Secondary Traumatic Stress & Educator Resilience

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Welcome & Activity
THE EVOLUTION OF HUMOUR
What is Secondary Traumatic Stress?

The emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the firsthand trauma experiences of another.

(National Child Traumatic Stress Network)
How can the Stories we Hear from our Students Affect Us

- Numb
- Irritability
- Poor concentration
- Guilt
- Intense feelings, persistent thoughts
- Unhealthy avoidance
- Nightmares
Who is Vulnerable to Secondary Traumatic Stress?

• *Those who*...
  • are empathetic
  • have experienced some painful or traumatic event(s) in their own lives
  • work directly with children who have traumatic experiences
  • help others
Personal Impact of Secondary Traumatic Stress

- Physical
- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Occupational
- Social
- Spiritual
Physical Impact
• Low energy, fatigue
• Upset stomach, nausea
• Rapid heartbeat
• Difficulty sleeping
• Impaired immune system

Emotional Impact
• Overwhelmed
• Hopeless
• Overly sensitive, angry
Cognitive Impact

- Poor decision making
- Self-doubt
- Apathy
- Rigidity

Occupational Impact

- Decline in work performance
- Calling in sick
- Avoiding meetings or staying on campus
- Lack of patience with students
Social Impact

• Isolating from friends, family
• Less emotionally available
• Blaming others, less tolerant

Spiritual Impact

• Questioning previously held beliefs
• Angry at God
• Loss of purpose and meaning in life
Teachers Exposed to Students Under Stress

Baseline

Stress

UNABLE TO COPE

HOPELESS/HELPLESS

Post-traumatic growth

Return to baseline

Continued struggles
What is Resilience?

The ability to effectively cope with, adapt to and overcome adversity, stress, and challenging experiences.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressor</th>
<th>Ready</th>
<th>Reacting</th>
<th>Injured</th>
<th>Ill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good to Go</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mild and Transient</strong></td>
<td><strong>More Persistent</strong></td>
<td><strong>Persistent Distress</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confident and competent</td>
<td>• Anxious, irritable, short-tempered</td>
<td>• Persistent sadness or irritability</td>
<td>• Behaviors are highly problematic</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Getting the job done</td>
<td>• Disrupted routines</td>
<td>• Can’t fall or stay asleep</td>
<td>• Communication is negative or nonexistent</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sleeping enough</td>
<td>• Unusual sadness/crying</td>
<td>• Feeling of chaos</td>
<td>• Lots of fear and worry</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Healthy routines</td>
<td>• Trouble sleeping</td>
<td>• Roles/routines unclear</td>
<td>• Constant fighting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Good communication</td>
<td>• Eating too much or too little</td>
<td>• Social avoidance</td>
<td>• Social avoidance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Clear roles</td>
<td>• Loss of interest</td>
<td>• Loss of intimacy</td>
<td>• Misuse of alcohol or drugs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sense of humor</td>
<td>• Difficult communication</td>
<td>• Symptomatic persist or get worse</td>
<td>• Helplessness/hopelessness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Able to solve problems</td>
<td>• Increased worry</td>
<td>• Stress injury that don’t heal</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Coping well</td>
<td>• Reduced intimacy</td>
<td>• Social isolation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Future looks bright</td>
<td>• Solving problems is challenging</td>
<td>• Symptoms persist or get worse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Needs Professional Help**

**Responds to Self Help**
Mechanisms of Risk & Resilience

Saltzman, Lester, Beardslee, Layne, Woodward, & Nash, 2011

Resilience

- Understanding the nature and case of stressor
- Enhancing awareness and understanding
- Open and emotionally resonant communication
- Supportive and responsive relationships
- Capacity to accommodate change
- Ability to make sense of an experience and endow it with meaning
Activity
The Gifts I Bring

• The gifts I bring to my work with children are...
• My own childhood experience taught me...
• My own experience with stress/anxiety has taught me...
• The gifts I bring to my school district are...
• The gifts I receive from this work are...
We’d like you to think about the role you would like to play in supporting *resilience in your schools, your students, your teams, and yourself.* As educators, you are a key piece of the puzzle to setting your school, your students, and your colleagues up for success. Please create a picture in response to this prompt...
Building resilience is like cultivating a garden. What seeds will you plant?
Remember the ABCs...

• Become **aware** of what issues are getting to you
• Seek **balance** among work, rest, play, and alone time
• **Connect** with people you trust, respect, and for whom you care
My Toolbox

Getting Started
• Write notes of gratitude or positive reflection to yourself
• Have a mailbox for happy emails, notes of thanks, or other positive prompts
• Set passwords as positive reminders
• Check in with colleagues and friends
• _______________________
• _______________________

Skills Practice
• Set inspirational and realistic goals
• Practice reflection
• Engage in mindfulness techniques
• Set and manage effective boundaries
• Practice optimism
• Take breaks
• Regularly check in with yourself
• Practice emotion identification and regulation
• Ask for help or consultation (if needed)
• _______________________
• _______________________

Transitions
• Remember your personal values and priorities and what is important to you
• Try to leave work at work
• Allow yourself down time
• Allow yourself transition time and/or a transition ritual such as changing clothes, showering, listening to music, or other transitional behavior
• _______________________
• _______________________

Lifestyle Factors
• Get adequate sleep
• Practice healthy eating habits
• Exercise regularly
• Maintain social connections
• Create a sense of meaning and purpose
• Have a regular gratitude practice
• Practice regular meditation or mindfulness
• Use substances in moderation (or not at all)
• Attend regular physical, dental, and mental health appointments (as needed)

Other
• _______________________
• _______________________
Thank you!

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