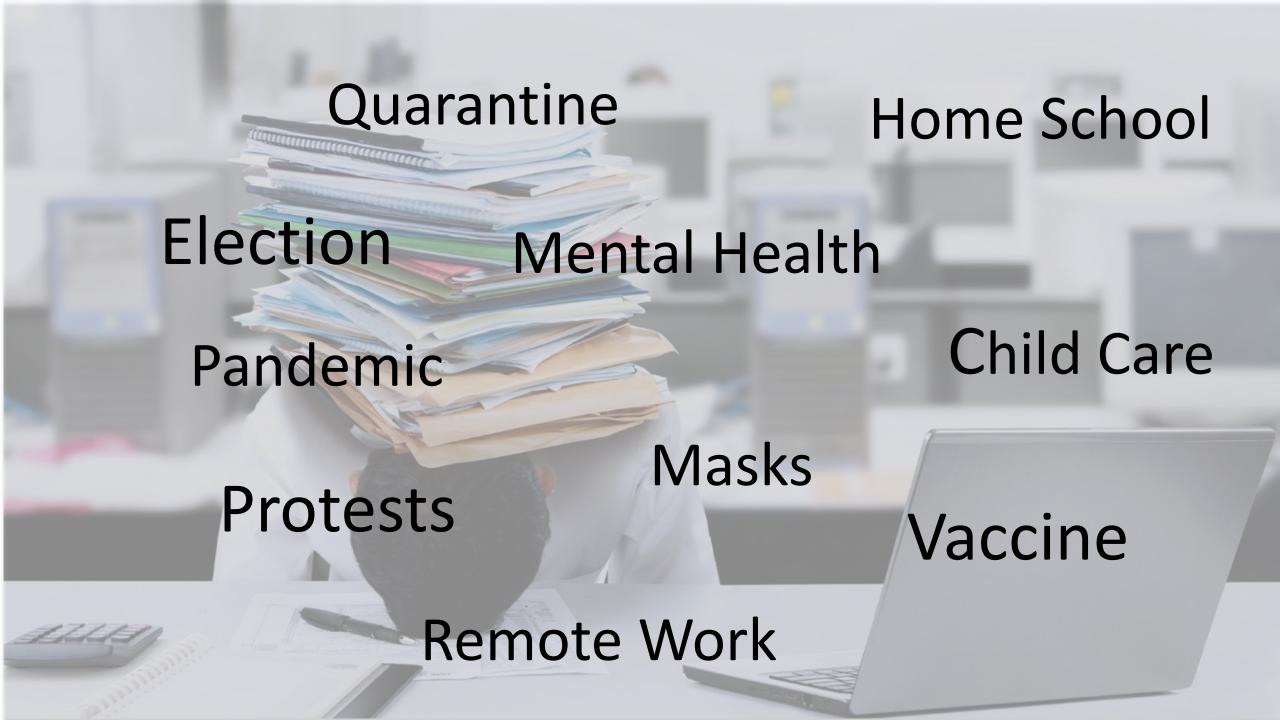


Agenda

- Define compassion fatigue and how it is different from exhaustion or burn out
- Understand secondary trauma and how it affects HR specifically
- Discuss coping strategies and ways to combat compassion fatigue





Mental Health Statistics

- In any given year, 1 in 5 employed adults in the U.S. experiences a mental health issue, including depression, anxiety, and insomnia
- Only 57% of employees who report moderate depression and 40% of those who report severe depression receive treatment to control depression symptoms.



Mental Health Statistics

- Mental health issues can be present without visible symptoms
- You are more likely to experience mental illness than you are to develop heart disease, diabetes, or any kind of cancer



Mental Health Statistics

- You don't have to have a pre-existing condition
- You can experience the onset of a new condition
- Quarantine can exacerbate an existing condition







- Terminology used in the healthcare industry and the animal care industry.
- Associated trauma in the medical field dealing with patients in emergency, long term or hospice care
- Associated trauma in the animal care field dealing with euthanasia, cruelty, hoarding, attacks and emergencies



- Large body of work associated with medical and animal care
- New parallels with human resources profession

Compassion Fatigue is a state experienced by those helping people or animals in distress; it is an extreme state of tension and preoccupation with the suffering of those being helped to the degree that it can create a secondary traumatic stress for the helper.

Dr. Charles Figley



Secondary Traumatic Stress

Certain circumstances can cause you to be more susceptible to secondary traumatic stress:

- Personal exposure to a traumatic event(s) or to individuals who are coping with their own reactions to trauma
- Direct contact with...traumatic stories
- Helping others and neglecting yourself

https://traumaawareschools.org/secondaryStress

We have not been directly exposed to the trauma scene, but we hear the story told with such intensity, or we hear similar stories so often, or we have the gift and curse of extreme empathy and we suffer. We feel the feelings of our clients. We experience their fears. We dream their dreams. Eventually, we lose a certain spark of optimism, humor and hope. We tire. We aren't sick, but we aren't ourselves.

Dr. Charles Figley

"The cost of caring"

Dr. Charles Figley



The fundamental trap that causes compassion fatigue is a focus on other people and their needs before focusing on your own self-care needs. It's easy to forgo the activities that bring you happiness...without capacity flowing back in, eventually you run yourself ragged, identifying too closely with those suffering, and have nothing left to give. This is the point where compassion fatigue sets in.

-Terri Bogue



- Redefining organizational care
- HR deals with employees that are literally dealing with life and death situations, domestic violence, workplace violence, health issues and a long list of other challenges.



- All of these situations are in addition to the daily operational tasks
- Constant empathy and sympathy have a cumulative effect



Isn't This Just Burnout?

- Burnout
- Slower onset
- Over a prolonged period of time
- Not necessarily trauma related
- Feeling like you're not getting the job done

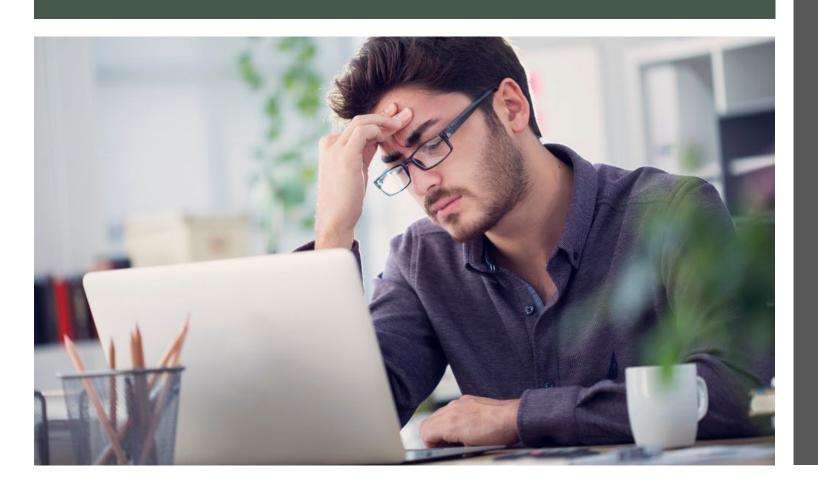


Isn't This Just Burnout?

Compassion Fatigue

- More immediate onset
- Triggering events
- Ability to care is taxed to depletion overwhelmed
- Dealing with secondary trauma
- Constant emotional availability

Compassion Fatigue and Burnout



- Emotional exhaustion, negativity and irritation
- Reduced sense of personal accomplishment or meaning in work
- Decreased interactions with others (isolation)
- Depersonalization (symptoms disconnected from real causes)
- Physical or mental exhaustion



Doesn't Every Manager Get This?

- A manager is only responsible for direct reports
- HR is responsible for an entire organization

 caregivers, first responders/front line workers, resource for all including candidates and former employees
- Referrals come to HR for solution





How to Combat Compassion Fatigue

- *****Awareness
- Setting Boundaries
- Creating a Support System
- **❖** Self-Care





Awareness

- What types of situations contribute to your stress level increasing your vulnerability to compassion fatigue?
- Think of events or situations that cause you to experience an unusually strong reaction and often overpowers your usual coping mechanisms



Awareness

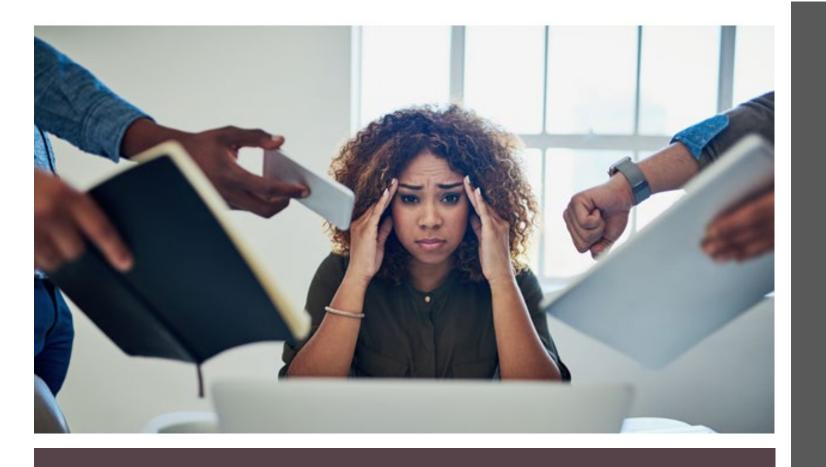
- Ability to function is interfered with or altered
- Situation or incident does not seem "typical or ordinary", it feels traumatic
- Regularly waking up tired in the morning and struggling to get to work



Awareness

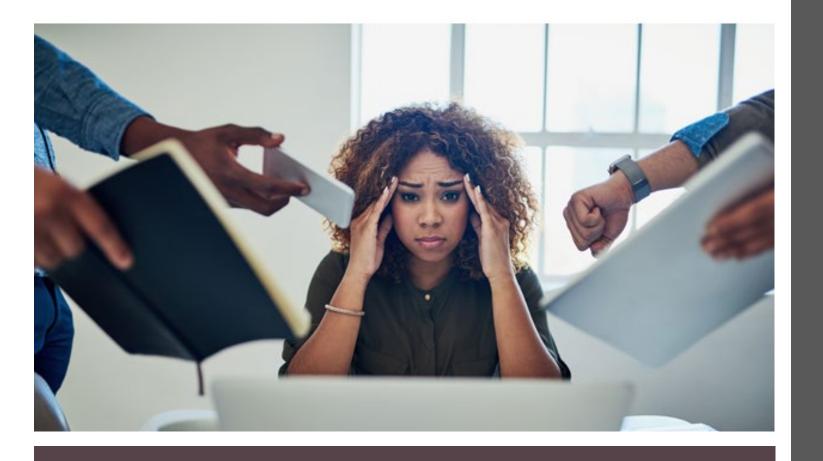
- Becoming frustrated/irritated easily
- Feeling as if you are working harder but accomplishing less
- Losing compassion for some people while becoming overly involved in others
- Experiencing illness, aches and pains





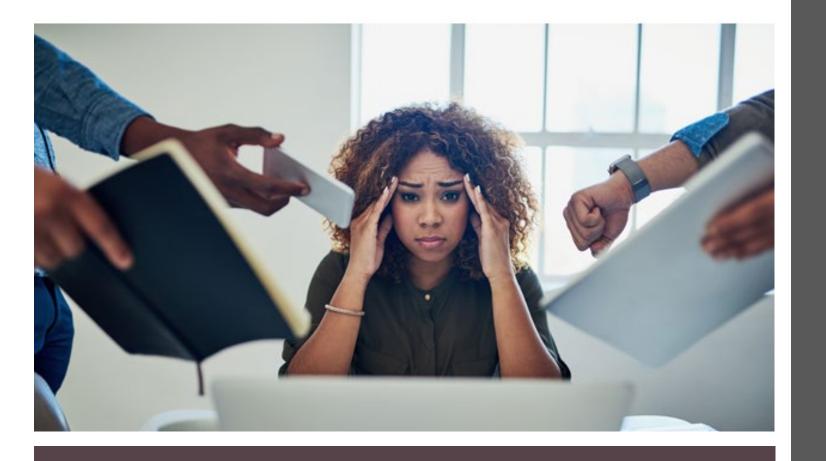
Setting Boundaries

Setting emotional boundaries helps maintain a connection while still remembering and honoring the fact that you are a separate person with your own needs. (Good Therapy)



Setting Boundaries

- Boundaries are limits people set in order to create a healthy sense of personal space
- Boundaries can be physical or emotional in nature, and they help distinguish the desires, needs, and preferences of one person from another
- Identify behaviors from others that are acceptable and unacceptable



Setting Boundaries

- Setting a boundary doesn't mean someone will respect it
- Boundaries should be communicated assertively and openly and repeated as needed
- Changes throughout your career





Support System

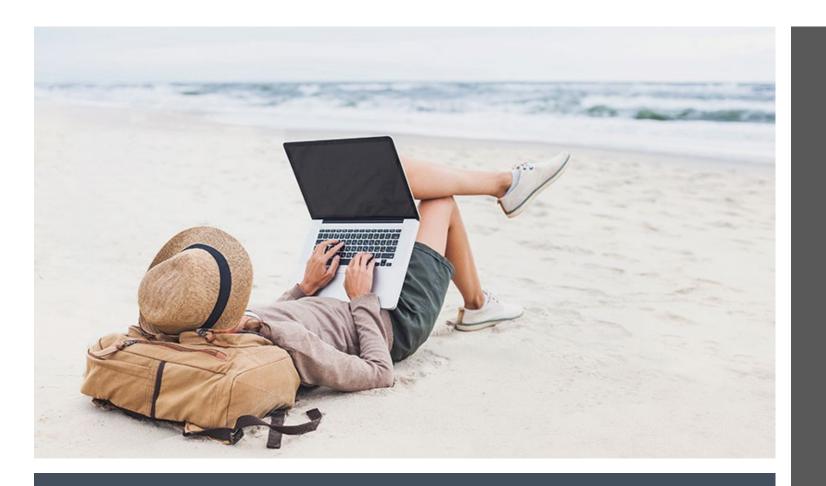
- Be your own advocate first; Who cares for the caregivers?
- Acknowledge the emotional toll of our role in the organization
- Allow "post action" time to decompress
- Ask for help and resources you need



Support System

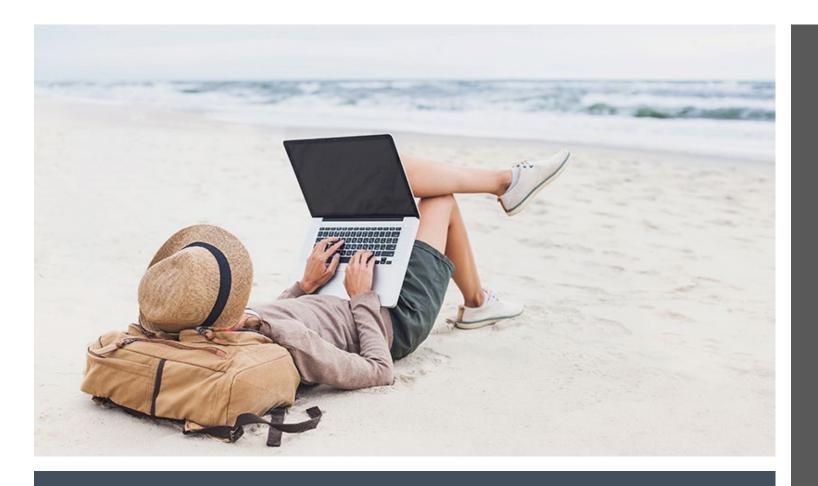
- Reach out through online networks and groups
- Talk through your stressors with your peers, friends or family
- Have regular check ins and conversations with your leadership team
- Stay realistic about what you can and can't do
- Delegate





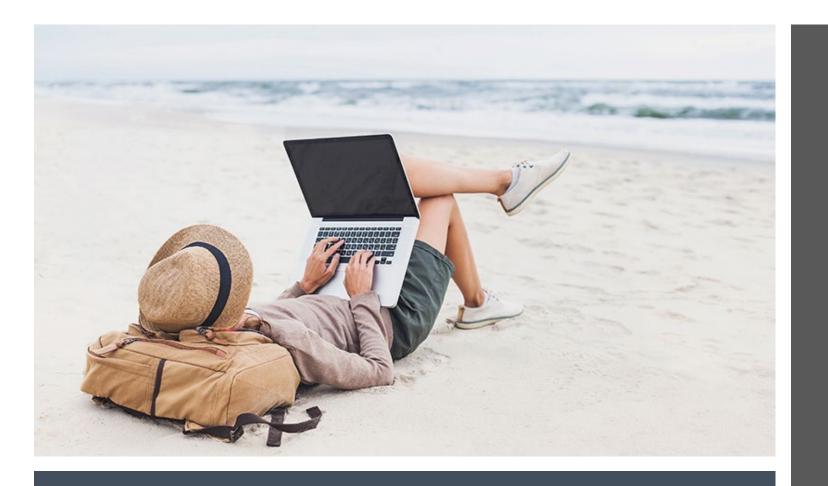
Self-Care

When you overuse your compassion without taking time to **regularly** recharge, the ability to feel and care for others becomes worn down



Self-Care

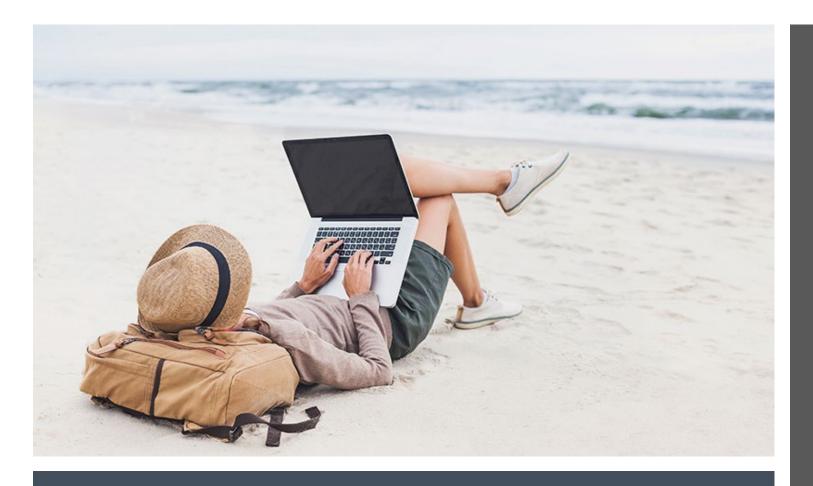
- Self-care is different for everyone
- Self-care should be done daily
- Do no try to do "supply side" self care
- Avoid "Pandemic Performance Pressure"
- Nurture yourself by putting activities in your schedule that are sources of pleasure, joy and diversion



Self-Care

Avoid

- Ignoring signs of stress, fatigue or burnout
- Working harder and longer
- Self-medicating
- Neglecting your own needs and interests
- Feeling shame or guilt for resting



Self-Care

Embrace

- A time every day for a self care routine
- Celebrating small wins (Dishwasher Standard)
- Doing something meditative
- Redefining rest and recovery
- Getting professional assistance











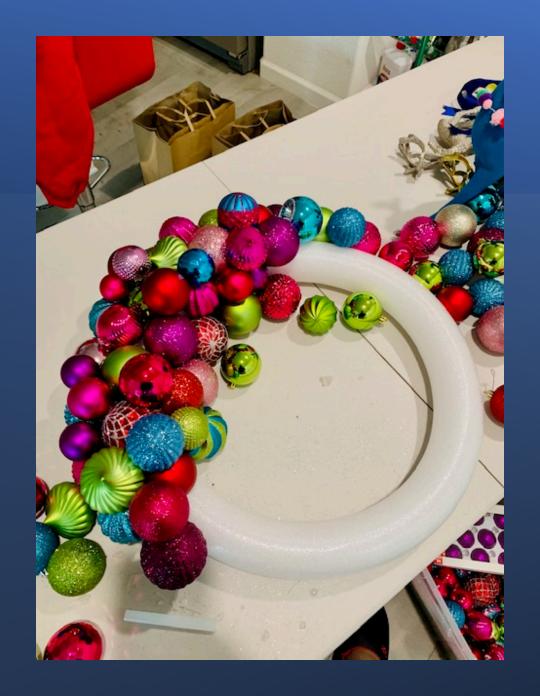




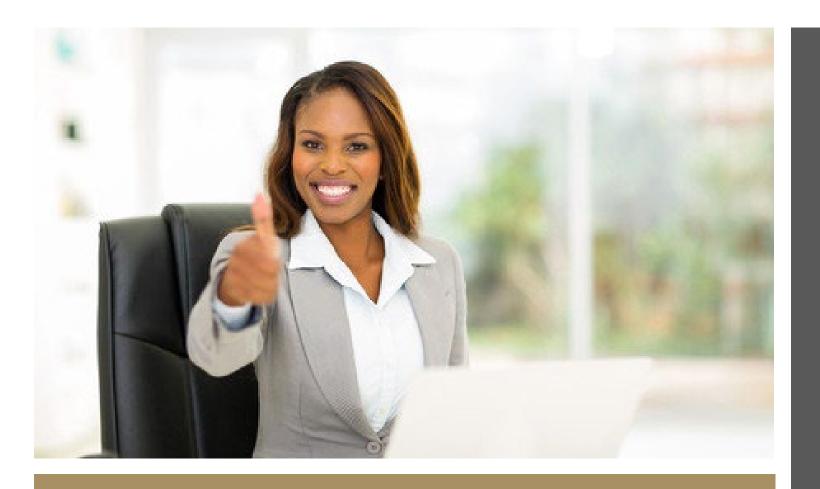




GO BIG OR GO HOME!







Compassion satisfaction is the pleasure you derive from being able to do your work

Compassion Satisfaction



Wonder Woman

#1 Fan



Fighting for Your Rights



In Her Satin Tights





Sometimes She's Diana Prince



Questions?

Resources

https://extinguishburnout.com/2019/08/19/is-it-compassion-fatigue-or-burnout/

https://www.stress.org/military/for-practitionersleaders/compassion-fatigue

https://www.goodtherapy.org/for-professionals/business-management/human-resources/article/cost-of-caring-10-ways-to-prevent-compassion-fatigue

https://proqol.org/Compassion_Satisfaction.html#:~:text=Compassion%20satisfaction%20is%20about%20the,what%20you%20do%20at%20work

https://traumaawareschools.org/secondaryStress