Foster Youth Serving Foster Youth

Michael Crane
Dr. Sara I Gamez
Meet your presenters

Michael Crane

Dr. Sara I Gamez
Why it matters
It matters because...

Valuable perspective

Experience shaping practices

Changing the narrative
Helping “OUR” Community...

Population - “Our community”
Better outcomes
Change lives
Provide opportunities
Break the cycle
Compassion fatigue, burnout, and retraumatization
Caring too much can hurt...

Compassion Fatigue
Compassion Fatigue refers to a state experienced by those helping people or animals in distress; it is an extreme state of tension and preoccupation with the suffering of those being helped to the degree that it can create a secondary traumatic stress for the helper.

Vicarious Trauma refers to changes in the inner experience of the helper resulting from empathic engagement with a traumatized individual.

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) refers to the presence of PTSD symptoms caused by at least one indirect exposure to traumatic material.

Definitions

Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project: http://www.compassionfatigue.org/index.html
• Being a new professional
  • Being a new graduate intern(s)
• Trauma Trainings
• Being a seasoned professional
• Individual student meetings / advising sessions
• Student Crisis
• Student events / activities (Retreats / Groups sessions)
• Social Media
• Application(s)
  • Personal Statements
  • Student Interviews
Recognizing Signs

- Apathy, sad, no longer finds activities pleasurable
- Difficulty concentrating
- Mentally and physically tired
- Preoccupied
- Compulsive behaviors such as overspending, overeating, gambling, sexual addictions
- Poor self-care (i.e., hygiene)
- Re-occurrence of nightmares and flashbacks to traumatic event
- Chronic physical ailments (gastrointestinal problems, headaches, and recurrent colds, back pain)
- In denial about problems
- Excessive blaming
- Bottled up emotions
- Isolation from others
- Substance abuse used to mask feelings
- Appearance
- Legal problems, indebtedness

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Professional Quality of Life
CS-CF Model

Professional Quality of Life

Compassion Satisfaction

Compassion Fatigue

Burnout

Secondary Trauma

Compassion Fatigue

Compassion Fatigue is the negative aspect of helping those who experience traumatic stress and suffering.

Compassion Satisfaction

Compassion Satisfaction is about the pleasure you derive from being able to do your work.

In our work
Best practices and takeaways

_Foster Alumni Perspective_

(Self-preservation and Mental Health)
Post-Traumatic Growth

- Appreciation for Life
- Relationships with Others
- New Possibilities in Life
- Personal Strength
- Spiritual Change
WHAT ARE YOU DOING
Taking Care of YOU!

TAKING CARE
OF MYSELF DOESN'T
MEAN 'ME FIRST.'
IT MEANS 'ME, TOO.'

L.R. Knost
CARING FOR YOURSELF
In The Face of Difficult Work

Switching is a conscious process. Talk to yourself as you switch.

2. Use images that make you feel safe and protected (switch off) or connected and cared for (switch on) to help you switch.

3. Find rituals that help you switch as you start and stop work.

4. Breathe slowly and deeply to calm yourself when starting a tough job.
Tips on how to take care of YOU...

❖ Be kind to yourself
❖ Accept where you are on your path at all times
❖ Understand that those close to you may not be there when you need them most
❖ Exchange information and feelings with people who can validate you

❖ Clarify your personal boundaries. What works for you; what doesn't
❖ Express your needs verbally
❖ Take positive action to change your environment
❖ Informal/formal self-report screening(s)

❖ Workplace self-care groups (yoga or meditation)
❖ Creation of a balanced caseload/scheduling (Take lunch!)
❖ Self-care accountability buddy system

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Simple Tips for Being an Effective Professional

- Setting boundaries (Foster Care Alumni vs. non-foster care professionals)
- Preparing for Transition in work roles
- Being ok with student discomfort (not enabling)
- Creating a network of support (personally & professionally) w/ Alumni of Care & non-foster care professionals
- Getting professional help (properly heal)
Thank you!

Michael Crane
mcrane9@gwc.cccd.edu

Dr. Sara Gamez
sigamez@cpp.edu

A person has TWO hands,
One for helping HIMSELF,
The other for helping OTHERS.