THE HEROES YOU NEVER SEE: BRINGING YOUR WHOLE SELF TO COMPASSIONATE CARE SETTINGS

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"The therapist may make up the bulk of a client's support system." Willyn Webb (1999), 112



"Caregivers may perform a number of concrete functions, but the essential product



they deliver is themselves." C. Joinson (1992) "Our job is to be a presence, not a savior! a companion rather than a leader a friend rather than a teacher."

William Wellshons (2002) 159

Your self-care is critical to your clients! Maybe as important as your credentials.



If you are not taking "kind care" of you who is?



Name five ways you "self-care."

"As caregivers and counselors go through life the number of losses in both their personal and professional lives accumulates and the distance to their own death diminishes."

Counselors need to "attend to their own sense of woundedness."

David Crenshaw (2007), 234

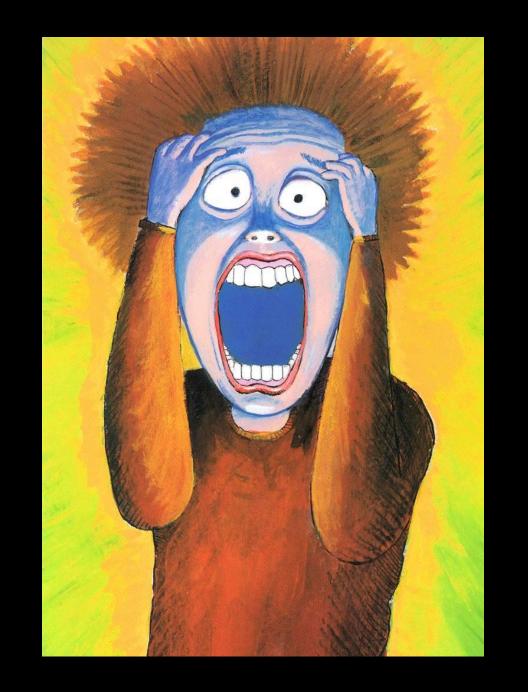
"It is imperative that professional caregivers and counselors counterbalance the inherent stress of work with the bereaved by providing adequate care and consideration to themselves."

David Crenshaw (2007), 234

Anticipating & Acknowledging Compassion Fatigue

 Sooner, or later, regardless of credentials, vita, resume, or years of service, a professional experiences the:

- "I don't know what to say" moment
- "I don't know how much longer I can do this!" moment



The Question:

"What am I pretending not to know?" Frank Freed, PhD



Daily Work with Challenges Professional Caregivers

"Listening to stories of human suffering can set into motion a process whereby helping professionals begin to question their core beliefs." Patrick Morrissette (2004) 63

Three "danger zones" [Janoff-Bulman, 1985]

- Personal vulnerability
- The positive view of oneself
- That the world is meaningful and orderly.



• ADT: Attention Deficit Trait

E.M. Hallowell, PhD



Three components of ADT

- Distractibility
- Inner frenzy
- Impatience



"The ADT sufferer therefore feels a constant low level of panic and guilt. Facing a tidal wave of tasks, the worker becomes increasingly hurried, peremptory, and unfocused, while pretending that everything is fine."

E.M. Hallowell (2008) 4

Bride's U GA Study of Social Workers:

- 40% thought about their work without intending to
- 22% reported feeling detached from others
- 26% felt emotionally "numb"
- 28% had a sense of foreshortened future
- 27% reported irritability
- 28% reported concentration difficulties

Complicating Factors for ADT

Constant availability









"Never before in history has the human brain been asked to track so many data points. Everywhere, people rely on their cell phones, email, and digital assistants in



the race to gather and transmit data, plans, and ideas faster and faster."

E.M. Hallowell (2008) 7

"When you are confronted with the sixth decision after the fifth interruption in the midst of a search for the ninth missing piece of information... and the twelfth impossible request has blipped unbidden across your computer screen, your brain begins to panic, reacting just as if that third decision were a bloodthirsty, maneating tiger."

E. M. Hallowell (2008) 8





Constant exposure to noise

"As our minds fill with noise—feckless synaptic events signifying nothing—the brain gradually loses its capacity to attend fully and thoroughly to anything."

E.M. Hallowell (2008)

The "bullhorn" impact



Continuous exposure to multiple dimension "terrible" news

"People bring to work the stress aroused by dealing with family problems, taxes, and traffic jams, as well as anxieties stemming from a continuous diet of bad news that upsets them and makes them feel helpless—hurricanes, politics, child abductions, wars, terrorist attacks, environmental devastation, you name it."

Herbert Benson (2008) 70

• 24/7 Lifestyle



 Demand for the nonprofit "athlete" (Loehr & Schwartz, 2008)

The inclination for busy social workers

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"... is to live in a perpetual state of triage, doing whatever seems most immediately pressing while losing sight of any bigger picture...."

J. Loehr & T. Schwartz (2008) 62
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"Bet I am running faster than you!"



Self-flagellation



Evaluative stress

"Employees who seem unable to keep up the pace are seen as deficient or weak."

E.M. Hallowell (2008) 10



 Stress is the oxygen in many professional, organizational and personal settings



Baggage from home and personal relationships



 Audit current relationship to attachments



Role as caregiver



- Triggers our own past traumas and losses
 - Reminds us of our own worst fears
 - Elevates our own existential anxiety

Taking 'kind care" of you!

"ADT is a very real threat to all of us. If we do not manage it, it manages us."

E. M. Hallowell (2008) 19

 Some, although excellent in offering kind compassionate care to parishioners, clients and patients, may be slow to implemental personal kind care.

TURN off the news



RESERVE some "still" time



Even Captain America needs to relax!



WEIGH e-mail



 IDENTIFY times daily when you are at your best.



"Sit down!

Hush up!

Stop trying to fix things!

Be still for a while."

Recommendations, Lois Wagner, RN (in Palmer, 2009)

INVEST lavishly in human moments:

"An authentic psychological encounter that can happen only



when two people share the same physical space." A.M. Hollowell "Making special"
 Ellen Dissanayke, PhD



PAY ATTENTION to what you are eating



INVEST in a massage.

"For every insult you heap on your body

it will seek and find its ultimate revenge!" Fritz Perls

Three significant questions

Edwin Schneidman, PhD

Psychache

"...the intolerable psychological pain created by thwarted vital needs."

Edwin Shneidman

"Where do you hurt?"

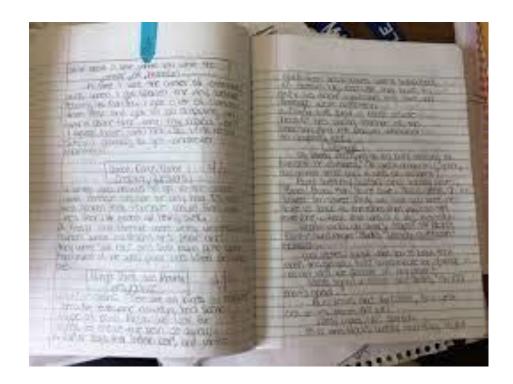
"How can I help?"

"How willing am I to be inconvenienced?"

Memoir-ing



The memoir "slice": 3 pages/double space



"Entraining" [Smith 2013]

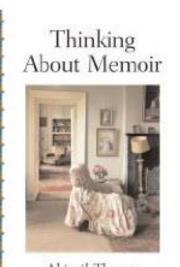
Engine [death/loss] + 3 page boxcars

40 boxcars is a memoir.



"Writing memoir is a way to figure out who you used to be and how you go to be who you are."

Abigail Thomas, Thinking About Memoir



Abigail Thomas

Memoir Prompts or "Jumpstarts":

 The most incredible patient I have met (so far).

 The most incredible story I have ever heard...

 The most irascible patient I have met (so far). The most incredible story I have ever heard from a family member. . . .

 What is the funniest thing I have witnessed?

Making gratitude

even in the chaos of everyday life, moments of gratitude remind us to hold on to the good things.

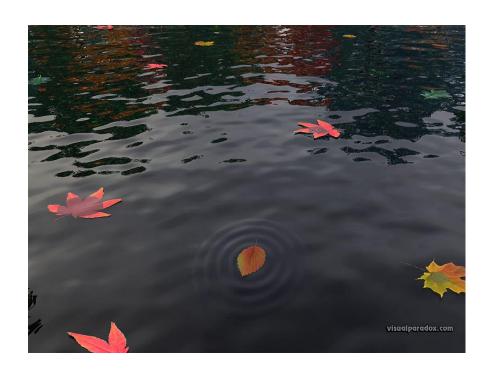
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Rx: Three gratitudes daily

"And I fall asleep, counting my blessings...."

Irving Berlin

 Remind yourself of the "rippling" effect Irwin Yalom, MD



"Rippling refers to the fact that each of us creates often without our conscious intent or knowledge concentric circles that may affect others for years, even for generations." Irwin Yalom (2008) 83

CONCLUSION

"If we are still breathing, it is too early to tell the ultimate impact of any event in our lives." John R. Claypool (2006) 40

"When it's over, I don't want to wonder if I have made of my life something, particular, and real. I don't want to find myself sighing and frightened, or full of argument. I don't want to end up simply having visited the world." Mary Oliver 1919
1313 Grand Avenue, Kansas City
residence of Walter Hall

