

# CareForum 2022

The WellSky® Conference

## **Beyond gratitude alone: Building resilience to reignite hope & reimagine healthcare** ©2015

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## Today's speaker



**Carla Cheatham, MA, MDiv, PhD, TRT**

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# Faculty Disclosure

**Carla Cheatham, MA, MDiv, PhD, TRT**

No financial or other relationships to disclose

*Nothing could have prepared us for the events of the past few years or the current state of the healthcare industry. Compassion fatigue, burnout, and recovery from professional and personal trauma are now combined with staffing shortages and struggles to reimagine professional caregiving in a way that makes both moral and financial sense. This presentation will take a fresh look at resilience, emotional intelligence, and post-traumatic growth, challenging participants to transform themselves in order to revolutionize healthcare.*

# Objectives

- 1) Review burnout, compassion fatigue, moral distress, moral injury, and primary and secondary/vicarious trauma
- 2) Explore what the fields of resilience, emotional intelligence, and post-traumatic growth can teach us about thriving through potentially traumatic events
- 3) Develop a plan of care for oneself and one's team to create an opportunity for transformation of our practices and profession
- 4) Apply practical techniques of mindfulness as a means of self-care and narrative-management in the face of systems needing repair

*And once the storm is over, you won't remember  
how you made it through, how you managed to survive.  
You won't even be sure whether the storm is really over.*

*But one thing is certain.*

*When you come out of the storm,  
you won't be the same person who walked in.*

*That's what the storm's all about.*

*~ Haruki Murakami*

# Definitions

A lit matchstick is shown against a dark background. The matchstick is positioned vertically on the right side of the frame. The tip of the matchstick is lit, with a bright orange and yellow flame. A large, billowing cloud of white smoke rises from the matchstick, filling the upper and middle portions of the frame. The smoke has a wispy, ethereal quality. The overall scene is dramatic and evocative, symbolizing burnout or stress.

## Burnout:

work overload

lack of community

lack of control\*

lack of fairness

lack of reward

value conflict

(Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001)

## Compassion Fatigue:

More care going out than coming in; can be acute or chronic

# Current Reality

Uncertainty, confusion, fear

Triggers—confinement, helplessness, loneliness

Grief—primary and secondary losses

Ambiguous grief

Heroes to hated (or martyrs)

Crisis Fatigue/Adrenal Fatigue

Other...?

Preparing for new normal



# Definitions



Moral Distress: I know what to do but am constrained from doing it

Moral Injury: I witnessed or engaged in behavior against moral norms

Trauma: “An event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being”

SAMHSA <https://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/trauma>

Vicarious/secondary trauma: Others’ trauma may impact us

# Risks

## **Individual characteristics —**

trauma hx, boundaries, coping strategies, self-expectations, community, etc.

## **Organizational characteristics —**

work environment, organizational structure, policies, etc.

Work overload; lack of control\*, reward, community, fairness; value conflict  
*(Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001)*

# Symptoms

Anger / Blame

Anhedonia / Apathy

Chronic lateness

Cynicism

Depression

Diminished sense of accomplishment

Displaced anger (snark)

Exhaustion

Existential struggles

Gastrointestinal complaints

Headaches

High expectations

Hopelessness

Inefficacy

Intrusive thoughts

Irritability & frustration

Low self-esteem

Nightmares

Rumination

Sleep disturbance

Workaholism



**DISAPPOINTMENT**

disillusionment

failure

Disillusionment

disenchantment

defeat  
anger

collapse

frustration

shower

dampers

disappointment

shock



**What's wrong with me?!**

“Frame adversity as a challenge, and you become more flexible and able to deal with it, move on, learn from it, and grow. Focus on it, frame it as a threat, and a potentially traumatic event becomes an enduring problem; you become more inflexible, and more likely to be negatively affected.”

(Bonanno, 2016 in The New Yorker)

# Protective Factors

## Resilience

Perceptions & Meaning-Making — Learned Optimism/Helplessness

Internalized Locus of Control — What CAN we do

Connection & Community — Social contact theory

Adaptability, Flexibility, Coping — Requires creativity and safety

Self-Care (including boundaries) — Greatest professional competence

Gratitude & Hope — Practices not feelings



# Emotional Intelligence

## Emotional Intelligence

Self awareness (**most important, AKA mindfulness**)

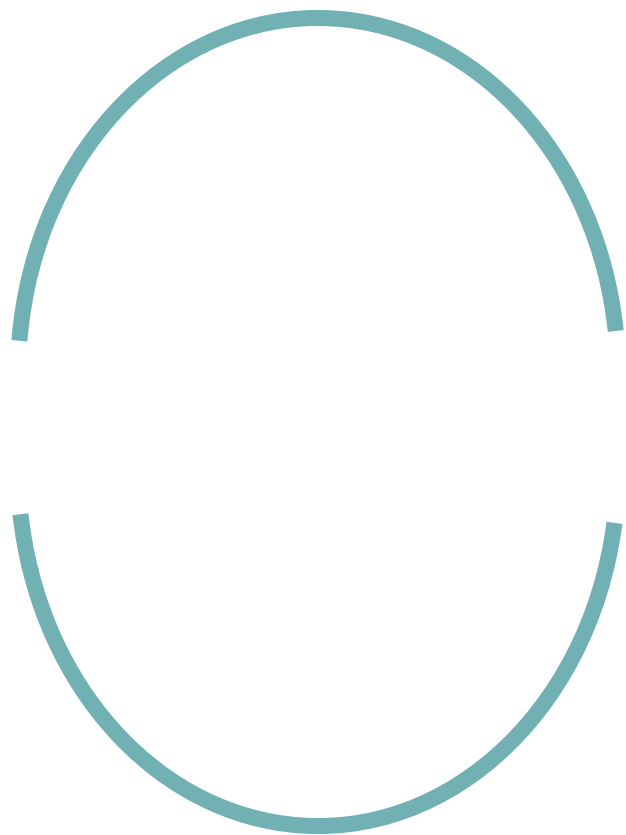
Managing disruptive emotions

Empathy—for self and others, perspective-taking

Handling relationships

**Mindfulness** — “Moment to moment *non-judgmental awareness*...paying attention on purpose in the present moment.” ~Jon Kabat-Zinn

Finish the  
circle



# What story are we telling?

## **Learned helplessness**

This will never really end. People don't care.  
Our system is broken. Our worst has been made evident  
and we'll never go back to normal.  
I cannot take care of the enormity of need around me  
and I don't have it in me to keep trying.

# What story are we telling?

## **Learned Optimism**

This is an opportunity for us to get clear about where and how things need to change, inside of us and in our systems. We have the chance to start over and do things even better than before. Where can I be part of creating a healthier way of caregiving by being healthier, myself? I am not alone in this, and together we can revolutionize our industry, transform service work, and stop killing ourselves while trying to save others. It's time, and we're worth it.



# Challenge to assumptive world

This isn't how things are supposed to be

People should care about one another

Leaders should protect us

No one should die alone

Autonomy and dignity should be honored

We should be able to care for all the needs around us

# Post-traumatic growth

Handbook of posttraumatic growth: Research and practice

(Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2014)

Tedeschi, R.G., Calhoun, L.G. (1996). The Posttraumatic Growth Inventory: Measuring the positive legacy of trauma. *J Trauma Stress* 9, 455–471.

“...how successful individuals, coping with the aftermath of trauma, are in reconstructing or strengthening their perceptions of self, others, and the meaning of events.”

New Possibilities

Relating to Others

Personal Strength

Spiritual Change

Appreciation of Life

# Post-traumatic growth

**Acknowledge and accept existential and moral threats**

*“I should be productive and provide”*

*“If people know they’re hurting others...”*

**Find meaning and purpose** (*for ourselves*)

**Re-story** (*reclaiming nightmares*)

**Access support** (*intra, inter, transcendent*)

## Resilience

Perceptions & Meaning-Making  
Internalized Locus of Control  
Connection & Community  
Adaptability, Flexibility, Coping  
Self-Care  
Gratitude & Hope

## Emotional Intelligence

### **Self-awareness**

Managing disruptive emotions  
Empathy  
Handling relationships

## Post-Traumatic Growth

Acknowledge and accept existential threats  
Find meaning and purpose  
Re-story  
Access support







**Get past seduction of the  
“Blame game”**

**“Everyone is responsible,  
and no one is to blame”**

**~Will Schutz**

**“What’s my part?”**

**Change what we can**

***Be hard on systems and  
gentle with people***

# Our best hope...

- 1) Mindful Awareness
- 2) Action
- 3) Support



I have choices.  
I may not see all of them right now &  
may not like any of them, but they're there.

Reminding myself of this keeps me open to  
seeing possibilities I otherwise might miss,  
leaving me hopelessly trapped by my story.

I'm powerless to change people & circumstances,  
but I'm not helpless to take action on my own behalf.  
I can set boundaries, ask for what I need, reach out  
for support from those who always have my back.

If I don't yet have those relationships, I can begin to  
cultivate them by befriending myself, first, then  
being the friend I want others to be to me.

I can trust that something greater than me—  
a deity, the universe, love, whatever—  
has a greater imagination than I do.

If I get still, get calm, and listen I'll eventually hear it.  
From this place of peace, connection, strength, trust,  
choice and hope I will be my best self,  
and I will be free.

*-Carla Cheatham*



CarlaCheatham.com  
#powerofpresence

# Selfishness

I will do for me at the expense of you

# Self-care

I will take care of me  
so I can bring my best self to you



**Okay, so I was wrong about you getting a hobby.  
We need to find you a new boyfriend.**

# Boundaries



Within ourselves as well as with others

Connect to client but not their outcome

Need vs. want

Self-expectations

Responsible for vs. to

Help vs. empower

Filled vs. fulfilled

Autonomy and dignity

Whose journey is it?

Paternalism in care

“our patients / client?”

Some things in life cannot be fixed.  
They can only be carried.

*~Megan Devine  
refugeingrief.com*

# Our Strength and Achilles Heel

Prevalence of trauma in the general population

History of trauma and dysfunction leads us to seek healing

Caring professionals, law enforcement

High-achieving, sensitive to others' feelings, responsible, heroes

In the extreme—great spidey-sense vs. toxicity

Twelve nurses...



# Mindful self-awareness IS self-care

Barriers to self-care

Time, energy, money...really?

Do not think we are worth it

Mindfully doing what we are already doing...

Breathing, eating, walking, handwashing, entering doorways (or virtual meetings), putting on and taking off our badge...ALL DAY LONG

# Changing what we can

Make space for “sacred moments” (Pargament, 2014)

Reconnect with “Compassion Satisfaction”

Help them find their “first love”

Alternative Centering:

- 1) Why did you first get into this field?
- 2) Why do you stay?



<https://terranceosborne.com/product/front-line/>

# Knowing our worth



## ABCs of Gratitude Moments of Silence

Nepo, Brown, Chodron, Remen, Beattie, Lamott, Angelou, Oriah Mountain Dreamer

Kristen Neff's Self-Compassion

<https://self-compassion.org/>

*“The challenge of our time is relearning how to concentrate. The past decade has seen an unparalleled assault on our capacity to fix our minds steadily on anything. To sit still and think, without succumbing to an anxious reach for a machine, has become almost impossible.”*

- Thibaut

# Healing healthcare

Threat vs. opportunity—New possibilities

Can't keep going this way—Re-story the nightmare

Whole-person (staff) care

We will be different on other side...but HOW?

The time to decide, to prepare, is now.

Let it begin with me—what am I modeling, where am I contributing for good or ill?

# Call to action

“You can have many great ideas in your head, but what makes the difference is the action. Without action upon an idea, there will be no manifestation, no results, and no reward”

(Ruiz, 1997)

# Plan of care

## Assessment

Mind

Body

Spirit

Behavior



# Plan of care

## Interventions

Mind

Body

Spirit

Behavior



# What can you change?

What can you change in your:  
stories?  
words?  
actions?  
mindful awareness?

What steps will you take in 24 hours?  
...7 days?  
...by next month?





# The Wholehearted Parenting Manifesto

by Brene Brown

Above all else, I want you to know that you are loved and lovable. You will learn this from my words and actions—the lessons on love are in how I treat you and how I treat myself.

I want you to engage with the world from a place of worthiness. You will learn that you are worthy of love, belonging, and joy every time you see me practice self-compassion and embrace my own imperfections.

We will practice courage in our family by showing up, letting ourselves be seen, and honoring vulnerability. We will share our stories of struggle and strength. There will always be room in our home for both.

We will teach you compassion by practicing compassion with ourselves first; then with each other. We will set and respect boundaries; we will honor hard work, hope, and perseverance. Rest and play will be family values, as well as family practices.

You will learn accountability and respect by watching me make mistakes and make amends, and by watching how I ask for what I need and talk about how I feel.

I want you to know joy, so together we will practice gratitude. I want you to feel joy, so together we will learn how to be vulnerable.

When uncertainty and scarcity visit, you will be able to draw from the spirit that is a part of our everyday life.

Together we will cry and face fear and grief. I will want to take away your pain, but instead I will sit with you and teach you how to feel it.

We will laugh and sing and dance and create. We will always have permission to be ourselves with each other. No matter what, you will always belong here.

As you begin your Wholehearted journey, the greatest gift that I can give to you is to live and love with my whole heart and to dare greatly.

I will not teach or love or show you anything perfectly, but I will let you see me, and I will always hold sacred the gift of seeing you.

Truly, deeply, seeing you.

<http://brenebrown.com/downloads-badges/>

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CONSULTING GROUP, LLC

*Emotional Intelligence for Professionals*

# Thank you for your presence

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