



Central East (HHS Region 3)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# Promoting Well-Being: Addressing Compassion Fatigue, Burnout and Secondary Traumatic Stress

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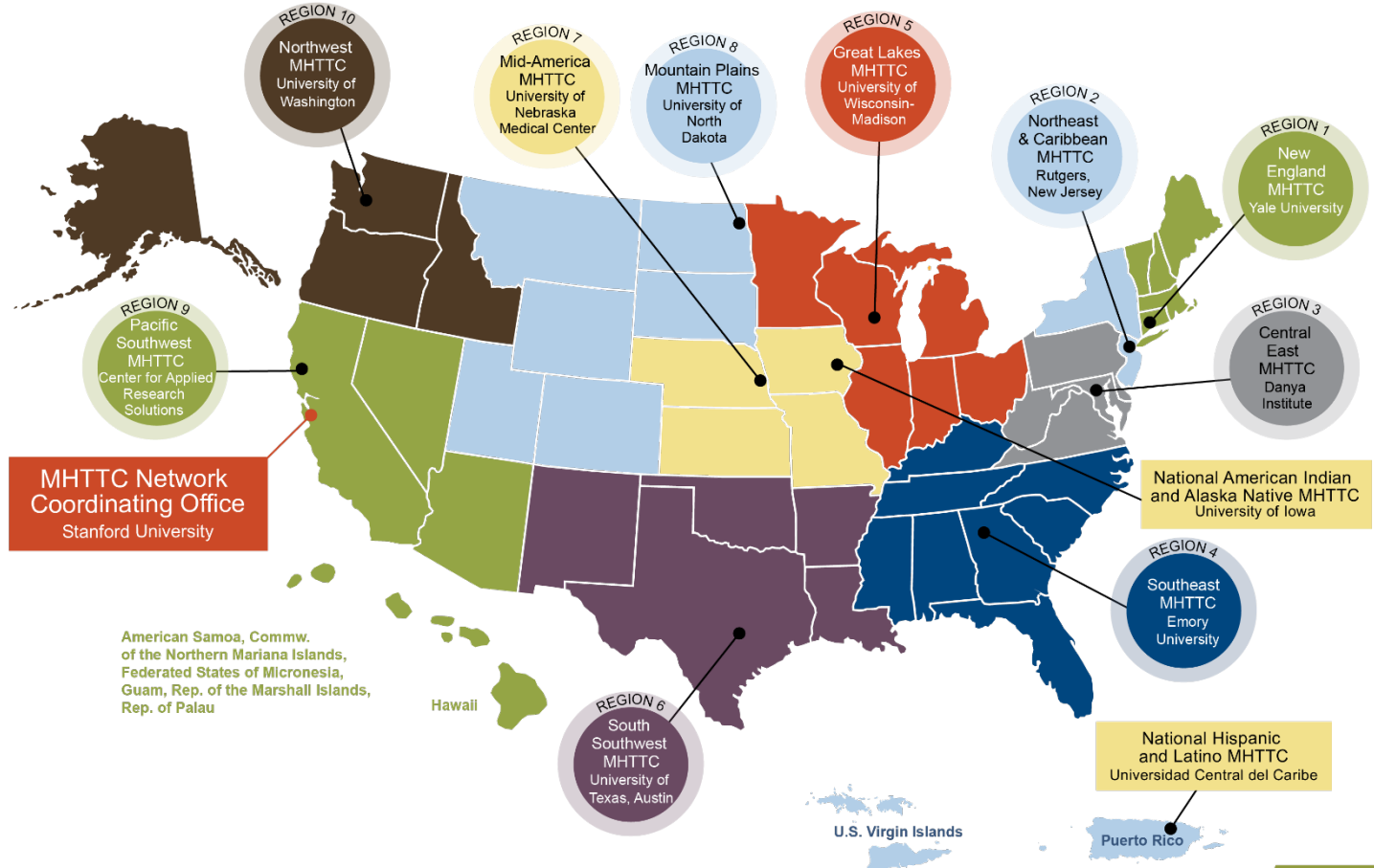
# MHTTC Network



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# Central East Region

## HHS REGION 3

Delaware

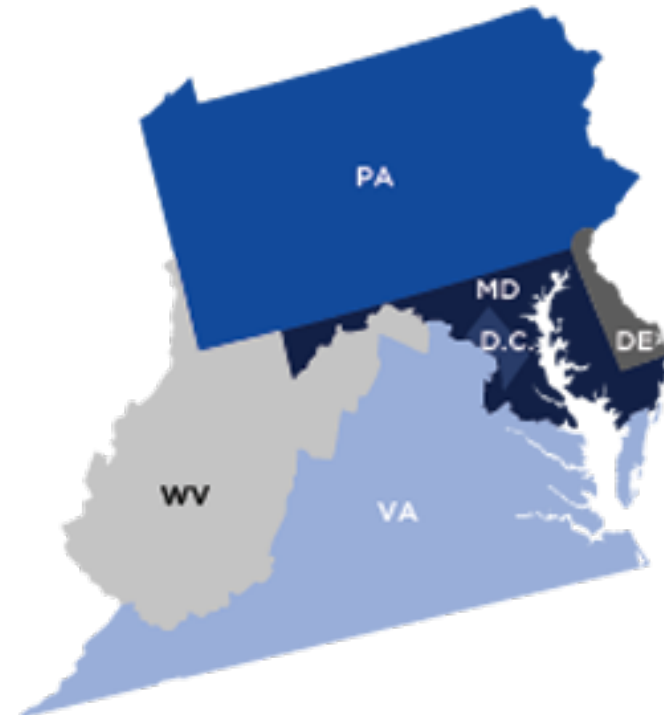
District of Columbia

Maryland

Pennsylvania

Virginia

West Virginia



# MHTTC Purpose

The MHTTC Network vision is to unify science, education and service to transform lives through evidence-based and promising treatment and recovery practices in a recovery-oriented system of care.



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# Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to describe contributors to and symptoms of compassion fatigue, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress.
- Participants will gain an understanding of how stress manifests in individuals
- Participants will learn strategies to improve well-being and to counter compassion fatigue, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress.

Week 1: Overview of compassion fatigue concepts and how stress impact us physically and emotionally.

*Homework: Complete to Professional Quality of Life questionnaire; stress reaction log*

**Week 2: Defining compassion fatigue concepts.  
Introduction to healthy and unhealthy coping strategies**

*Homework: Coping Style Invention, try out one coping strategy*

Week 3: Coping strategies and managing thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Develop a personal stress plan

*Homework: Personal stress plan trial*

Week 4: Preparing for holiday and family stress. Review and adjust personal stress plan

*Homework: continue to implement stress plan and treat yourself for taking care of you!*



# Week 2



# Poll: What is your role at work?

- See clients/patients
- Supervise others who see clients/patients
- Both a and b





# *Review of ProQoL and Stress Reaction logs*

*What stood out to you about your ProQoL Results?*

*Did your results surprise you? Why or why not?*

*What stood out to you about your stress reaction log?*

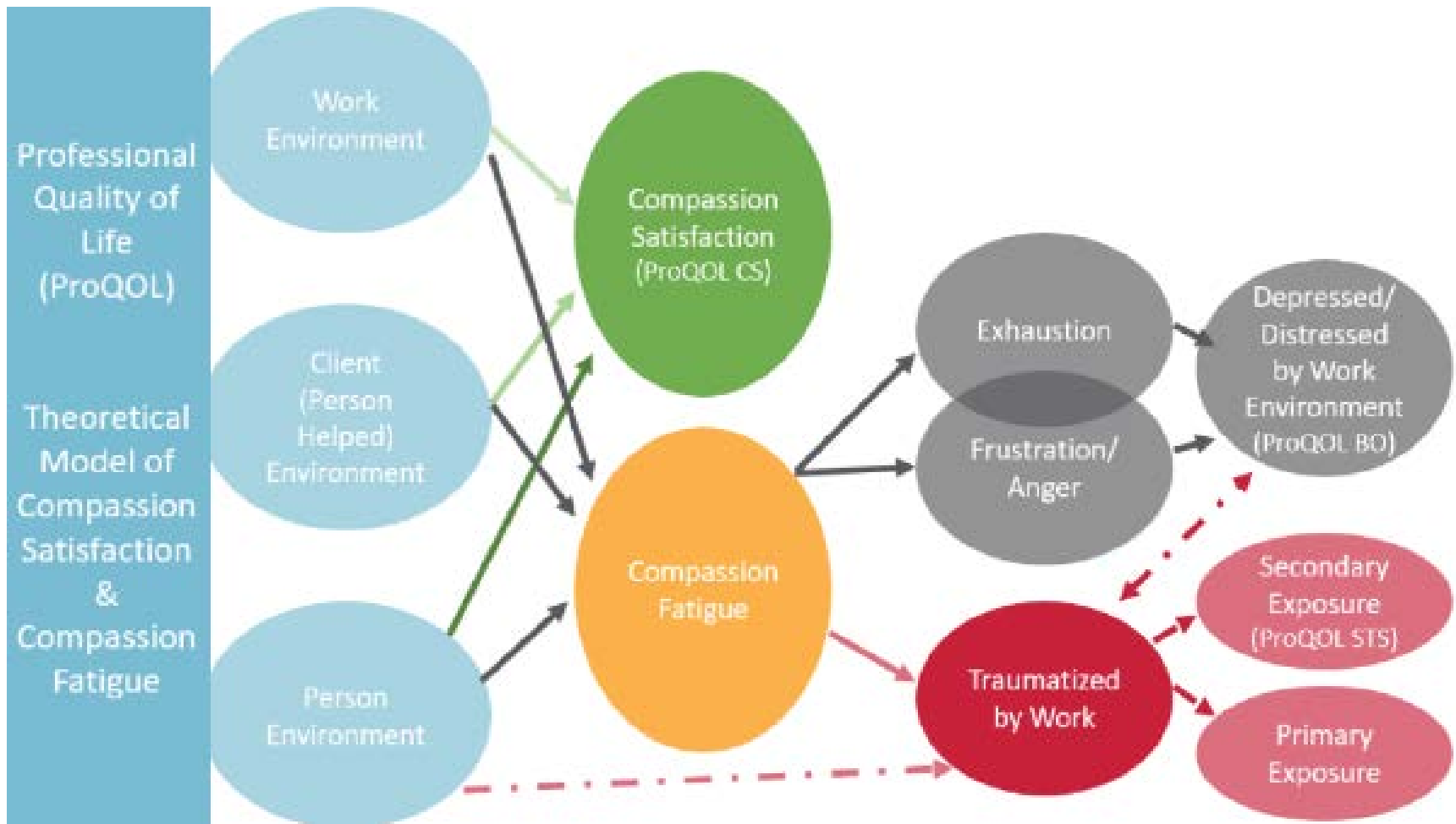
*Any patterns or ah-ha moments?*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3yxouKWVTU>

What was your takeaway from this video?

# CS-CF Model



# Compassion Satisfaction

- The positive aspects of helping
  - Pleasure and satisfaction derived from working in helping, care giving systems
- May be related to:
  - Providing care
  - Work with colleagues
  - Beliefs about self
  - Altruism

# Compassion Fatigue

- The negative aspects of working in helping systems may be related to
  - Caring for others
  - System demands / low resources
  - Taking on our youths' stress and trauma
  - Feeling ineffective
- Burnout
- Secondary Traumatic Stress
- Vicarious Trauma

# Burnout

- Burnout
  - Work-related hopelessness and feelings of inefficacy
  - Comes on slow, builds over time
  - Job changes can ease
  - Characterized by:
    - Exhaustion
    - Cynicism and identifying less with the job
    - Feelings of being less professionally able

# Secondary Traumatic Stress and Vicarious Trauma:

- STS: Witnessing trauma happening to others
- VT: Hearing about others' trauma
- Emotional residue of exposure to others' trauma
- State of tension and often pre-occupation
  
- Difficulty talking about own feelings
- Free floating

# Traumatic Stress Responses

- having difficulty talking about feelings
- free floating anger and/or irritation
- startle effect/being jumpy
- over-eating or under-eating
- difficulty falling asleep and/or staying asleep
- losing sleep over patients
- worried that they are not doing enough for their clients
- dreaming about their clients/their clients' trauma experiences
- diminished joy toward things they once enjoyed
- feeling trapped by their work
- diminished feelings of satisfaction and personal accomplishment
- dealing with intrusive thoughts of clients with especially severe trauma histories
- feelings of hopelessness associated with their work/clients
- blaming others

American Counseling Association's  
Traumatology Interest Network



- Burnout, STS, and VT are **not** clinical disorders
- Also not mutually exclusive
- Some people who experience burnout may also develop depression
- Some people who experience STS and VT may develop an anxiety or traumatic stress disorder

# Surviving vs Thriving Emotions

Thrive Emotion	Evolutionary Benefits	Example
Serenity	We feel safe and secure in our environment, able to remain and engage	Calmness watching students apply instruction to homework or tasks
Hope	Helps us persist and continue amidst obstacles or difficulties	Seeing students describe aspirations and goals to better themselves
Awe	Makes us less afraid of new or unexpected experiences	Students do something far beyond your expectations with assignment
Love	Encourages us to engage with others, to connect, to work together, to	Feel proud and/or tear up as students end year and prepare to move on
Joy (Internal Events)	Produces a feeling of good fortune and delight; and helps us fully experience events and engage more with all parts of our environment	Students feel pleased with their success, and take delight in learning
Inspire	Helps us consider new possibilities and to believe we can attempt these with less risk of danger	See other do something that looks fun and worthwhile that want to also do
Gratitude	Helps us recognize and appreciate those people and events that are good for us	Recall kindnesses in words or deeds or student toward you

# Surviving vs Thriving Emotions

Survive Emotion	Evolution Benefits	Example
Fear	Prevents or inhibits dangerous behavior.	Fear of discussing a student's bad behavior with a parent because it may increase the parent's complaints to school administration.
Regret	Helps us recall past bad choices so that we don't repeat them.	Recalling that when I screamed at a student, I felt badly and was reprimanded.
Envy	We resent the fact others have more success or more wealth; it can encourage use to work harder to achieve more. Jealousy is similar, but associated more with fear or "losing" some one, and thus confounded by a sense of "ownership" or "entitlement" over others. While this can make one work harder to keep the other person satisfied, the expectation of owning/having someone else is often destructive.	Resenting another's new car or award.
Shame	A painful emotion caused by consciousness of guilt, shortcoming, or impropriety. Remembrance of shame may help us avoid decisions that could cause us to experience it again.	Being embarrassed for having yelled at students in the past.
Hate (intense avoid)	Feeling of aversion may cause us to avoid things or people likely to harm us.	Impedes persisting efforts that might leave us vulnerable to someone untrustworthy.
Guilt (past acts)	Help us recall past actions that harmed others so that we make different choices.	Choosing not to reprimand a student in front of the class because I have caused serious pain when I did so in the past.
Anger (hurt lies beneath)	Strong feelings, if controlled, can help us stand up for ourselves and others.	Sternly reprimanding a student who made fun of another student.
Sadness	May draw others to support/help us when we feel wounded/vulnerable.	Not hiding my distress from my class when they do not engage in an activity.

# My Mood Review

1. Which thrive emotions do you feel most frequently?
2. What actions do you take to bring these thrive emotions about in you?
3. What most interferes with your feeling thrive emotions?
4. Which survive emotions do you feel most frequently?
5. Is there a particular situation that brings about survive emotion(s) for you frequently?
6. How much time do you experience survive emotions compared to thrive emotions?

# Unhealthy ways to respond

*Avoiding or denying the stressor*

*Numbing and blunting your reaction*

*Using your social support system to  
justify your actions*

# Healthy ways to respond

## ***Healthy Alternative Activities***

doing something else, find a distraction

## ***Reframing***

finding the lesson to be learned in this situation

## ***Problem Solving***

Breaking down the issue or trying to look at it differently

## ***Social Support***

seeking ideas or clarity from others

# Activity

John is a nurse practitioner. He has been at his job site for two years and while he loves his job but lately he has been feeling 'off'. He is tired all the time, complains that nothing he does will help his patients, and missed a deadline for a work training. John's supervisor has started to notice that he is arriving later than usual and has been absent three times in the past 2 weeks.

John is likely experiencing

Burnout

Secondary Traumatic Stress

Vicarious Trauma

# Activity

Mary is a casework manager at a substance abuse treatment facility. Her co-workers have noticed that Mary, who is usually cheery, hasn't been smiling much. When her supervisor told her others have noticed her mood, she got angry and stopped talking to several people. Mary has been worrying a lot and complains frequently that the world just isn't safe anymore. She has stopped seeing most of her friends and has started talking vaguely about changing careers.

Mary is likely experiencing

Burnout

Secondary Traumatic Stress

Vicarious Trauma





## Positive Ways of Working Through Stress

Please read each item below and think about how you have coped with stressful experiences. Using the following rating scale, circle to what extent you have used the strategies listed below.

0=Don't Use    1=Use a few times per Month    2=Use most Weeks    3=Use most Days

1. Used a substitute healthy activity to clear my mind for a bit.	0	1	2	3
2. Let my feelings out in a safe place/way.	0	1	2	3
3. Wrote/drew/joumaled about my experiences.	0	1	2	3
4. Exercised/jogged/worked out.	0	1	2	3
5. Listened to music that improves how I feel.	0	1	2	3
6. Tried to sleep or eat better to improve my body readiness for stress.	0	1	2	3
7. Looked for the good/positive side or lessons I could learn.	0	1	2	3
8. Accepted the next best thing to what I wanted.	0	1	2	3
9. Told myself that I would survive and benefit from this experience.	0	1	2	3
10. Didn't let it get to me; focused on what I could influence.	0	1	2	3
11. Joked about the situation; tried not to take it so seriously.	0	1	2	3
12. Imagined/prayed/meditated for clarity/guidance.	0	1	2	3
13. Just concentrated on what I had to do next – the next step.	0	1	2	3
14. Tried to analyze the problem to explore additional options.	0	1	2	3
15. Examined my role in the situation and what I could do differently.	0	1	2	3
16. Watched to see how others were perceiving and addressing the problem.	0	1	2	3
17. Drew on my past experiences as I've been in a similar situation before.	0	1	2	3
18. Tried to see things from the other person's point of view.	0	1	2	3
19. Accepted understanding and support from someone.	0	1	2	3
20. Apologized or took steps to improve the relationship.	0	1	2	3
21. Talked to someone who could do something about the situation.	0	1	2	3
22. Asked another teacher/colleague I respected for advice.	0	1	2	3
23. Talked to someone about how I was feeling.	0	1	2	3
24. Thought about how a person I admired would handle the situation.	0	1	2	3

(Adapted from Folkman et al. [1988]. Dynamics of a stressful encounter in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.)

# For Next Week!

- Complete coping style inventory
- Choose one healthy way to respond and try it out
- Track progress with your stress reaction log
- Added a line for use of coping activity



# Questions or Comments?

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# Contact Us



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[Danya Institute website](#)

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