Workforce Resilience

Establishing a Culture of Safety and Support for Child Welfare Professionals

- Awareness around development of Cumulative Stress & Burn Out
- How to get good at stress
- The role of the Workforce Resilience Program in shifting culture toward safety and support
What Would Be Helpful To You?

Select a stressful event from your life: a personal loss, a difficult case, a challenging dynamic in the workplace.

1. What helped you?
2. What didn’t help?
3. What would you recommend to someone trying to provide support, direction, and help?
Prefrontal Cortex (PFC)
Rational brain, understanding the world, manage ourselves & our time, how to get what we want, competence, courage

Limbic System
Seeks comfort and pleasure, emotions, social brain, satisfying hunger/tiredness, cravings/urges, identifying threats, avoiding pain, unconscious

Brainstem
Balance of body’s chemistry/physiology, hearts/lungs, endocrine/immune function, comfort in our own skin

Uram, 2016
**Secondary Traumatic Stress:**
The emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the firsthand trauma experiences of another (The National Child Traumatic Stress Network [NCTSN], 2011)

**Compassion Satisfaction:**
Positive aspects of working as a helper (Professional Quality of Life [ProQOL], 2017)

**Burn out:**
Prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job which consists of three components: Exhaustion, depersonalization (defined as: disengagement or detachment from the world around you) and diminished feelings of self-efficacy in the workplace (Meichenbaum, n.d. p.3)

**Sanctuary Trauma:**
A person reaches out to someone from whom they expect to find solace but instead receives an indifferent, non-supportive, and/or abusive response (Lewis, 2018)

**Vicarious Trauma:**
The cumulative transformation in the inner experience of the therapist that comes about as a result of empathetic engagement with the client’s traumatic material (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995)

**Cumulative Stress:**
Stress that builds over time, upon previous incidents of unresolved stress and may reduce one’s ability to be resilient and productive (Professional Quality of Life [ProQOL], 2017)
Big T versus Little t

Big Trauma (Big T)
Little Trauma (Little t)
How does this relate to our work?
“The breath is the connection between the mind and the body.” – Thich Nhat Hahn
Getting Good at Stress

- Our stories about stress:
  - Why am I so stressed about this little thing?
  - This shouldn’t be bothering me so much
  - I am weak for feeling this way
  - I am not good at my job if I feel a high degree of stress
  - I should be better at dealing with this type of thing by now
  - Can you think of others?

- These narratives can be powerful
  - They create shame
  - Shame lends to isolation
  - We come to believe we are the only one struggling
“Trying to create a psychological shield can interfere with the ability to find purpose and meaning.”

McGonigal, 2015, p.76.
Getting Good at Stress

Stress is a response to being involved in something you care about.
Positive biological states stimulated by stress:

- Increased empathy, connection, and trust
- Increased motivation, dampened fear
- Enhanced perception, intuition, self-control

Talking to, and working with others, activates these biological functions.

(Lewis, 2018)

Stress is not something to be ashamed of; reaching out to discuss your stressful circumstance can expedite your recovery.
We believe that, within our shared experiences lies the strength, wisdom, and resilience of our workforce.
Peer Support Program

Who Are We?
- We are a group of 38 DCS Field Employees
- Our team has representatives in all around the state
- We have representation in several different job titles
- We serve on the Workforce Resilience Team on a voluntary basis
- We received specialized training in trauma exposure, stress management and peer support
Peer Support Program

What We Do

• Provide a confidential and timely resource to debrief or offload with a peer who does the job and can uniquely appreciate the impact of the work and the effect it can have on personal and professional lives.

• We do this by:
  • Offering a non judgement space
  • Not trying to “fix it”
  • Offering company
  • Expressing compassion
  • Validating your experience
  • Normalizing your reactions
  • Sharing coping strategies

• We can provide resources to other avenues where employees can receive support.
Peer Support Program

Confidentiality

- Without assurance of confidentiality, this program will not be helpful
- Workforce Resilience Team members cannot share what is discussed during a Peer Support intervention
  - They cannot confirm that an intervention occurred
  - No notes or records will be kept to document peer support responses
- There are only a few circumstances in which team members may have to break confidentiality
  - They will do this with the utmost discretion

38-1111. Critical incident stress management team member; privilege; exceptions; definitions
A. Except as provided in subsection B, a critical incident stress management team member who, in the course of the member’s response to a critical incident at the request of the member or member’s agency, acquires information secretly and in confidence from a designated person shall not be compelled to disclose that information in a legal proceeding, trial or investigation before any agency of this state or a political subdivision of this state.
B. Subsection A does not apply if:
1. The communication or advice indicates clear and present danger to the designated person who received crisis response services or to other persons.
2. The designated person who received crisis response services gives express consent to the testimony.
3. The communication or advice is made during the course of a criminal investigation.
4. The designated person who received crisis response services voluntarily testifies, in which case the critical incident stress management team member may be compelled to testify on the same subject.
5. A breach of department policy exists and that breach amounts to a violation of laws that are normally enforced by law enforcement.
C. For the purposes of this section:
1. "Crisis response services" means consultation, risk assessment, referral and onsite crisis intervention services provided by a critical incident stress management team to a designated person.
2. "Critical incident stress management team member" means an individual who has completed training through a recognized organization that delivers critical incident stress management training and who is part of a law enforcement, probation, firefighter or emergency medical provider crisis response team.
3. "Department" means the branch of government in which a designated person is employed.
4. "Designated person" means an emergency medical provider, firefighter or law enforcement officer.
5. "Emergency medical provider" means municipal or state emergency medical services personnel.
6. "Firefighter" means a municipal or state firefighter.
7. "Law enforcement officer" means:
   (a) An individual who is certified by the Arizona peace officer standards and training board, other than a person employed by a multi county water conservation district.
   (b) A detention officer or correction officer, other than a probationary employee, who is employed by this state or a political subdivision of this state.
Being able to fully reflect on the profound privilege of being with a person in the time of suffering gives our work meaning and purpose, and ultimately, reduces burnout.
“Suffering ceases to be suffering at the moment it finds meaning.”
– Viktor Frankl
QUESTIONS?

Jenny Bilskie-Smith
Jenny.Bilskie@azdcs.gov
602-255-2518 (office)
602-380-1236 (cell)
References


http://digitalcommons.library.tmc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1139&context=jfs


Professional Quality of Life Elements Theory and Measurement. (2017). Retrieved from: 
http://www.proqol.org/


http://www.childtraumaacademy.com/cost_of_caring/lesson01/assignment01.html
