



Beyond Surviving to Thriving: Compassion Fatigue In Tribal Communities

Gayle Thom - FBI, SDHP Retired

OVC Grantee Regional Training
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Why me?



Oglala Sioux Tribe
Police Officer




- FBI: IC VS, ERT, RDT
- Ground Zero, Hurricane Katrina
- Red Lake Nation School Shooting
- Criminal Intelligence, Meth Enforcement
- Sturgis Motorcycle Rallies
- Mexican Border, Canada, Interpol
- 10 years in Tribal Communities
- Training & Technical Assistance
- SDHP CAP-Crash Assistance Program

10-2

Learning Objectives

1. Define and describe compassion fatigue
2. Identify negative and positive effects of doing trauma-related work
3. Describe the five core elements of resilience
4. Develop and demonstrate personal strategies to strengthen your resilience

Trigger Warning:

Compassion Fatigue / Resiliency can be triggering topics. There may be content, discussion and images which can be trauma-inducing and may inspire intrusive thoughts for some.

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

~ Rachel Naomi Remen,
Kitchen Table Wisdom

Discussion Questions

In small groups, please discuss the following:

1. What does the term “compassion fatigue” mean to you? Do you call it by any other names?
2. Have you ever experienced symptoms of compassion fatigue or “burnout”? What were your symptoms?
3. Why is compassion fatigue common in our work?

What’s In A Name?

Impact of Trauma Work

Compassion Fatigue Can Be:

- ❖ Secondary stress
- ❖ Burnout
- ❖ Compassion fatigue
- ❖ Vicarious traumatization
- ❖ Cumulative stress
- ❖ Countertransference
- ❖ Emotional contagion
- ❖ Inability to bounce back after stressful incident

Resilience

- ❖ One's ability to return to healthy functioning after being in a stressful situation
- ❖ The power to cope with adversity and adapt to challenges or change

Bounce-back factor

How many can your team list?

Negative Personal Effects of Working in the Trauma Field

- ❖ ?
- ❖ ?
- ❖ ?
- ❖ ?
- ❖ ?

Team Quiz:
SIGNS TRAUMATIC STRESS IS TAKING IT'S TOLL ON AN INDIVIDUAL

Negative Personal Effects of Working in the Trauma Field

❖ Numbing defenses	❖ Flashbacks
❖ Rage	❖ Irritability
❖ Shame	❖ Anxiety
❖ Horror	❖ Alienation
❖ Grief	❖ Loss of control
❖ Disturbed sleep	❖ Suicidal thoughts
❖ Anger	❖ Physical distress
❖ Fear	❖ Low self-esteem
❖ Nightmares	❖ Disturbing images

These same factors are also debilitating for many of our family relationships and for our allied partner programs.

Positive Aspects of Working in the Victim Service Field

Many victim service providers are strengthened and energized by the work that they do *when trauma responses are acknowledged and processed.*



SIGNS STRESS IS TAKING ITS TOLL:

- Difficulty communicating thoughts, remembering instructions, maintaining balance, making decisions, and/or concentrating
- Uncharacteristically argumentative or angry
- Limited attention span
- Unnecessary risk-taking
- Tremors/headaches/nausea
- Tunnel vision/muffled hearing
- Cold or flu-like symptoms
- Disorientation or confusion
- Loss of objectivity
- Easily frustrated
- Unable to engage in problem-solving
- Increased use of drugs/alcohol
- Unusual clumsiness

Your individual score?

Most efforts are focused AFTER

- ❖ AFTER a PTSD diagnosis
- or
- ❖ AFTER a critical incident

Let your program be on the forefront of developing **RESILIENCY** in our Victim Assistance Workers and first responders **BEFORE** we reach that point!

Nowhere in our job description does it say, "Give up the potential for living a joyful, meaningful and satisfying life, both at home and work."

Yet, our work can be so stressful that, if we don't learn how to stay proactive about our wellness...

- ❖ We'll start to break down
- ❖ We'll stop caring about our chosen career
- ❖ We might even actively hate it

Five Core Elements of Resilience

- ❖ Self-knowledge and insight
- ❖ Sense of hope
- ❖ Healthy coping
- ❖ Strong relationships
- ❖ Personal perspective and meaning

Activity

1st- Quickly find your group, 1-5

1. Self-knowledge and insight	4. Strong relationships
2. Sense of hope	5. Personal perspective and meaning
3. Healthy coping	

2nd- Discuss in groups:

- ❖ What does the element mean to you?
- ❖ How has it affected you? Others?
- ❖ How have you used it? Examples?

Resilience Core Element 1: Self-Knowledge and Insight

- ❖ Knowing who you are
- ❖ Having a clear sense of what you believe and how you feel
- ❖ Identifying your strengths and weaknesses

Components of Self-Knowledge and Insight

- ❖ Positive self-esteem
- ❖ Strong inner locus of control
- ❖ Independence

Complete Assessment

Strategies To Develop Self-Knowledge and Insight

- ❖ Explore motivation for working with victims of crime
- ❖ Identify own strengths and challenges
- ❖ Identify themes associated with discomfort
- ❖ Clarify goals, mission, and boundaries of organization
- ❖ Know your code of ethics
- ❖ Recognize limits of control
- ❖ Get adequate training
- ❖ Individualize services to each victim

What is the best and highest use of your time?
 No one has any more or less of it:
 24 hours in a day,
 1,440 minutes, 86,400 seconds.

Why do YOU do the work you do?

Have you considered how you really want to leave your mark on humanity?



Reasons we are drawn to become one who “serves and/or protects” victims may be as varied as the many different disciplines critical to constructive case outcomes.

Regardless of our role, the secondary trauma of seeing and hearing the many details when working victims’ cases can have a disturbing effect on us as professionals and yes, on our families as well.



**Resilience Core Element 2:
Sense of Hope**

- ❖ Believe that situations can get better
- ❖ Believe that future will be better than the present or past
- ❖ Recognize difficulty of the experiences of the victims you serve, yet maintain a positive view of the challenges of life

She / He who Laughs, LASTS!



Components of Sense of Hope

- ❖ **Optimism: Capacity to envision a solution**
- ❖ **Sense of humor and ability to have fun**

Complete Assessment



Strategies To Develop Sense of Hope

- ❖ Develop opportunities to succeed.
- ❖ Practice gratitude.
- ❖ Change or expand your job description.
- ❖ Give praise.
- ❖ Diversify client types.
- ❖ Seek advanced professional development
- ❖ Decorate your office.
- ❖ Find appropriate ways to have fun.

“Laughter is the best medicine”




**2nd Key to Resilience:
Sense of Hope**

Maintaining an attitude of hope and optimism.

How do we keep our attitudes fresh from becoming burned out?

🎉 prizes 🎉



2nd Key to Resilience



World renowned researcher, Dr. Barbara Frederickson discovered that experiencing positive emotions in a 3-to-1 ratio with negative ones leads people to a tipping point beyond which they naturally become more resilient to adversity. With the 3-to-1 ratio, we can:

- see new possibilities,
- bounce back from setbacks,
- connect with others, and
- become the best version of ourselves.

What's your ratio?

80% of Americans fall short of the ideal 3-to-1 positivity ratio. Take Dr. Fredrickson's 2-minute on-line quiz and see how you score

So.... Just how much does your happiness at work affect your life, family, health, and self-image?

Quality Time -

- ❖ Relationship Hierarchy
- ❖ Continue Date-nights
- ❖ Communication important to us females: (Just listen, don't have to 'fix')
- ❖ Lines of communication open – all family members
- ❖ Keeping in touch (texting?)

What are other ways to: Reduce Negative Impact Of Stress On Our Families

Resilience Core Element 3: Healthy Coping

- ❖ Balance the negative aspects of work with positive activities
- ❖ Pay attention to physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual needs and doing something about them
- ❖ Building on skills and abilities, and planning for and addressing negative feelings proactively

Components of Healthy Coping

- ❖ Utilization of skills and abilities
- ❖ Creativity
- ❖ Effective planning
- ❖ Addressing negativity proactively

Complete Assessment

Strategies to Develop Healthy Coping

- ❖ Learn to identify your physical stress reactions
- ❖ Balance your life
- ❖ Get adequate sleep. Myth: It's all about QUANTITY
Truth: It IS about QUALITY
- ❖ Change the pace
- ❖ Develop calming and modulation techniques
- ❖ Assess safety in your work environment.
- ❖ Use regular supervision
- ❖ Use technology and resources wisely

What's in YOUR hobby chest?



What makes YOU smile?



Are HOBBIES your key to an balancing negative aspects of your work?

To keep a lamp burning, we have to keep putting oil in it.
-Mother Teresa

Physical Aspects of Healthy Coping

<p><u>Cognitive Behavioral Techniques</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Progressive Muscle Relaxation > Controlled Breathing > Visualization > Identifying Enjoyable Activities 	<p><u>Traditional Techniques</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Sweat lodge > Drumming > Meditation > Singing/Chanting > Prayer > Smudging > Active Outdoor games > Healing Ceremonies
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Each Culture Is Rich With Many Choices

Resilience Core Element 4: Strong Relationships

- ❖ Belonging is a basic human need
- ❖ Positive connections with others
- ❖ Personal networks of support



Components of Strong Relationships

- ❖ Attachments to others
- ❖ Seeking and giving support

Complete Assessment

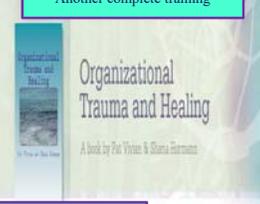
Strategies To Develop Strong Relationships

- ❖ Enhance communication skills
- ❖ Learn boundaries of confidentiality
- ❖ Collaborate
- ❖ Discuss cases
- ❖ Seek inclusiveness and diversity
- ❖ Foster a team approach
- ❖ Address conflict resolution proactively
- ❖ Strive to be genuine, empathetic, and warm

Agree? Disagree? Organizational Trauma

Organizations that help traumatized clients can become traumatized themselves.

While we'll talk a bit... Another complete training



Google Classroom: The Organizational Self-Care Checklist

4th Key to Resilience: Strong Relationships

1. We often emphasize the importance of building resiliency in crime victims. However, we sometimes overlook the need to develop resiliency in ourselves.
2. If we are unable to cope with the difficult situations inherent in our work, we are susceptible to compassion fatigue or burnout. To go beyond surviving, then, we providers must learn how to build our own individual resiliency.
3. But it is also the ethical responsibility of the organization to create an environment that supports and encourages this critical strength.

Flex schedules? Debriefs? On-site Yoga?
 What else? Ideas?

Keys to Strong Workplace Relationships: RESILIENCE

Part of taking care of ourselves is understanding which aspects of our life nurture or deplete us - including our workplace dynamics, policies, and physical environment. Is your work environment healthy and functional? Trauma informed? Do you feel supported and appreciated on a daily basis? If not consider these recommendations.

Celebrate Wins: When a victim has an emotional or behavioral breakthrough, it's a party.

Don't forget to celebrate your own accomplishments!

Keys to Strong Workplace Relationships: RESILIENCE

Celebrate Wins:

- Write down 3 good things you do every week with the victims you work with. Keeping a list will help you push through the hard times and remember the good.
- Write down 2 things you are grateful for every day. Appreciate both the little and big things that add up to more satisfaction in life.
- Compliment colleagues or support network personally or professionally every week.
- Recognize the small changes you've made by celebrating external and internal benchmarks.

Keys to Strong Workplace Relationships: RESILIENCE

Do you foster strong relationships within the workplace?

It takes how many positives to balance out 1 negative in building/maintaining relationships!

Speaking of Communication.... Just how much does it affect your life, family, health, and self-image?

Resilience Core Element #4: Strong Relationships

Relationships over Technology

- ❖ **No Screen Time 1 hour Before Bed**
- ❖ **No Technology Devices for 3 months**
ss **One Million Dollars** ss

Resilience Core Element 5: Personal Perspective and Meaning

- ❖ Personal points of view - weighing the costs, losses, and benefits associated with victim services work
- ❖ Individual morality, integrity, spirituality
- ❖ Coherent meaning for life

Components of Personal Perspective and Meaning

- ❖ Morality and integrity
- ❖ Spirituality
- ❖ Coherent life meaning



Complete Assessment

Strategies To Develop Personal Perspective and Meaning

- ❖ Assess your personal values.
- ❖ Integrate new understanding in your work.
- ❖ Assess your perspective of suffering.
- ❖ Question old beliefs.
- ❖ Foster altruism.
- ❖ Engage in social activism.
- ❖ Include values in assessment of victims' strengths.
- ❖ Discard activities that are not coherent with values.

Dr. Dee BigFoot:

There is the eternal belief among Indigenous peoples that each walk a sacred path occupied by both faith & reasoning.

That there is a purpose ...

That there is order & understanding... why we are here & where we are going

We also realize that we do not walk this path alone; we have many relatives that walk with us.

Families are an essential feature of this sacred path.

#1 Survival Tool ???? Survivors Club.org



- Naval Survival Expert:
Group Cohesion
- Miners: **Facing brutal facts with realistic optimism**
- **Ability to agree to disagree & still come together**

PERSONAL FAITH/
BELIEF SYSTEM/
SPIRITUALITY

Mental

SPIRITUAL



Emotional

Physical

Means something unique to each of us:

Correlation between resilience and work that persons find meaningful

“In the best circumstances, the work becomes an extension of what you naturally want to do. That way you are the same person at home, at work, and in the community. All is integrated and coherent.”

~ Thottam 2005

“What a person needs to lead in helping professions is consistent behavior that earns recognition from others. We must be looked to not only for correct information but for our passion and reputation for following through.”

~ Sharon English, veteran victim service provider

Think through these...

...and see what YOU can do to help yourself and others to not only *SURVIVE*, but to *THRIVE!*

- ❖ Self-knowledge and Insight
 - ❖ Sense of Hope
 - ❖ Healthy Coping
 - ❖ Strong Relationships
- ❖ Personal Perspective and Meaning

With thoughtful self-assessment you may realize that the way you are doing things or expressing yourself no longer fits with your current values.

- ❖ Work with your supervisor/program to change aspects of your work
- ❖ Look for employment somewhere else



How you see your future is much more important than what has happened in the past.
Zig Ziglar

IMPORTANT

Positive Aspects of Working in the Victim Service Field

Many victim service providers are strengthened and energized by the work that they do when trauma responses are acknowledged and processed.



**Compassion SATISFACTION is INCREASED,
Compassion Fatigue is decreased!**

“I went to work every day, love my job and couldn’t believe that they paid me for it. It’s the kind of work that touches your soul.”
~ Kim Spoonhower – OVS Retired

1. Take a moment: W H Y do you do this work?

2. Personal Resilience Development Plan

Personal Resilience Development Plan

Resilience Challenge Column: Write down those items in which you scored yourself as a “1” or “2” on the Resilience Assessment and would like to improve your resilience.

Strategy Column: Using Worksheet 3, Resilience Strategies, identify a strategy you will use to strengthen your resilience in these areas.

Action Plan Column: Based on the strategy you have identified, write down action steps you will take to implement the strategy.

Resilience Challenge	Strategy	Action Plan

Acknowledge & Process trauma responses

Additional Handouts Provided on GOOGLE CLASSROOM

- Common Signs & Symbols of a Stress Reaction
- Stress Relief Tips and Thoughts
- Organizational Self-Care Checklist
- Developing Resiliency: Books, Websites, Future Reading

OVC WEBSITE:

The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit contains a wide variety of tools for victim services, emergency medical services, fire services, and law enforcement who experience work-related trauma due to repeated exposure to victims of trauma and violence. Learn more about specific tools that have been gathered and vetted for usefulness and relevance for the fields below:

[Victim services](#)

[Emergency medical services](#)

[Fire services](#)

[Law enforcement](#)

- OVC Training Available - Building Resiliency in Individuals and Organizations

This training consists of two Webinars held 2 weeks apart, short independent study assignments, followed by a 1-day face-to-face training, concluding with a final Webinar held several weeks following the face-to-face training.

https://www.ovcttae.gov/views/TrainingMaterials/dspBldgResiliencyChildAbuseOrgs.cfm

Reflection

What is one change *you* will make to protect yourself against compassion fatigue?

BEYOND SURVIVING TO THRIVING:

Closing

- ❖ Questions?
- ❖ Comments?



Live a Rich Professional and Personal Life!

Contact Information



Gayle Thom - SDHP, FBI Retired

PO Box 8012

Rapid City, SD 57709

thomhome@hills.net

605.209.0860

There are no experts...
Only people who have tried to do their best
And are willing to share what they have learned!