

* Compassion Fatigue - The Filling Up and Emptying Out

Jennifer Rowlands - Ostomy CNS
NZNOCSTN Conference October 2018

- * What is compassion fatigue? And what makes us more vulnerable?
- * Comparing compassion fatigue to burnout
- * What the empathy, fatigue, self-care cycle can look like with the development of daily emotional first aid
- * Using mindfulness meditation and the positive contribution of accepting gratitude
- * Incorporating two short simple mindful exercises

* Overview

- * Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was first included in the DSM III in 1980
- * Trauma may be experienced either “directly” or “indirectly” (secondary traumatic stress)
- * An evolution of names for secondary traumatic stress including: Secondary Victimization, Vicarious Trauma, Secondary Trauma, and finally “Compassion Fatigue” which was coined by a nurse, Carla Joinson in 1992.

* Evolution of Compassion Fatigue

- * Isolation
- * Emotional outbursts
- * Physical symptoms e.g. headache, lower back ache or shoulders (where we tense and hold stress), GI issues
- * Chronic fatigue
- * Poor self-care
- * Dread of going to work
- * Lack of joy in life
- * Substance abuse
- * Eating disorders - skipping meals, emotional eating

* Compassion Fatigue Presentation

- * Daily exposure to traumatic material
- * Empathy - the greater the empathy the more effective the relationship and the greater the risk for Compassion Fatigue
- * Other factors include: emotional state, limited stress management, poor self care, poor support and spirituality (sense of self)
- * Personal learnt behaviours - looking after others before ourselves, no personal boundaries, impulse to help anyone in need

* Vulnerability of Compassion Fatigue

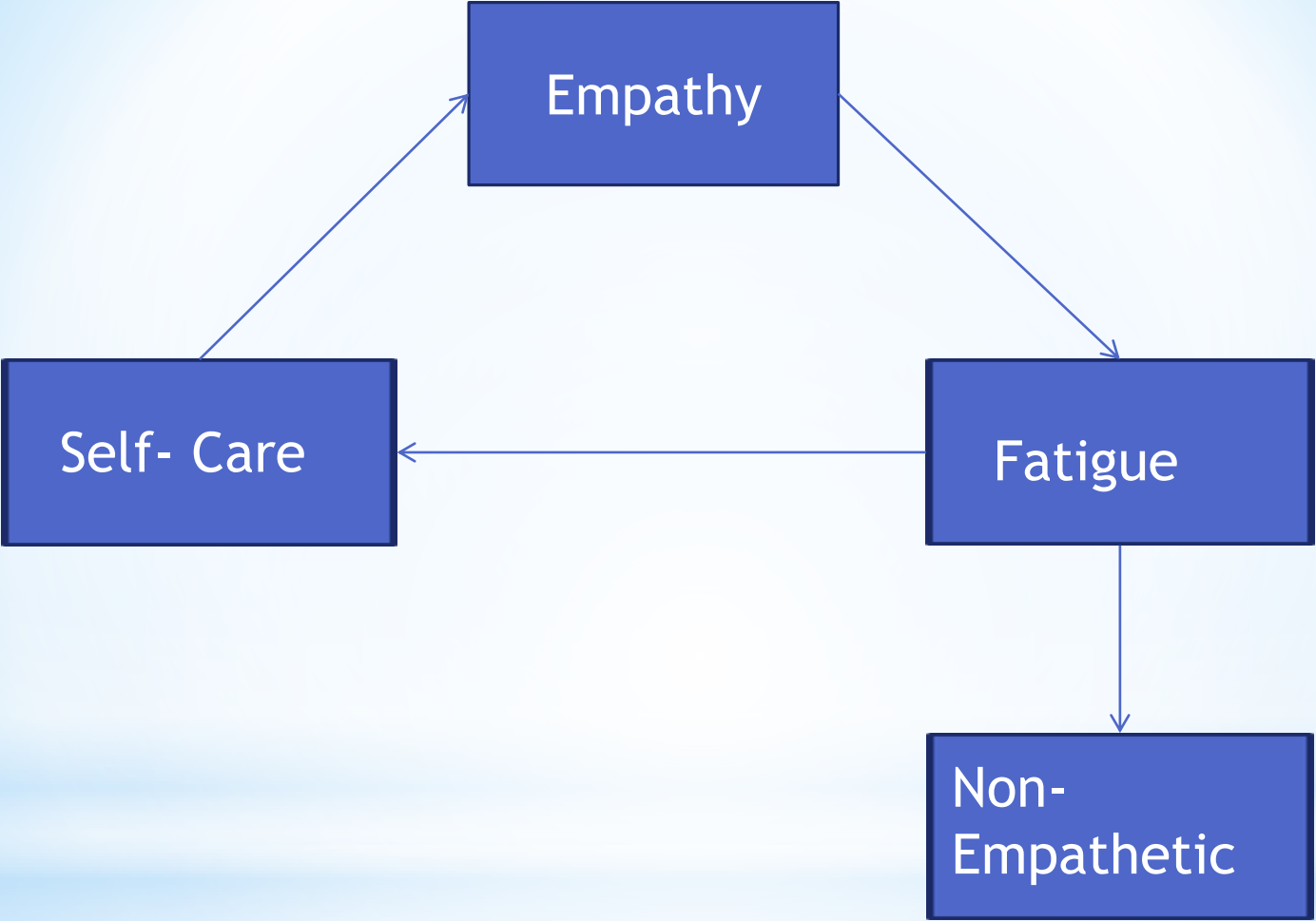
- * Stress: A normal response to a perceived threat or upset to one's equilibrium: there is optimal stress, with too little or too much not a healthy state
- * Compassion Fatigue: A combination of physical, emotional and spiritual depletion associated with caring for others.
 - * results from prolonged exposure to trauma (emotional upset) or difficult situations &/or the continuous offering or giving of self.
- * Burn out: a state of physical, mental and emotional exhaustion caused by long term involvement in demanding circumstances,
 - * usually over longer period of time
 - * origins are usually organizational
- * The triggers of Burnout versus Compassion Fatigue help differentiate
- * A nurse must possess compassion to experience the fatigue of it.

* Compassion Fatigue versus Burnout

 **How I Got to This Point**

*“If open hearted and caring, then not being at risk of being affected by compassion fatigue is like walking into water and not getting wet”

*-Nikita Amir



- * As a positive - ability to physiologically and psychologically adapt to environmental changes
- * Good defence mechanisms or Bad defence mechanisms
- * Survivor or victim mentality

* Building Resilience

- * Deep slow breathing - transferring into the parasympathetic nervous system
- * Grounding oneself
- * Being present
- * Observe the thoughts without attaching an emotion
- * Naming and taming - past and future
- * Think of the last time you.....

* Mindfulness Meditation

*“If you act like you've only got fifteen minutes, it will take all day. Act like you've got all day, it will take fifteen minutes.”

* — Monty Roberts

Don't just look, observe.

Don't just swallow, taste.

Don't just sleep, dream.

Don't just think, feel.

Don't just exist, live.

- * Why do we dismiss and/or minimalise gratitude or compliments from patient's and others?
- * Health Benefits - decreased cardiovascular disease, happier, decreased sickness
- * Self-value
- * I challenge you to wholly accept others gratitude and reflect how doing this makes you feel

* Excepting Gratitude



Mind Full, or Mindful?

- * Acceptance that we cannot fix or alleviate everything or every situation
- * Unrealistic expectations which can lead to a sense of failure
- * Importance of continuing to explore ways of practicing self-care habits daily

* **Top Three Learning's
to Conclude**

- * Amir, N. (2017, April 3). Deconstructing Compassion Fatigue. Retrieved from https://youtu.be/U_4qlz0jMZU
- * Gamblin, K. (2011). Compassion fatigue: When caring takes its toll. *Oncology Nurse*, Retrieved from <https://www.oncnursingnews.com/publications/oncology-nurse/2011/september-2011/compassion-fatigue-when-caring-takes-its-toll>
- * Harris, C., & Quinn Griffin, M.T., (2015). Nursing on empty: Compassion fatigue signs, symptoms, and system interventions. *Journal of Christian Nursing*, 32(2), 80-87. doi:10.1097/CNJ.0000000000000155
- * Nolte, A.G.W., Downing, C., Temane,A., Hastings-Tolsma,M. (2017). Compassion fatigue in nurses: A metasythesis. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 26, 4364-4378. doi:10.1111/jocn.13766
- * Sheppard, K. (2016). Compassion fatigue: Are you at risk? *American Nurse Today*, 11(1), 53-55. Retrieved from <https://www.americannursetoday.com/compassion-fatigue/>

* References