



**IMPACT AND RESOLUTIONS FOR VICARIOUS
TRAUMA IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND
PROSECUTION SYSTEMS**

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AGENDA

- Introductions [speakers as well as participants? Depending on size of group?]
- Defining Vicarious Trauma
- Defining Compassion Fatigue
- Exploring experiences of VT in law enforcement and prosecution settings
- Assessing for VT: PRO-QOL
- Addressing VT: Self and Setting strategies
- Closing

INTRODUCTIONS

- Donna Holbert – Butler County Prosecutor's Office
- Casey Frazee Katz – Women Helping Women, Southwest Ohio

POLL: ROLES AND SETTINGS

- Law Enforcement
- Prosecution
- Advocate in Law Enforcement setting
- Advocate in Prosecution setting
- Advocate in Advocacy setting (shelter, rape crisis center, DV organization, etc.)
- Children's Services Worker
- Others

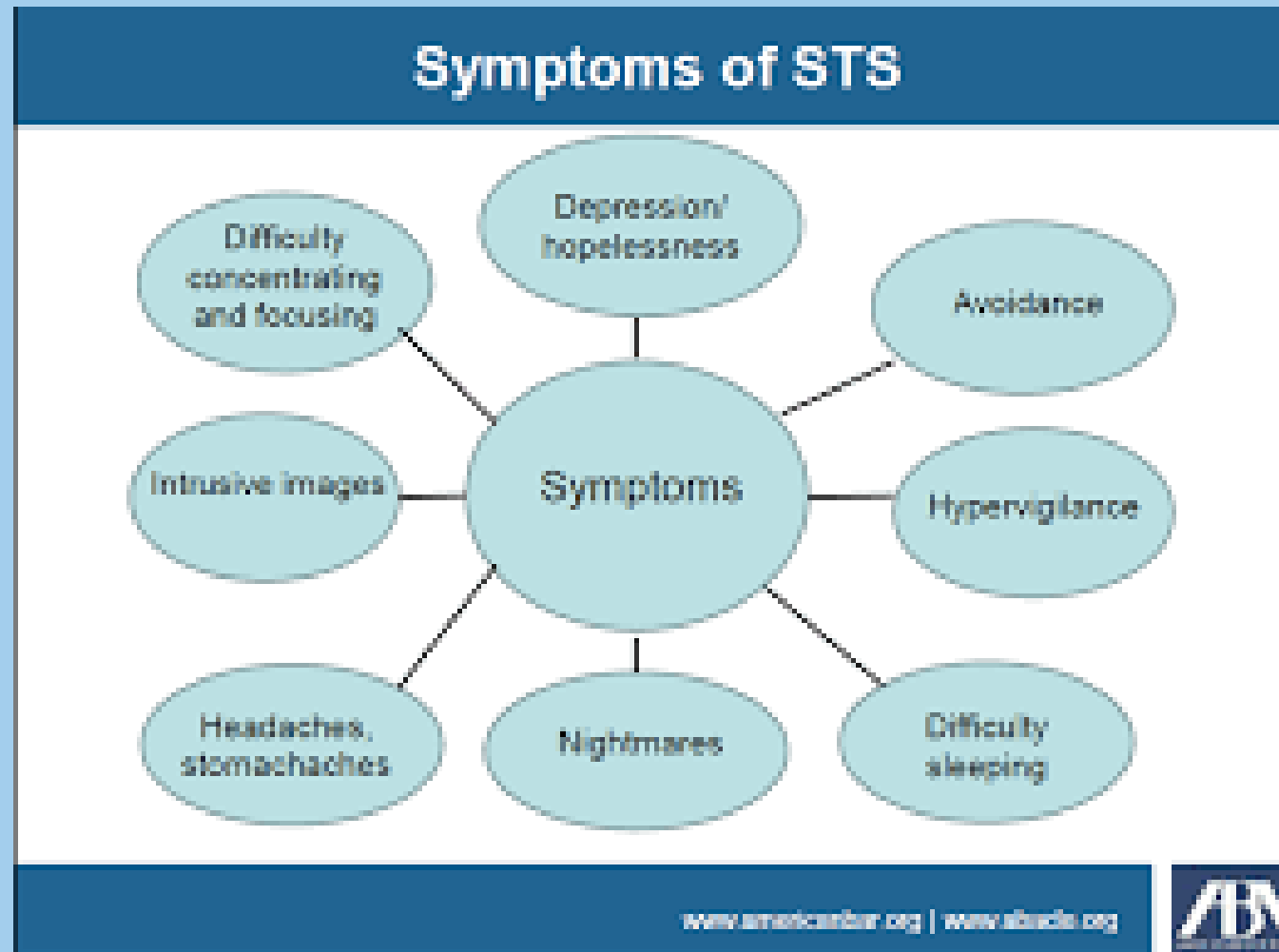
VICARIOUS TRAUMA: WORKING WITH VICTIMS OF CRIME

- US Office for Victims of Crime
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHewhs_4YMM

WHAT IS VICARIOUS TRAUMA (VT)?

- AKA Secondary Traumatic Stress or Secondary Victimization
- Operational definitions:
 - Vicarious trauma is an occupational challenge for people working and volunteering in the fields of victim services, law enforcement, emergency medical services, fire services, and other allied professions, due to their continuous exposure to victims of trauma and violence. This work-related trauma exposure can occur from such experiences as listening to individual clients recount their victimization; looking at videos of exploited children; reviewing case files; hearing about or responding to the aftermath of violence and other traumatic events day after day; and responding to mass violence incidents that have resulted in numerous injuries and deaths. *[DOJ Office for Victims of Crime]*
 - Vicarious trauma is a state of tension and preoccupation of the stories/trauma experiences described by clients. *[American Counseling Association]*
- Signs (what others can see in you) and Symptoms (what YOU experience)

WHAT IS VICARIOUS TRAUMA (VT)?



COMPASSION FATIGUE (CF)

- Operational definitions:
 - indifference to charitable appeals on behalf of those who are suffering, experienced as a result of the frequency or number of such appeals [Google Dictionary]
 - apathy or indifference toward the suffering of others as the result of overexposure to tragic news stories and images and the subsequent appeals for assistance [Merriam Webster]
 - medical : the physical and mental exhaustion and emotional withdrawal experienced by those who care for sick or traumatized people over an extended period of time [Merriam Webster]
 - **Compassion fatigue** is a combination of physical, emotional, and spiritual depletion associated with caring for others who are in significant emotional pain and physical distress. [DOJ Office for Victims of Crime]
- What does this look like? What has this looked like for you?
- Different from Vicarious Trauma

COMPASSION FATIGUE (CF)



LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTION SETTINGS

- How vicarious trauma is handled in these settings?
- What is common in these settings (i.e. ignore it? Don't talk about it? Made fun of?)
- What is unique to these settings?
- What are experiences like for people of minority identities and/or roles in these settings? Women, BIPOC, advocates, etc.?

Please 'chat' in your responses!

ASSESSING FOR VT AND CF: PRO-QOL

Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)

*Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue
(ProQOL) Version 5 (2009)*

When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you [help] can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the last 30 days.

1=Never

2=Rarely

3=Sometimes

4=Often

5=Very Often

VICARIOUS TRAUMA EVALUATION

1=Never

2=Rarely

3=Sometimes

4=Often

5=Very Often

- _____ 1. I am happy.
- _____ 2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I *[help]*.
- _____ 3. I get satisfaction from being able to *[help]* people.
- _____ 4. I feel connected to others.
- _____ 5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
- _____ 6. I feel invigorated after working with those I *[help]*.
- _____ 7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I *[help]*.
- _____ 9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I *[help]*.
- _____ 10. I feel trapped by my job as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 11. Because of my *[helping]*, I have felt "on edge" about various things.
- _____ 12. I like my work as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I *[help]*.
- _____ 14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have *[helped]*.
- _____ 15. I have beliefs that sustain me.

VICARIOUS TRAUMA EVALUATION

1=Never

2=Rarely

3=Sometimes

4=Often

5=Very Often

- _____ 16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with *[helping]* techniques and protocols.
- _____ 17. I am the person I always wanted to be.
- _____ 18. My work makes me feel satisfied.
- _____ 19. I feel worn out because of my work as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I *[help]* and how I could help them.
- _____ 21. I feel overwhelmed because my case *[work]* load seems endless.
- _____ 22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.
- _____ 23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I *[help]*.
- _____ 24. I am proud of what I can do to *[help]*.
- _____ 25. As a result of my *[helping]*, I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.
- _____ 26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.
- _____ 27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.
- _____ 29. I am a very caring person.
- _____ 30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.

SCORING! COMPASSION SATISFACTION

WHAT IS MY SCORE AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

In this section, you will score your test so you understand the interpretation for you. To find your score on **each section**, total the questions listed on the left and then find your score in the table on the right of the section.

Compassion Satisfaction Scale

Copy your rating on each of these questions on to this table and add them up. When you have added them up you can find your score on the table to the right.

3. _____
6. _____
12. _____
16. _____
18. _____
20. _____
22. _____
24. _____
27. _____
30. _____

Total: _____

The sum of my Compassion Satisfaction questions is	And my Compassion Satisfaction level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

- *Score yourself!*
- *Share your results!*
- *What do you think?*

SCORING! BURNOUT

WHAT IS MY SCORE AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

In this section, you will score your test so you understand the interpretation for you. To find your score on **each section**, total the questions listed on the left and then find your score in the table on the right of the section.

Burnout Scale

On the burnout scale you will need to take an extra step. Starred items are "reverse scored." If you scored the item 1, write a 5 beside it. The reason we ask you to reverse the scores is because scientifically the measure works better when these questions are asked in a positive way though they can tell us more about their negative form. For example, question 1. "I am happy" tells us more about

You Wrote	Change to
	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1

the effects of helping when you are *not* happy so you reverse the score

- *1. ____ = ____
- *4. ____ = ____
- 8. ____
- 10. ____
- *15. ____ = ____
- *17. ____ = ____
- 19. ____
- 21. ____
- 26. ____
- *29. ____ = ____

Total: ____

The sum of my Burnout Questions is	And my Burnout level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

- *Score yourself!*
- *Watch out for the 'reverse scoring'!*
- *Share your results!*
- *What do you think?*

SCORING! VICARIOUS (SECONDARY) TRAUMA

WHAT IS MY SCORE AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

In this section, you will score your test so you understand the interpretation for you. To find your score on **each section**, total the questions listed on the left and then find your score in the table on the right of the section.

Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale

Just like you did on Compassion Satisfaction, copy your rating on each of these questions on to this table and add them up. When you have added then up you can find your score on the table to the right.

2. ____
5. ____
7. ____
9. ____
11. ____
13. ____
14. ____
23. ____
25. ____
28. ____

Total: ____

The sum of my Secondary Trauma questions is	And my Secondary Traumatic Stress level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

- *Score yourself!*
- *Share your results!*
- *What do you think?*

PRO-QOL PROCESSING

- What do you think of your scores? Where are you? Low, moderate, high?
- Evaluate where you are and where you want to be
- Make decisions you need to make because of this – changes in day to day work life, vacation, schedule change, etc.

NOW WHAT DO WE DO? THE CAR MAINTENANCE ANALOGY



- Routine maintenance
- Scheduled, intentional care
- What happens if you don't get oil changes?
- What happens if you don't gas-up?
- How difficult is it to 'look under the hood'? Any barriers?

NOW WHAT DO WE DO? 'SELF' STRATEGIES

- Continued Self-assessment
- Build networks
- Schedule 'manage your schedule or it will manage you'
 - Prepare yourself how you need to – work to your style
- Be intentional about scheduling yourself time out
- Build your staff / team

NOW WHAT DO WE DO? AGENCY / SETTING STRATEGIES

- Office of Justice Programs – Vicarious Trauma Toolkit
- Supervision
 - Create a safe space for addressing vicarious trauma
 - Manage workload and expectations
 - Identify and address warning signs (the ‘check engine’ light is on!)
 - Support supervisors
- Peer Support
 - Peer-to-peer support
 - Peer supervision
- Human Resources
 - Management and supervision
 - Hiring policies and practices
 - Employee health and wellness
 - Evaluation
 - Variation of job responsibilities
 - Employee empowerment and work environment
 - Training and professional development

NOW WHAT DO WE DO? AGENCY / SETTING STRATEGIES

- Office of Justice Programs – Vicarious Trauma Toolkit
 - <https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/vtt/introduction>
- Assess Organizational Culture
 - VT – Organizational Readiness Guide
- Determine Priorities and Develop an Action Plan
- Others?

NOW WHAT DO WE DO? AGENCY / SETTING STRATEGIES

- Build networks – SARTs are great resources!
- Build your staff / team capacity to debrief in healthy ways (happy hours are good, but not on all days that end in y! 😊)

RESOURCES

- Compassion Fatigue Self-Test (CFST)
- Impact of Event Scale (IES)
- ProQOL
- Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale
- Self-Care Assessment Scale
- Traumatic Stress Institute Belief Scale (TSI)

THANK YOU!

- Final questions?
- Take care of you!

