At the Frontlines: The Pursuit of Self Care in the Workplace

9th Annual Department of Mental Health Housing Institute
“Call to Action: A Joint Venture to End Homelessness”
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The California Endowment Center

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The Downtown Women’s Center (DWC) provides permanent supportive housing and a safe and healthy community fostering dignity, respect, and personal stability, and advocates ending homelessness for women.

Founded in 1978, DWC is the only resource in Los Angeles that is exclusively dedicated to serving the unique needs of homeless and very low-income women in downtown Los Angeles’ Skid Row community.
DWC Programs & Services

DWC is nationally recognized as a prototype for unique and effective programs serving homeless women and ending homelessness. DWC serves over 3000 women every year.

**DROP-IN DAY CENTER**
- 200 women each day
- Services: Meals (100,000+)
- showers, phones & mail
- Trauma Recovery Center

**HOUSING**
- 119 units of permanent supportive housing
- 100 Veterans in HUD-VASH and SSVF
- 100 Housing for Health
- 95% of the women stay housed permanently

**CLINICAL HEALTH SERVICES**
- Case management, mental health & medical services
- Over 1200 women served

**PERSONAL & FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITY**
- Education, skill development, on-the-job training & transitional jobs
- Competitive job placement
- 900 women served
Trauma-Informed Care: An Evidence-Based Practice

The ACE study (1997) created a new paradigm

Source: http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/
Trauma-Informed Care Organizations

A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.

(SAMHSA, 2014)
“We must become the change we want to see.” –Mahatma Gandhi
Continuum of Staff Experience

- **Compassion Satisfaction**: Positive feelings derived from competent performance, positive relationships with colleagues and conviction that one’s work makes a meaningful contribution.

- **Burnout**: Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced feeling of personal accomplishment; work-related.

- **Compassion Fatigue**: Often used interchangeably with secondary traumatic stress; presence of PTSD symptoms caused by indirect exposure to traumatic material.

- **Vicarious/Secondary Trauma**: Changes in the inner experience of the caregiver resulting from empathic engagement with a traumatized client.
## Organizational Risk and Protective Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foster Risk Factors</th>
<th>Bolster Protective Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of resources for clients and staff</td>
<td>• Provide adequate training</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of supervision</td>
<td>• Diversify caseload</td>
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<td>• Lack of support from colleagues</td>
<td>• Foster culture of support among colleagues</td>
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<td>• Lack of acknowledgement</td>
<td>• Provide trauma-informed supervision</td>
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<td>• Create a culture of empowerment that offers a sense of autonomy, shared leadership</td>
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<td>• Values the voice of the staff</td>
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<td>• Invest in physical safety measures</td>
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Organizations Can Bolster Protective Factors

- Normalize Secondary Trauma
- Include Trauma-Informed Care principles on hiring practices, onboarding and early orientation training
- Balance workload
- Create a culture that supports collaboration through team meetings, retreats, esteems peers as experts
- Supervision must be conducted in a trauma-informed manner
- Solicit input; demonstrate how staff input makes positive change
- Create structure to discuss self-care
- Develop a protocol to respond to critical incidents
- Address Secondary Traumatization immediately
# Comprehensive Self Care Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Professional</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
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<th>Psychological</th>
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<th>Relational/Social</th>
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DWC’s Approach to Fostering a Trauma-Informed Environment

Following guidance from Trauma-Informed Organizational Toolkit

1. Setting the Stage
2. Completed Organizational Self-Assessment
3. Formed Trauma-Informed Care Workgroup
4. Developing a Strategic Plan
5. Implementing Trauma-Informed Changes
6. Dissemination of Results/Community Training

Organizational Self Assessment Domains

1. Supporting Staff Development
   – Training and Education
   – Staff supervision, support, and self-care

2. Establishing a Safe and Supportive Environment
   – Information sharing/open communication
   – Cultural and gender competency
   – Confidentiality
   – Safety and Crisis Prevention Planning
   – Consistency

3. Assessing and Planning Services
   – Intake assessment and follow-up
   – Developing goal plans
   – Offering Trauma-Specific Interventions
   – Involving current and former consumers

4. Adapting Policies
   – Reviewing policies

5. Evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement
Organizational Activities: Supporting Staff Development

- Organizations Leadership communicates a clear and direct message that we are committed to creating a trauma-informed system
- Organizational stakeholders (individuals served, volunteers, staff at all levels, Board of Directors) are trained and buy-in to how this model creates a healing environment
- Hiring practices clearly communicate focus on trauma-informed services
- Job performance evaluations clearly describe staff expectations and behaviors that are aligned with trauma-informed care principles
- The organization ensures that supervisors and practitioners are supported in further developing their trauma-informed care competencies
- Support staff receives ongoing training, performance evaluations, and supervisory assistance in integrating trauma-informed care principles in their work
- The organization helps staff develop personally meaningful and useful stress management strategies
Organizational Outcomes: Supporting Staff Development

• Increased better outcomes for individuals served
• Less staff turnover related to workplace dissatisfaction
• Productivity goals are met/Better outcomes for clients
• Stress related workers comp decreases
• Reduction of unplanned time off
• Staff surveys demonstrate higher satisfaction rates
• Client surveys demonstrate higher satisfaction rates
Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue Tool (ProQOL)

Tool assesses for Compassion Satisfaction, Burnout, and Secondary Trauma

Let’s try it out!

© B. Hudnall Stamm, 2009–2012. Professional Quality of Life: Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Version 5 (ProQOL). http://www.proqol.org. This test may be freely copied as long as (a) author is credited, (b) no changes are made, and (c) it is not sold. Those interested in using the test should visit http://www.proqol.org to verify that the copy they are using is the most current version of the test.
Resources


• What About You? A Workbook For Those That Work With Others. [www.familyhomelessness.org](http://www.familyhomelessness.org)

• Most of the presentation was based off of information from:
Contact DWC

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www.DowntownWomensCenter.org
Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Ph.D.  
President  
St. Joseph Center
In 1650, the very first Sisters of St. Joseph met in this room in Le Puy, France, where they cared for 39 orphans and made lace to earn money. The lace symbolizes the trade the Sisters taught widows so they could be self-sufficient.

St. Joseph Center was founded in 1976 - the first facility was located at 533 Rose Avenue in Venice, CA.
**SJC PROGRAMS & SERVICES**

**St. Joseph Center’s Mission** is to provide working poor families, as well as homeless men, women, and children of all ages with the inner resources and tools to become productive, stable and self-supporting members of the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outreach &amp; Engagement</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Mental Health</th>
<th>Education &amp; Vocational Training</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Served 26,877* at Bread &amp; Roses Café</td>
<td>Housed 500* family members in two years through HFSS</td>
<td>Housed 250* chronically homeless, severely mentally ill individuals in Venice &amp; Santa Monica</td>
<td>Web development training program (Codetalk) graduated 40+ women, 50% are employed since January 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Served 3,000* people in the Food Pantry</td>
<td>Case managed 650* formerly homeless men, women, and children to help them retain stable, subsidized housing</td>
<td>Provided mental health services to 475* individuals, families, Veterans, and older adults</td>
<td>75%* of Culinary Training Program graduates have obtained employment</td>
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*Annual Totals
COMPASSION SATISFACTION & FATIGUE

Compassion Satisfaction
Positive feelings derived from competent performance, positive relationships with colleagues and conviction that one’s work makes a meaningful contribution

Compassion Fatigue
Often used interchangeably with secondary traumatic stress; presence of PTSD symptoms caused by indirect exposure to traumatic material
FINDING MEANING, PURPOSE & PASSION

1. What makes you come alive?
2. What are your innate strengths?
3. Where do you add the greatest value?
4. How will you measure your life?

Margie Warrell, Stop Playing Safe, 2013
SYMPTOMS OF COMPASSION FATIGUE

• Bottled up emotions

• Loss of sense of humor

• Chronic physical ailments such as gastrointestinal problems and recurrent colds

• Substance abuse used to mask feelings

• Sadness, apathy, no longer finds activities pleasurable

• Poor self-care (i.e., hygiene, appearance)

• Recurring nightmares, flashbacks, intrusive thoughts or images

• Relationship issues and co-worker disputes

• Poor decision making and problem solving skills

• Voices excessive complaints about administrative functions

The Compassion Fatigue Process (Figley, 2001)
HOW TO HELP AVOID COMPASSION FATIGUE

- Maintain work-life balance
- Create a self-care plan and make a commitment to yourself to follow through
- Identify your triggers and stressors that create stress and burnout in your life; learn to manage them
- Build a healthy support system
- Take the Compassion Fatigue self-tests regularly; Compassion Fatigue is never healed and it can creep back into our lives
- Raise your Compassion Satisfaction levels

https://notesfromadogwalker.com/2013/09/12/patricia-smith-compassion-fatigue-awareness-project/
## HOW SJC PROMOTES SELF-CARE

<table>
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<th>Organization Self-Assessment Domain</th>
<th>Output</th>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting Staff Development</td>
<td>Monthly and quarterly staff training, annual staff retreat, weekly supervision that addresses staff development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establishing a Safe and Supportive Environment</td>
<td>Non hierarchical approach to management and supervision, organization wellness program (weekly yoga), allow flexibility in work hours, vacation and additional paid time off, hold debriefing sessions following traumatic events, activities that build community and connections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessing and Planning Services</td>
<td>Client satisfaction surveys, staff satisfaction assessments, staff focus groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adapting Policies</td>
<td>Include staff feedback in policy procedures and strategic planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement</td>
<td>Use of consultant to assess climate and offer opportunities for staff to provide feedback</td>
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COMPASSION SATISFACTION: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

- Identified what mattered
- Secured employment that drew upon my natural talent, skill, and passion
- Performed at high level of competency
- Developed positive professional relationships
- Discovered that my work has meaningful impact
Meditation Exercise

Zachary Coil, LCSW
St. Joseph Center
Resources

• Margie Warrell, Stop Playing Safe, 2013

• The Compassion Fatigue Process, Figley, 2001

• https://notesfromadogwalker.com/2013/09/12/patricia-smith-compassion-fatigue-awareness-project/
Contact SJC

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