Care for Caregivers

Psychological First Aid and Prevention of Burnout

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Jordan

What are we going to discuss?

- What is stress and what is trauma?
- What does the traumatic experience mean?
- What are the psychological mechanisms arising during surviving and listening to trauma?
- What is burn-out?
- How can we prevent burn-out?

I THINK
ITS
STRESS!!

PENDING
COFFEE

What does stress mean?

- **Any type of change that causes physical, emotional, or psychological strain**.
- Phases: **alarm, resistance, and exhaustion**.
- It is your body's response to anything that requires attention or action.
- It’s result is ***distress***.

What is trauma?

- It is the consequence of stress causing harm, damage
- Results: certain reactions

  1. traumatic damages (PTSD)
  2. posttraumatic growth - resilience

The traumatic experience

- Trauma has an infective nature (J. Hermann)
- The thread of empathy
- Boundary problems (fix or permeable)
- ”Empathic dance” (McCann and Colletti 1994.)

The characteristics of trauma

- Trauma has an intrusive character
- It intrudes into the person and overwrites her/his coping capacity
- It changes the person's relationship towards her/himself and towards others.

If you are a helper/caregiver:

You have to know the basics of psychological first aid!

What is psychological first aid?

Humane, supportive and practical assistance to other human beings who used to survive extreme stress situations

- non-intrusive, practical care,
- assessing needs, (L1)
- active listening but not pressuring, (L2)
- comforting, calming,
- contacting, (L3)
- protecting from further harm

What PFA is NOT?

- No professional help,
- no counseling,
- neither therapy
- not pressuring people to evoke!

When PFA?

- First contact with the person,
- soon after the event
- some days or weeks after.

- Find a secure place for PFA! Issues of confidentiality!

PFA basics (L-L-L)

- Look (secure place, basic needs,distress)
- Listen (contact, ask about needs and concerns,listen to feel calm)
- Link (link to basic needs, services,give information, link people to their loved ones)

Look

- Learn about refugees background (culture, language, customs
- Look who needs help: children, single persons, wounded persons
- Look about serious reactions!

Listen

- Make contact people needing support
- Ask about people's problems and concerns
- Listen to people to feel calm

- Use voice soft and calm,
- Keep eye contact,
- Reassure tham that they are in safe,
- Dissociation: feet on the floor, tap, notice surroundings, breathe deeply and slowly

Listen with

- Eyes,
- Ears and
- Heart

- Active listening! Talk less, listen more!

To DO

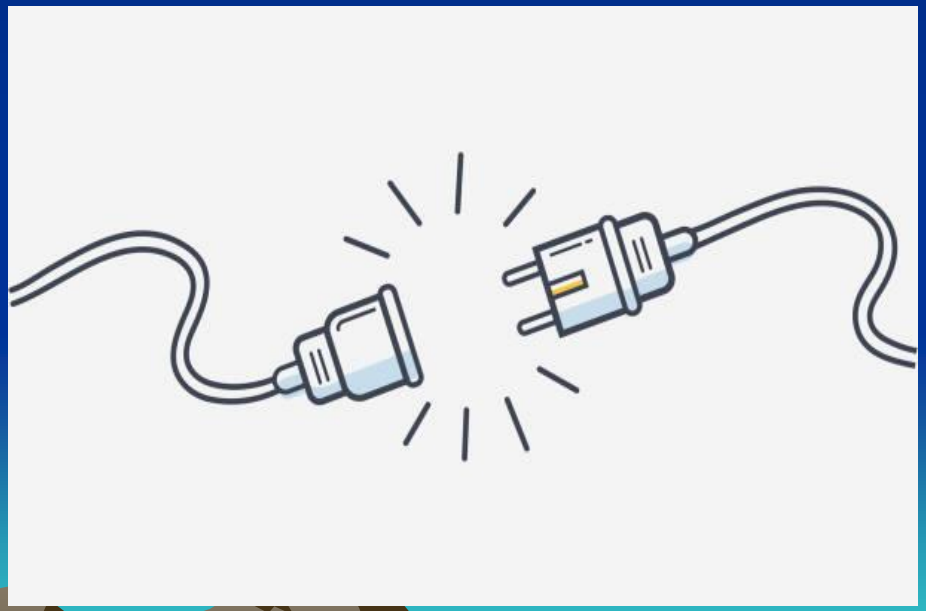
- Calm place,
- Distance
- Hmmm…
- Information
- Respect
- Acknowledge the strength of the person!

NOT to DO

- Don’t pressure,
- Don’t interrupt,
- Don’t touch,
- Don’t make diminuating remarks,
- Don’t give false promises,
- Don’t talk about your own problems,
- Don’t think you can solve the problems of the person!

Link

- to basic needs,
- Help them to cope with their problems,
- Link to social support
- Link to information.

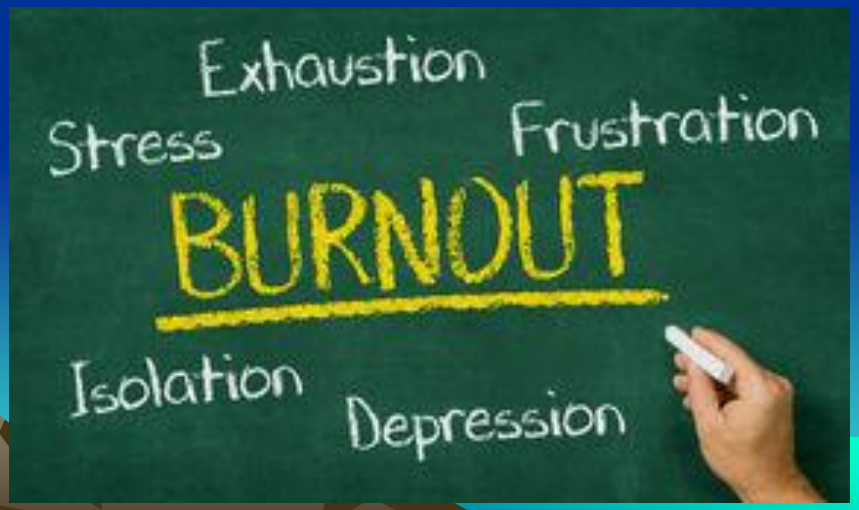


Burnout

- The burnout syndrome is a psychological phenomenon of medical staff/other caregivers changing their relationships towards clients, colleagues and family.

Burnout 2.

- According to New York psychologist Herbert J. Freudenberger, burnout is a state of fatigue or frustration due to a devotion to a cause, a way of life, or a relationship that failed to produce the expected reward.



A person can burn out if s/he used to „burn” before

- Burnout is a problem born of good intentions. People try to reach unrealistic goals.

They end up depleting their energy losing touch with themselves and others.

Three things are associated with burnout 4.

- *role conflict:* - conflicting responsibilities -
- - the person is pulled in many directions
- - no priorities
- The result :fatigue or exhaustion
- *role ambiguity:* - The individual does not know what is expected of her/him.
- - no role model or guidelines

The result is that s/he never feels that s/he has accomplished anything worthwhile.

Three things are associated with burnout 5.

- *role overload:* If you can't say no.
- The result: the person feels wasted among duties.

Working in a team: team dynamics

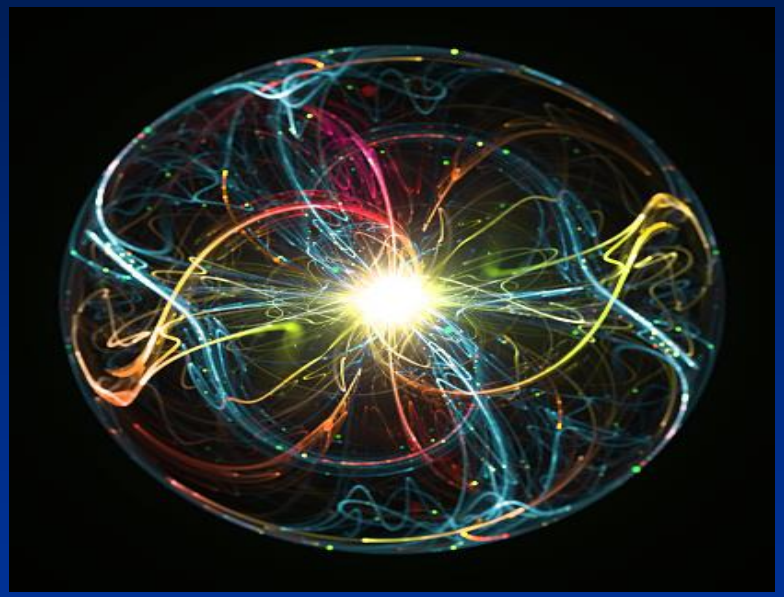
- Induction of paranoid attitudes
- Induction of agressor-victim situation
- Scapegoating

Remarks

- If you deal with traumatised clients you need :

- special trainings,
- capacity of self reflectivity,
- regular supervision,
- participation in a working team (supporting, holding, containing).

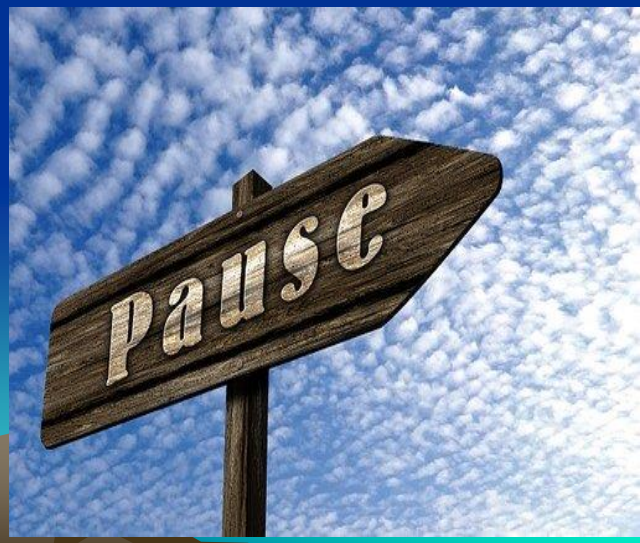
Take into account:reality frames



- Time
- Energy
- Personal characteristics
- Professional characteristics
- Environmental characteristics

Tools

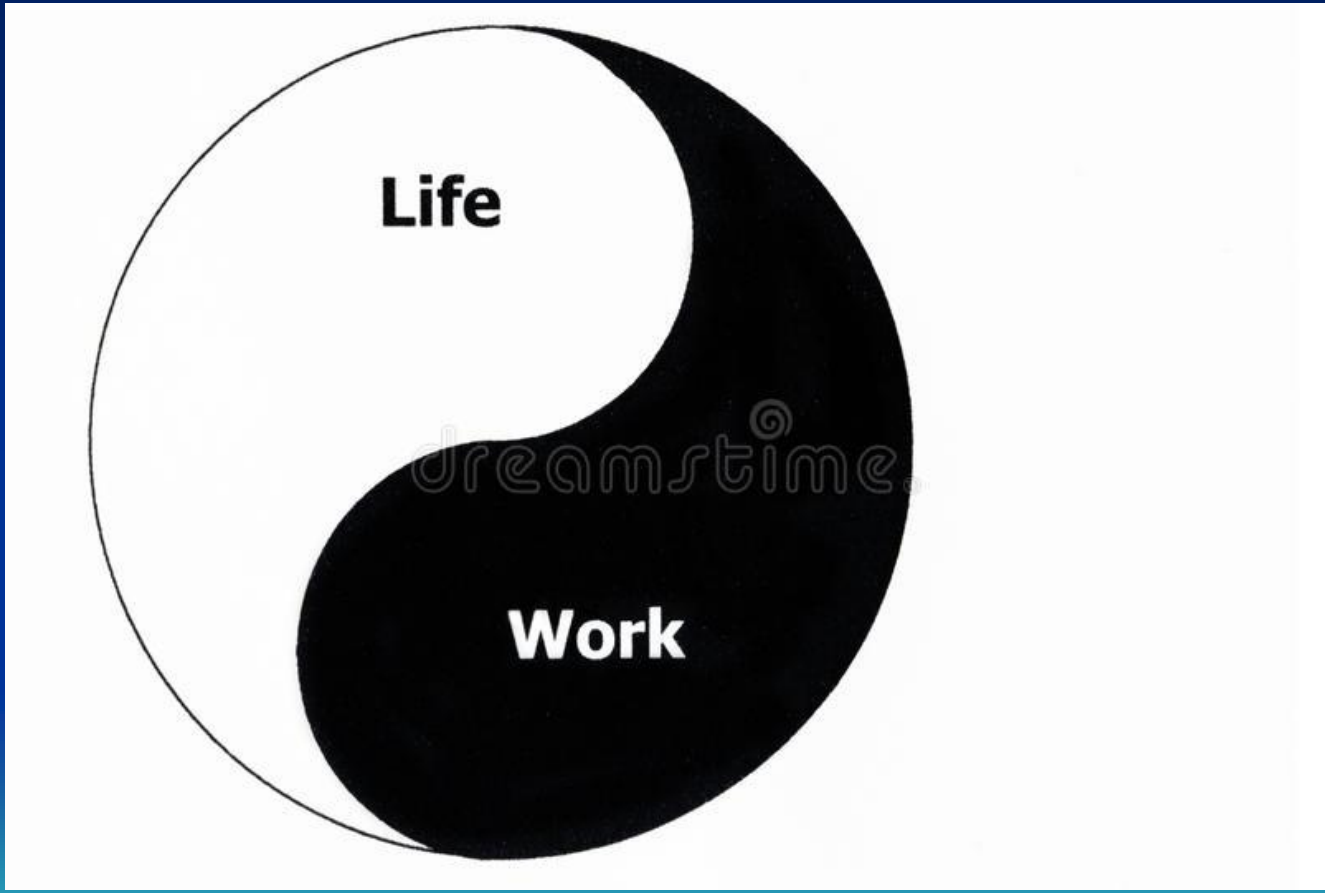
- Elaborate adaequate self esteem
- Elaborate professional empathic level
- Optimal use of psychological resources
- Have strong but flexible frames
- Teamwork: support and
- criticism
- Ability of „closing the door”
- Leave sufficient leisure time

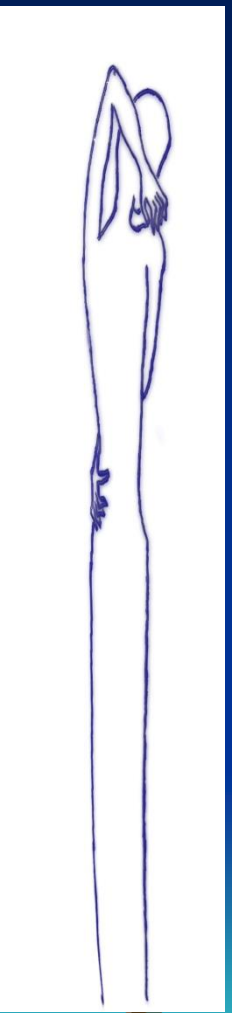


Some ideas to prevention

- Consiously recognise your reactions
- Learn your adaptive and coping strategies!
- Prioritise!
- Share your energies!
- Separate work
- from private life!
- Humour and leisure time!

Find your balance!





Thank you for your attention!