Burning Brightly: Self Care for School Counselors
Darcie Davis-Gage Ph.D
Certified Compassion Fatigue Professional
Division Chair and Program Coordinator of Counseling Division
Associate Professor at University of Northern Iowa
Soul Blooming Health and Wellness Consulting
Darcie.davis-gage@uni.edu or Soulbloomingconsulting@yahoo.com

Compassion Fatigue (Gentry & Baranowsky, 1997)

Compassion Fatigue and Neuroscience

- Fire and Wire
- Accelerator and Brakes
- Mirror, Mirror
- Neuroplasticity
Addressing Secondary Traumatic stress

Burnout

Perceived Demands + Perceived Recourses = Perceived Threat and Flight-Fight-Freeze
Addressing Secondary Trauma
1. Relaxation
   a. Mindfulness
   b. Practice response to exposure
2. Relationships
   a. Professional and Personal
   b. Find “your person”
   c. Mission statement activity
3. Narratives
   a. Co-worker & Supervisor
   b. Elements of Sharing
   c. Timeline and Journal Activities
4. Relaxed body even when flight-fight-freeze is activated

Addressing Burnout
1. Perceptual Maturation
   a. Choice vs. Demand
   b. Relinquish outcomes
      i. Work related to self worth
      ii. Demand clients have certain outcomes so we retain our self-worth
      iii. Evaluations are not about my worth but about my skills and abilities
      iv. You do it because you choose it
      v. Workplace is a place to practice your mission
      vi. Work is always going to demand more than you can give

Building Resiliency
1. Self-regulation: Respond not react in the here and now
2. Intentionality: Principle based vs. demand based
3. Self-validation: Work from integrity… others reactions and validations are not required
4. Connection: Develop strong relationships and connect with your tribe
5. Self-care: Do things you love, make you smile, and bring joy to your life
   (Gentry & Baranowsky, 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protective Factors</th>
<th>Early Warning Signs</th>
<th>Self-Care Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong emotional boundaries</td>
<td>Distancing self from social situations</td>
<td>Positive self-care through all four realms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support</td>
<td>Becoming avoidant of client’s trauma material</td>
<td>Self-awareness and treatment of primary trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to reframe</td>
<td>Not being present during counseling</td>
<td>Mindfulness of countertransference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resiliency</td>
<td>Devaluing work</td>
<td>Seeking out client resilience (vicarious resilience)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing a professional network</td>
<td>Emotional or physical exhaustion</td>
<td>Outside supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaning-making</td>
<td>Decreased empathy</td>
<td>Creative strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing mind, body, and spiritual wellness</td>
<td>Anger toward clients</td>
<td>Posttraumatic growth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bell & Robinson, 2013)
References


