



Northwest (HHS Region 10)

ATTC Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



Northwest ATTC presents:

Healing the Healer: Employing Principles of Neuroscience, CBT and MI to Understand and Treat Compassion Fatigue among Human Services Professionals

Troy Montserrat-Gonzales, LPC, LMHC



LANGUAGE MATTERS.

Words have power.

PEOPLE FIRST.

We value your feedback on our ability to provide culturally-informed and inclusive services.

Please email us at northwest@attcnetwork.org with any comments or questions you have for us!

Today's Presenter

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 - Specializes in working with human service professionals





Healing the Healer

Employing Principles of Neuroscience, CBT
and MI to Understand and Treat Compassion
Fatigue among Human Services
Professionals

+ Why This Topic?

- Why now?
- Why *again*????
 - I already know this stuff.
- Two types of plasticity: Neural and Behavioral
- Neural Plasticity: “Brain plasticity can be defined as the capacity of cerebral neurons and neural circuits to change, structurally and functionally, in response to experience.” ¹
- Behavioral Plasticity: “Behavioral Plasticity refers to a change in an organism's behavior that results from exposure to stimuli, such as changing environmental conditions.” ²

1. Neural Plasticity Volume 2013, Article ID 863970, 2 pages <http://dx.doi.org/10.1155/2013/863970> , Accessed 4/1/19

2. Binder MD, Hirokawa N, Windhorst U, eds. (2009). "Behavioral Plasticity". *Encyclopedia of neuroscience*. Berlin: Springer. p. 372. [doi:10.1007/978-3-540-29678-2_594](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-29678-2_594). ISBN [978-3-540-23735-8](https://www.isbn-international.org/product/978-3-540-23735-8)



+ Why this topic? (cont.)

■ Impact of acute and chronic stress

- Ongoing and chronic exposure to stress and stress hormone corticosterone decreases BDNF expression, possibly creating:
 - “Vicarious Traumatization”
 - Depressed learning and memory
 - Immunosuppression
 - Depression, anxiety
 - Epigenetic factors – can facilitate the emergence of mental / physical illness
 - Lack of interest in and energy for other activities and relationships
 - Less effective as healers and professionals



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Compassion Fatigue - What is it? A.K.A. Burnout, Empathy
Fatigue



Compassion Fatigue - Definitions

- Empathy fatigue vs. Compassion Fatigue (tomato/tomahto?)
- Compassion and Empathy Fatigue - Contributing factors
 - Workplace stress
 - World events
 - Direct service
 - Our own histories
 - Life!!!! Ugh.
- Neuroscientific / Biological Bases and Definitions
- Illness narratives and local biologies of belief
 - The work of Dr. Arthur Kleinman makes the distinction between disease (the biological basis of poor health) and illness (our own stories and understanding about our health or sickness, which are often culturally and socially situated).



Tying It All Together: The Wounded Healer

- Relationship between our personal histories and our professional choices and behaviors
 - Early research shows that adults with adverse childhood experiences are more likely to choose a helping profession as a career
 - Emphasizes the importance of taking good care of ourselves at work and offers subsequent opportunities for growth and healing
 - Career choices as opportunities for corrective emotional experiences
 - For facilitating neural and behavioral plasticity
 - For healing attachment wounds
 - The healthier we are, the healthier are our professional communities and the better quality of care we can provide for our clients



Thriving: Antidotes to Compassion Fatigue Using MI, CBT and Neuroscience

- Using gems from Motivational Interviewing to examine our change and healing processes
 - What does MI offer us that we can apply to our own processes?
 - Ambivalence: Normalizing and accepting ambivalence related to self-care
 - Readiness to Change: Assessing our own readiness to change
 - Why make changes or continue to cultivate self-care practices?
 - Assessing Current Change Supporting Resources:
 - How and when have we taken good care of ourselves in the past?
 - What models do we have for professional resilience?
 - What are our current internal and external resources?



CBT-Informed Self-Care



Mind Full, or Mindful?

- What does CBT offer us that we can apply to our own processes?
 - The power of metacognition/mindfulness – cultivating a practice of self-reflexivity: thinking about what we're thinking
 - We can't control others, but we can control our own responses
 - “right vs. effective” – at work, do we want to be right, or do we want to be effective? We can't always do both.

+ Thriving: Self-Care Basics

“Our sorrows and wounds are healed only when we touch them with compassion.”
- Buddha

- Pillars of self-care – What has been shown to heal empathy fatigue:
 - Compassion (for self and others)
 - Connection
 - Coping skills and health-supporting practices
- The neuroscience of self-care
 - Cultivating resiliency, brain and neuroplasticity and developing shiny new neural networks
 - Cultivating the Practice of Self-Care or “Good Behavioral Health Hygiene,” as I like to refer to it.

+ Thriving: Continued

- Exercise, caloric restriction, intellectual stimulation – all shown to regulate and contribute to the health and functioning of the CNS
 - All increase expression of BDNF
 - Aerobic Exercise is medicine:
 - Increased neuro and behavioral plasticity, (increased neural growth, increased neural activity) , enhanced cognitive control of behavior (executive functions: selecting and monitoring behaviors that facilitate attainment of chosen goals), improved memory, improved mood (promoting positive affect and inhibiting negative affect –such as poor self concept, anger, disgust, guilt, fear, nervousness), treating and preventing the development of drug addiction 1.
- Cultivating safe and nurturing spaces
- Our own WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action) plans?

1. Carroll ME, Smethells JR (February 2016). "Sex Differences in Behavioral Dyscontrol: Role in Drug Addiction and Novel Treatments". *Front. Psychiatry*. 6: 175. doi:10.3389/fpsy.2015.00175. PMC 4745113. PMID 26903885.



For Further Exploration: Resources and Practices to Condition the Mind and CNS

- Our own “Board of Directors” or trusted others
 - Healers
 - Therapists / Coaches
 - Insight work
 - Somatically oriented treatments
 - Sensorimotor Psychotherapy
 - Alternative medicine
- Psychonutrition
 - Research shows that dietary factors are powerful regulators of neural plasticity, contributing to the health and regulation of neuronal activity and ultimately affecting mental health.
 - Anti-inflammatory diets
 - Amino acid therapy to support and facilitate production and metabolism of dopamine, serotonin, etc.

+ Resources (cont.)

■ Illness Narratives

- The work of medical anthropologist and physician, Dr. Arthur Kleinman makes the distinction between disease (the biological basis of poor health) and illness (our own stories and understanding about our health or sickness – often culturally and socially situated).

■ Scholars and authors who teach about IPNB, trauma, and mindfulness:

- Bonnie Badenoch
 - The Mindful Therapist
- Tara Brach
 - Radical Acceptance
- Bessel van der Kolk
 - The Body Keeps the Score

+ Resources (cont.) – Authors, Websites, Books, oh my!!!

- Babette Rothschild
 - The Body Remembers
 - Help for the Helper
- Stephen Porges
 - The Polyvagal Theory
- Daniel Siegel
 - The Developing Mind
- Candace Pert
 - Molecules of Emotion

+ Resources (cont)

- Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky
 - Trauma Stewardship
- Dan Eagleman
 - The Story of You
 - Brain and Behavior
- David Treleaven
 - Trauma Sensitive Mindfulness: Practices for Safe and Transformative Healing
- Gabor Mate
 - When the Body Says No: Exploring the Stress Disease Connection
- Peter Levine
 - Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma

+ Resources (cont.)

- Technology / Apps
 - Calm
 - Fabulous
 - Buddhify
 - Others?
- Monthly self – care skill shares
 - What's going to be helpful without further taxing our depleted resources of time and energy?
 - MI practice circles
 - Physical activity supports
 - Book groups

+ Resources (cont.)

On the Web:

- How Mindfulness Changes the Brain:
 - <https://hbr.org/2015/01/mindfulness-can-literally-change-your-brain>
- Urgent vs. Important:
 - https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_91.htm
- CompassPoint (an Oakland-based non-profit leadership organization) Self-Care Starter Kit
 - <https://www.compasspoint.org/blog/12-resources-your-self-care-starter-kit>
- Neural Plasticity Journal:
 - <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/np/>
- The Bounceback Project:
 - <http://www.bouncebackproject.org>

There are many different ways to take care of yourself. We need different things at different times. Here are some ideas to inspire you.

	Rest	Nourishment	Cleansing	Grounding	Energy	Protection
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -practicing good sleep hygiene -sleeping at least 8 hours a night -restorative or yin yoga -receiving a massage -taking a nap -deep belly breathing -shavasana (corpse pose) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -eating balanced meals at regular mealtimes -eating enough fruits, veggies, proteins, and healthy fats -drinking plenty of water -taking nutritional supplements as prescribed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -taking a bath or shower -doing a detox -taking a break from sugar, alcohol, or processed foods -washing the laundry -clearing out your closet, desk, car, or other cluttered area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -following daily routines -getting dressed -packing your belongings -organizing your home -balancing poses -connecting with nature -feeling bare feet on soil, grass, or sand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -coffee or tea -fresh air -exercise -sunshine -tai chi or qi gong -safe, caring sex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -locking doors -carrying pepper spray -safe people & places -having backup plans -making an emergency kit -wearing sunscreen -martial arts or self-defense classes -having insurance
Mental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -limiting screentime -meditation -reading fiction -taking a vacation or "staycation" -learning to compartmentalize, set things aside -accepting not knowing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -watching a documentary -taking a class -reading a book -playing puzzles or brain-training games -studying a new language or instrument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -meditation -breathwork -focusing on an activity so much you forget everything else (enter a "flow state") -taking a "digital detox" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -planning your day -setting intentions -making lists -getting organized -paying attention to your surroundings -remembering important details, or things that help you feel centered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -inspiring conversations -learning new things -traveling -looking at art -finding meaningful work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -avoiding bad news -cultivating discernment -going to therapy -taking your medication -focusing on priorities -setting aside the rest
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -unburdening yourself of others' problems -"me time" -taking a break from social media -letting go of people-pleasing -practicing self acceptance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -good friends -a cherished pet -soothing touch -face-to-face contact -positive affirmations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -grieving -crying -writing an angry letter, then shredding or burning it, or reading it to your therapist -menstruating -sweating -giving away old items of emotional significance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -using the 5 senses to help you feel grounded -looking at old photos or other memorabilia to remind you of who you are -playing an instrument, writing a song, singing, making art -working with clay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -laughter, play, silliness -people who make you happy -listening to music -dancing -playing a sport or game -giving to others -being of service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -setting boundaries -picking friends carefully -saying no -taking it slow in romantic relationships -having your friends vet your partners -staying connected to people who really know you and care
Spiritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -daydreaming -meditating -"let go and let God" -the serenity prayer -spending time in quiet places, contemplating -visiting places of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -reading scripture or spiritual literature of your choosing -finding a mentor -joining a congregation, 12-step group or other spiritual community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -sweat lodges -smudging, incense, spritzes and other aromatics -grieving rituals -sitting by a fire -making amends for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -rites of passage -affirmations -connecting with the elements -honoring the passage of time -celebrating holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -looking up at the stars -finding your purpose -pilgrimage or travel to spiritually inspiring destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -wearing a talisman -carrying an object from an ancestor -protection prayers

+ My contact information

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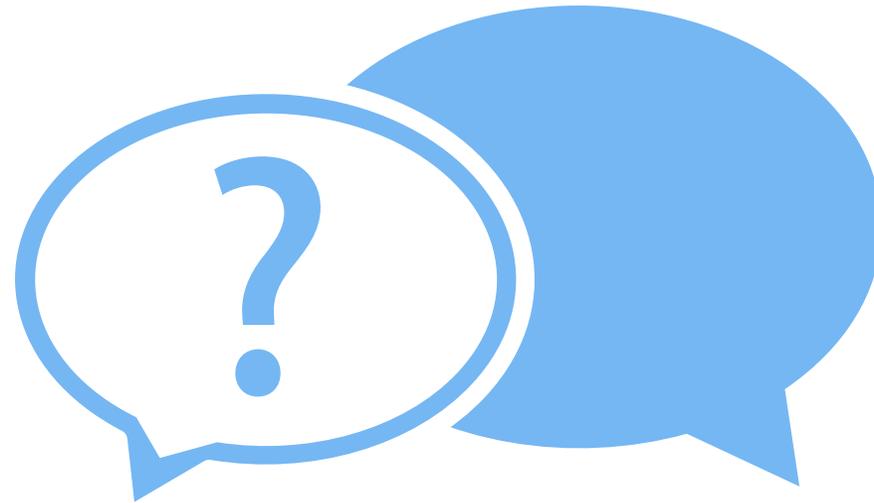
Look for our surveys in your inbox!

We'll send two short surveys:
one now, and
one in a month.



We greatly appreciate your feedback! Every survey we receive helps us to improve and develop our programming.

Questions? Please type them in
the chat box!



Upcoming Events

Join us for our next webinar!

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Substance Use Disorders

Jonathan Bricker, PhD
May 22, 2019, 12-1pm



gracias cảm ơn bạn धन्यवाद 고맙습니다
شكرا جزيلًا salamat благодарю вас 谢谢
Dziękuję Ci **Thank** ευχαριστώ
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ありがとうございました спасибі mahalo