

Yamhill Community Care  
Continuing Medical Education Series

**Strong @ the Broken Places:**

Addressing Vicarious Trauma in Individuals and Teams




## INTENTION

### Journaling Activity

What is your INTENTION in doing the work today? How do you want to show up?

The **CUMULATIVE TRANSFORMATIVE** impact upon the [professional] of working with survivors of traumatic life events.... The **PERVASIVE** effect of doing this work on the **IDENTITY, WORLD VIEW, psychological needs and BELIEFS, and MEMORY** system of the [professional]

DEFINITION  
**Vicarious trauma**




SOURCE: Saakvitne & Pearlman, 1996



**DEFINITION**

## Trauma Stewardship

Trauma stewardship refers to the **ENTIRETY** of how we interact with others' suffering, pain, crisis, and trauma. It includes but is not limited to our **INTENTION** in choosing the work we do, our **PHILOSOPHY** of what it means to help others, the **TONE** our caregiving takes, and our daily decisions about **HOW WE LIVE OUR LIVES**. Trauma stewardship extends even to the ultimate **MEANING** we extract from our work.



SOURCE: Van Dernoort Lipsky, 2014

## SELF-CARE INVENTORY

Adapted from *Transforming the Pain* by Saakvitne & Pearlman

Rate the following areas in frequency

5 = Frequently

4 = Occasionally

3 = Rarely

2 = Never

1 = It never occurred to me!

### PHYSICAL SELF-CARE

- Eat healthily and regularly
- Physical activity for fitness and fun
- Get regular medical care for prevention and when sick
- Take time off work



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- Say “no” to extra responsibilities
- Get massages
- Get enough sleep
- Take day trips or mini-vacations
- Make time away from telephones, television, email, internet, text messages, voice mail, etc.
- Keep home organized, clean, and safe
- Other:

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF-CARE**

- Make time for self-reflection
- Seek your own personal therapy, as needed
- Read literature that is unrelated to work
- Do something at which you are not the expert or in charge
- Engage your intelligence in a new area, e.g. go to an art exhibit, history exhibit, sports event, auction, theater performance
- Spend time with children
- Check vehicles for safety and basic maintenance
- Other:

### **EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE**

- Spend time with people you enjoy, and limit time with those that drain you
- Stay in contact with important people in your life



- Identify comforting activities, objects, people, and places, and seek them out
- Find things that make you laugh as often as possible
- Allow yourself to cry
- Connect with your neighbors
- Do family activities
- Express your opinion (e.g. social action, letters to editor, donations, marches) and contribute in your community
- Other:

### **SPIRITUAL SELF-CARE**

- Make time for self-reflection
- Find a spiritual connection or community
- Write in a journal, meditate, pray, sing, or dance
- Spend time in nature
- Be open to not knowing (e.g. say “I don’t know”)
- Engage your intelligence in a new area (art, history, etc)
- Practice receiving kind words and actions from others
- Be aware of nonmaterial aspects of life
- Try not to be in charge or the expert at all times
- Other:

### **WORKPLACE OR PROFESSIONAL SELF-CARE**

- Give yourself affirmations—list accomplishments that give you pride



- Be curious and ask questions
- Take a break during the workday
- Arrange your work space so that it is comfortable
- Balance your caseload so that no one part of the day is “too much”
- Identify and seek out projects that are exciting and rewarding
- Set appropriate limits with clients and colleagues
- Get regular supervision, peer feedback, mentoring, and coaching from peers or manager
- Proactively work on developing a career path and professional network with others
- Set goals for accomplishments not related to work
- Other:

To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives.

If we remember those times and places—and there are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction.



Howard Zinn, *You Can't be Neutral on a Moving Train*  
(2002)

