.proqol.org.
- Stamm, B.H. (2010). *The concise ProQOL manual (2nd ed.)*. Pocatello, ID: ProQOL.org
- Sweeney, T.J., & Witmer, J.M. (1991). Beyond social interest: Striving toward optimal health and wellness. *Individual Psychology*, 47, 527-540.
- Tedeschi, R.G., & Calhoun, L.G. (1995). *Trauma and transformation: Growing in the aftermath of suffering*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tedeschi, R.G., & Calhoun, L.G. (1996). The Posttraumatic Growth Inventory: Measuring the positive legacy of trauma. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 9, 455-471.

References



- Tedeschi, R.G., & Calhoun, L.G. (2004). Posttraumatic growth: Conceptual foundations and empirical evidence. *Psychological Inquiry, 15*, 1-18.
- Thomas, R.B. (1998). An investigation of empathic stress among mental health professionals working with post traumatic stress disorder (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest. (UMI No. 933949)
- Thomas, R.B., & Wilson, J.P. (1996). *Clinicians' trauma reaction survey (CTRS)*. Cleveland, OH: John P. Wilson, Cleveland State University.
- Tosone, C. (2011). The legacy of September 11: Shared trauma, therapeutic intimacy, and professional posttraumatic growth. *Traumatology, 17*(3), 25-29.
- Walker, M. (2004). Supervising practitioners working with survivors of childhood abuse: Counter transference, secondary traumatization and terror. *Psychodynamic Practice, 10*(2), 173- 193. doi:10.1080/14753630410001686753
- Wilson, J.P., & Thomas, R.B. (2004). *Empathy in the treatment of PTSD*. New York: Routledge.
- Witmer, J.M, & Sweeney, T.J. (1992). A holistic model for wellness and prevention over the life span. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 71*, 140-148.

Contact Information



Jean M. LaFauci Schutt

jlafauciphd@gmail.com

Feona Davis

fxd6257@ego.thechicagoschool.edu

Walter H. Stamp II

whs8558@ego.thechicagoschool.edu