



Transcript: Tired, Wired, Mired & Inspired! Self-Care Strategies for School Personnel

Presenter: Mark Sanders
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JEN WINSLOW: OK. Good morning, everyone. We're going to just take a moment to let people log on. And we'll start in just a moment. Welcome, everyone, to today's webinar, Tired, Wired, Mired, and Inspired. Self-care Strategies for School Personnel with our presenter, Mark Sanders.

This webinar is co-sponsored by the Great Lakes MHTTC and SAMHSA. The Great Lakes ATTC, and MHTTC, and PTTC are funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration cooperative agreements. The content and views in this training are those of the speaker and do not necessarily reflect the views of SAMHSA and the Department of Health and Human Services. The MHTTC network believes that words matter and uses affirming, respectful, and recovery-oriented language in all activities. For more upcoming events and information, please follow the Great Lakes MHTTC on social media or visit the website.

A few housekeeping items. If you are having any technical issues, please individually message Jen Winslow, Alyssa Chwala, or Rebecca Buller in the chat section at the bottom of your screen, and we will be happy to assist you. If you have any questions for the speaker, please put them in the Q&A section.

We will be using live transcription during the presentation. At the end of this session, you will be automatically redirected to a very brief survey. Certificates of attendance will be sent out via email to all who attended the full session. This can take up to two weeks.

Our presenter today is Mark Sanders. Mark is the state project manager for the Great Lakes ATTC MHTTC, and PTTC. Mark has worked for 40 years as a social worker, educator, and part of the SUD workforce. He is founder of the Online Museum of African-American Addiction Treatment and Recovery and co-founder of Serenity Academy of Chicago, the only recovery-oriented high school in Illinois. Mark is also an international speaker, trainer, and consultant in the behavioral health field whose work has reached thousands throughout the United States, Europe, Canada, the Caribbean, and the British islands.

Recently, Mark Sanders was named as the 2021 recipient of the NAADAC Enlightenment Award in recognition of his outstanding work and contributions to NAADAC, the field of SUD services and SUD professionals. He is also the recipient of the Illinois Association for Behavioral Health's 2021 Lawrence Goodman Friend of the Field Award in honor of the many years of dedicated



service Mark has provided to communities throughout his home state of Illinois. Welcome, everybody. And I'll hand it to you, Mark.

MARK SANDERS: And thank you so very much, Alyssa, and Jen, and Rebecca, and Sarah. And good morning, everyone. Presentations often begin with a polling of an audience. So let me poll the audience. By a show of hands, how many you do outstanding work? Raise your hand if you're really good at your job. Very good.

How many of you feel, as a result of the work that you do, that you're making a difference in the lives of at least one human being? Let's see those hands. And how many of you feel, as a result of the work, that you do that you deserve a \$90,000 a year pay increase. Every hand goes up twice. Know that I know that the world cannot compensate you enough for the important work that you do.

About four years ago, I was flying in from Arizona to Chicago where I live. And I'm sitting on a plane next to a man with six Purple Hearts. And how do you earn a Purple Heart? I'm glad you asked. Bravery. He was about 95 years old, a World War II veteran. In other words, the 3 and 1/2 hours on this flight, I'm sitting next to the bravest human being I ever met in my life.

And at one point, he says, Mark, what do you do? I say I'm a social worker. I give speeches. I talk to counselors. I talk to social workers. I talk to teachers, principals, assistant principals. And he told me to tell you, thank you for your service. Thank you so very much for your service and all that you do on behalf of children.

And so I read a book called Good to Great. And the author says you can tell what's most important to a society by its tallest buildings. 100 years ago, the tallest buildings were churches. Today, the tallest buildings are Fortune 500 companies and Fortune 100 companies. But the author said that no society is great just because you have tall buildings, and Fortune 500 companies, and Fortune 100 companies. But society is great when you have great school counselors, and social workers, and psychologists, and principals, and administrators, and teachers, and cooks in the kitchen, and physical education teachers and coaches.

So if you're in a room anywhere near a mirror, I invite you to look at yourself in the mirror and repeat these words to yourself. This is your lucky day. You're looking at greatness. Would you take a moment, if you could, to just claim that? I have one more story for you, and then we will start to look at our slides.

It's the story of baseball player, Lou Gehrig. How many of you have ever heard of baseball player, Lou Gehrig? Lou Gehrig played baseball about 100 years ago. And he was teammates with a man named Babe Ruth. They played on a team known as the Yankees. And there was a movie about his life from the 1940s called The Pride of the Yankees.



And towards the end of the movie, Lou Gehrig went in front of 40,000 screaming Yankee fans and he gave the following speech. It was a retirement speech. He said, today-- and there was an echo that went through the stadium. Today, today, today, I feel, I feel, I feel, I feel, like the luckiest man, man, man, man on the face of this Earth, Earth, Earth, Earth. Today, I feel like the luckiest man on the face of this Earth. How can it be lucky? He was dying. It was his death speech.

Lou Gehrig was dying of a condition, which they later named after him, ALS, Lou Gehrig's disease. So I went on the internet and looked up the backstory. The story that I read, which is the day before Lou Gehrig gave that speech, there was a 12-year-old boy in the hospital. The boy was sick. He was dying. And he refused to take his medication.

And doctors told the boy's mother, if your son doesn't take his medication, he'll be dead soon. The mother knew that Lou Gehrig was her son's hero, so she called the Yankee organization and asked if Lou Gehrig had come to the hospital to convince her son to take his medication.

So he showed up in the hospital room. The boy's eyes got so big, he saw his hero, looked at Lou Gehrig and said, I'm still not going to take my medication unless you hit a home tomorrow. Lou Gehrig said, OK, I'll hit a home tomorrow. He didn't hit a home run. He hit two.

Now, fast forward. Right before he gave the speech, the mother called the Yankee organization, and word got to Lou Gehrig that her son started taking his medication. He felt lucky because he was able to help someone. And you're fortunate because you get to help somebody every day. You get the help students. You help prepare the future every day. And you're fortunate for being able to help every day. And of course, the students are fortunate because of the important work that you do.

So I'd like to ask you to find the chat feature. And would you put in chat, your occupation. What do you do? Are you a teacher? Are you a principal? Are you a counselor? It really helps to know who I'm talking with. So what do you do? What's your title?

JEN WINSLOW: We have school social worker, school counselor, CCS case manager, outreach case manager.

MARK SANDERS: Anyone else, what do you do? What's your occupation?

JEN WINSLOW: Social worker, ADA specialist, Project AWARE, community, project manager, public health educator with state school health team, certified peer support specialist, certified medical assistant, psychology student, school dorm night attendant, deal with students and school staff, mental health [INAUDIBLE].



MARK SANDERS: Sounds like. Jen, then we have a range. It looks like everybody helps others for a living. OK, what a year. Let's talk about the stress of this year, actually, the last two years. There was COVID-19, millions of deaths worldwide. It triggered an economic recession. Hundreds of thousands of people in the United States lost their jobs in the midst of COVID-19.

We learned that drug use the last two years was at an all-time high amongst children, adolescents, and adults. Suicide was an all-time high in the midst of all of this. Overdose deaths. We had in 2021 more drug overdose deaths than any year in our nation's history. Mental illness has been increasing the last two years, especially traumatic stress disorders, and especially anxiety, and especially depression.

Then there was an increase in violence, child abuse, spousal partner abuse, racial violence, political violence, and wars all happening at the same time. And we know that all of this is happening also affects schools because we are impacted by this and so are your students. So if you take COVID-19 and you have the economic recession, racial conflict, wars, political conflict, the mathematical formula is 1 plus 1 plus 1 equals 100. We've never seen times quite like this.

So my son asked me-- he was 17 years old at the time. We were talking about COVID-19, the economic recession, and tension throughout the country. My son asked me, so dad in the past, did crisis occur as quickly as they do today back-to-back? What happened after the war in Vietnam in the 1960s and racial conflict in the 1960s? He said, what did you do in the 1970s?

And I told my son that we danced the whole 1970s after all of that racial conflict and the war in Vietnam. And when we got tired of Soul Train dancing, we did what we call disco dancing. For those of you who've never seen this, this is a strobe light. In the 1970s there was lots of disco dancing, And we danced under that light, and looked like everyone in the world could dance.

So let me ask you a question. What are some specific stressors for school personnel? Would you put that in the chat? We want to know, what's unique about the stress that you experience in the workplace? Those of you who work in school, what's stressful about your work? Let us know, Jen, if you're seeing any responses in chat. What's stressful about your work?

JEN WINSLOW: Physical aggression from the students, how one student behavior affects other students, absences due to COVID-19, parents arguing CRT, critical race theory, feeling lack of support from admin, increased behaviors of students.

MARK SANDERS: Yeah. Did someone say parents arguing and students fighting? Thank you for sharing your list. So what we're going to do today in



this short amount of time we have together-- we have about 43 minutes together. We're going to talk about managing stress. And by definition, stress- - burnout is really chronic stress. So we'll talk about managing stress connected to the workplace. We'll talk about preventing burnout and compassion fatigue.

We start with a definition of key terms. The first is compassion satisfaction defined as the pleasure you derive from your work. This includes doing your work well, client progress, relationship with your coworkers. That's important because most of us spend more time at work than we do at home and the realization of the differences you are making. Compassion satisfaction, that is what you like most about your work, is a protective factor against burnout and compassion fatigue.

Next, we have a definition of compassion fatigue, secondary trauma as a result of internalization of the clients or students' traumatic experiences. Let me lean in. I'm about to share something with you, which you might find kind of interesting. There is a trauma researcher from USC, the University of Southern California. His name is John Briere. And John Briere's research indicates that helping professionals, counselors, case managers, social workers, nurses, teachers-- that helping professionals, that we actually experience more trauma in childhood than any other profession.

Your brilliance is that you've taken whatever you've endured in this lifetime in your childhood years, your adolescent years. You turned that into empathy and compassion, and you used that to help others. And at the same time, if what I'm saying is true about you, if you join me and being a human being that had lots of trauma in childhood, then it basically means that when things traumatic happened in school, it's easier for you to be retraumatized compared to people who do not have histories of trauma within their childhood.

Then we have a definition of burnout, a form of compassion fatigue that develops much slower than secondary PTSD. You see, secondary trauma happens quickly like that. Examples include you're in a car accident. Now you're having nightmares and bad dreams. You were arrested overnight, and you're having bad dreams. You have a son or daughter that came back from the military, and they're suffering symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Compassion fatigue, also known as secondary trauma, happens quickly. Burnout is different. It has a gradual onset, and it's associated with a non-supportive work environment, everybody in the school going their own way, every man, woman, and child for themselves. Toxic organizational dynamics. Have you ever worked in an organization that had toxic organizational dynamics, a large workload and the feeling that the work that you do does not make a difference?



Next, we have a definition of work-related burnout. It's a response to chronic stress. In other words, when you show up, there's a lot of stress in the school. But because of compassion satisfaction, your enthusiasm around being hired, that protects you for a while. The symptoms of work-related burnout include emotional exhaustion.

I imagine that some of you listen all day. You listen to students all day, co-workers all day, and if you're a counselor, clients all day. How do you, by show of hands, feel like your job is to listen all day? You see, some of you listen all day. I'm seeing those hands. Some of you listen all day. And then you go home. And you have that spouse, your partner, whose favorite word is I, and their next favorite word is me. And they talk about themselves all evening.

So you're listening to students all day. Then you're listening to your partner all evening. And then you have that son, that brilliant son of yours who asks you questions that they already know the answer to. If you listen all day and all night, you might start to feel like you're one big ear, like you're emotionally exhausted.

And then your sibling calls you and asks you again, should they leave, should they divorce their spouse. You thought 20 years ago they should have divorced their spouse, but they're still asking the question. It's almost midnight. You're ready to go to bed. You're ready to go to sleep. The phone rings. It's that friend who doesn't pause when they talk, and they're talking, and talking, and talking. Yeah, if you listen all day and all night, you're vulnerable to emotional exhaustion.

Another part of work-related burnout is depersonalization. And what depersonalization is is where you stop seeing those that you serve as human as you used to see them in the past. You might start detaching from their humanity. Anyone who's ever had a large caseload or a large student load is vulnerable to depersonalization.

If you've ever had a large student load, or if you're a counselor, or therapist, or social worker, if you've ever had a large caseload, would you put the number that you've worked in at one time, the biggest number of clients or students you work with at one time? Would you put that number in chat? We want to know what's the biggest workload you've ever had. 20, 30, 50, 60, 100?
[INAUDIBLE]

JEN WINSLOW: [INAUDIBLE] 80, 265, 140.

MARK SANDERS: 265. Go ahead. Keep going, Jen. I'm sorry.

JEN WINSLOW: 50.



MARK SANDERS: It looks like, so far, that 265 is the largest number. Would you join me in giving that person round of applause for surviving the largest student load or caseload in the Midwest? You ever have a caseload so large or class so large that one day, you're walking down the street and you see somebody walking towards you and you say look vaguely familiar only to realize you've just met with them an hour earlier, a caseload or a student load so large that one day, you're in the mall. There's 1,000 students in the mall. And faces start to blend into one. And you start to wonder if you work with all of them at one time or another.

So you know who's vulnerable the depersonalization? Our people who work in public aid offices for the Social Security. You walk into public aid or Social Security. Take a number. Next. Those that they serve, because of the long lines they manage, they become vulnerable to depersonalization.

I actually worked with people during COVID who worked for the unemployment agencies. And they have such large lines that you could see where depersonalization set in. Take a number. Next. One time, I went to Baskin-Robbins, 31 flavors, the ice cream parlor. The person behind the counter said, take a number. Next. I was the only person there.

If we're not careful, this has a way of catching up to us. You've ever gone to the emergency room of a hospital late at night? You walk into the emergency room. I'm bleeding. [INAUDIBLE]. Sit down. They become immune to blood. Work-related burnout as a response to chronic stress. You can handle it in the beginning, but it starts to mount. The symptoms include emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishments, which can occur upon individuals who help others for a living.

There are four stages to burnout. The first stage is called the honeymoon stage. It's when you first get that job. Your new co-workers are happy to see you. They give you a name tag, an ID. They give you a coffee mug with your name on it, two pads of paper, a pencil, and the pen. You are so happy to be there because they're happy to see you. You feel like you're floating on a cloud.

When you are in the honeymoon stage of burnout, your mind says, I don't need anything but this job. I don't need food, air, sex, water. All I need is a job. As a matter of fact, the next time you go to work, I want you to look in the eyes of your interns and look in the eyes of those workers who've only been working in schools for a year or two and notice how their eyes glow. That's the honeymoon.

The second stage is called stagnation in the burnout cycle. The honeymoon is over. Reality sets in. Difficult co-workers. You have had a difficult coworker? Difficult boss, challenging parents, challenging students, and a ton of paperwork. How many of you have a lot of paperwork to do? I used to bring my own home with me. Then one day, I stopped. I became convinced if I died



social worker tomorrow, I'd have at least one form to fill out before I died, if nothing else, a discharge summary or something like that. The second stage, stagnation. The honeymoon is over.

The third stage in the burnout cycle is frustration. It's in this third stage that you catch the fact that you're burning out. It's in this third stage that people do positive things in order to recover from burnout. Positive things like what? What are some things that people do that are positive once they have caught the fact that they're burning out to recover? What kind of things do they do? I'll start. They start taking their lunch hour every day. What else? You start going home on time. What else? Positive things. They start doing their work a little different. They take a vacation. Let me ask you a question.

Have you ever needed a vacation as soon as you came back from vacation? So that's when you really know you're burned out. Now, if we don't catch it in the third stage, we are vulnerable to slipping into the four stages of burnout, which is called apathy, chronic burnout. Now your attitude is a job as a job as a job.

You show up at 8:00 AM Monday morning. You lock the door in front of the school and touch the steering wheel. And you do everything in your power not to go in. You go into the building reluctantly. And you look at the clock, and you say, the best thing about 9:00 AM Monday morning is that it's four hours from noon, and noon is lunch.

The phone rings. It's a parent. Now you want to shoot the phone. You're running from students. You're so burnt out on this fourth stage after chronic burnout, that your co-workers speak to you. You don't even speak anymore. How are you doing, mark? You grunt.

We're talking about a person who says-- they're so burned out, they say the best thing about Wednesday is two days from Friday. They don't even call Thursday, Thursday anymore. They call it Friday eve. You ever met somebody who's so burnt out, that they retire at age 65, but they quit at age 40. It's like they're at the school, but they're not really there.

Well, let's take a moment to look at those factors that buffer us against burnout at work. Number one, according to research, is feelings of appreciation from the people that we work with. Incredible story about this woman who worked at Woolworths for 50 years.

Are you familiar with Woolworths? It was like Target before Target. She was never late, hardly ever sick in 50 years. And I asked her, how did you give 50 years of your life to Woolworths, never called in sick, never late? She said, one word. That word was baseball glove.

She started her job during the Great Depression. And the first day she showed up to work, her son called and said, mom, now that you have that



new job, will you finally give me that baseball glove you promised? She said, not now, son. I'm kind of behind in the payment of bills. I promise you I'll buy you the baseball glove as soon as I possibly can.

Her supervisor overheard the conversation. Listen, I wasn't intentionally eavesdropping, and I have a son too. And one of the things I understand about kids is they don't always understand when you say you can't buy something right now. So I brought to this baseball glove. I'd like to ask you to give it to your son. And I hope he appreciates it. She said that one act of kindness after another led to her feeling of sense of appreciation. And she was able to get 50 years of her life to Woolworths.

I looked at the research on what motivates us to do our best work. Believe it or not, pay rate's number three on the list. Number one is feelings of appreciation from the people that we work with. One of the highlights of my week is where I'm working right now. At the end of our main meeting, we give shout-outs. We let our coworkers know that we recognize what they're doing. And we let them know that we appreciate them.

As a matter of fact, the next time you hear someone complaining about salary, notice that it's always followed with this sentence. They don't appreciate me, and this is all that they pay me. Now, the story from the Chicken Soup for the Soul Series, Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul, about a boy named Mike who played little league baseball on a team known as the Cougars.

And Mike came down with a rare illness, actually, cancer requiring him to have chemotherapy, radiation treatment. He lost his hair. And he was embarrassed to go to the next Cougars baseball game because at the beginning of each game, the Cougars would line up along the third base line, they would take off their hats and place their hats over their heart, and they would sing the national anthem. And he was concerned that if he took off his hat and they saw that he had no hair, that his teammates would laugh at him.

His father talked him into going to the next Cougars baseball game. And sure enough, the team lined up along the third baseline. And right before Mike took off his hat, all 25 of his teammates took off their hats first. And he saw that he all shaved off their hair. They looked at him and said, once a Cougar, always a Cougar.

Research says that when you're connected to a cohesive team, team cohesion is a protective factor against burnout. The first two, your coworkers let they appreciate you, and you feel a sense of camaraderie with the team. A third factor that can buffer us against burnout is open communication.

Have you ever worked somewhere where the unwritten rule was that you don't talk about stress, you don't talk about what's happening at work, no one's talking about the stress? What happens in environments where you



can't talk openly about the stress, the stress mounts, and you become more vulnerable to burnout.

Proactive strategies to deal with chronic stress, team building retreats, supervision, vacation time. All of these things can help. Other factors that buffer us against burnout is when we have a good relationship with our immediate supervisor. There's a famous quote that people join organizations. People join schools. And they leave their immediate supervisor. When we get along with our supervisor, that's a protective factor against burnout.

Creativity. Let me lean in. You ever worked somewhere so long that you could get there and not even realize you drove there? When some people say they're burned out, they're really bored out. They're bored from doing the same thing the same way year in and year out.

It's written in my biographical sketch that-- Alyssa read that I've been doing this work for decades. The secret is I always create new stuff to do. There's a book that's called *The Artist's Way*. And the author says that the opposite of creativity is depression. She said [INAUDIBLE] the opposite of creativity is death. When we're not creating, it's like we're dying inside. Some people say they're burned out. They're really bored out. They need to add more creativity to their work.

Another factor that buffers us within burnout is individuals making the decision to take responsibility for managing their own burnout. You see, within schools, there are these dynamics that can facilitate burnout like long work hours, lots of paperwork, audits, yearly evaluations. There are factors within organizations that can facilitate burnout, but there's also factors within the individual that can facilitate burnout.

Examples include if you feel that you can be all things to all people at all times, you're vulnerable to burnout. If you can't acknowledge personal limits, you are vulnerable to burnout. By the way, workers with kids, according to research, actually experienced less burnout than workers without kids. Do you know why? Because raising kids is stressful. And you get lots of practice at dealing with stress that you can take that ability with you to the workplace.

How about this? Workers with significant good relationships outside of work, partnerships, friendships, workers with significant and good relationships outside of work experience less burnout than workers who do not have healthy relationships outside of work. Workers who are newer experience more burnout than workers who've been doing the work for decades. Here's how that happens.

If you've been doing this work for decades, chances are that you've burned out about four or five times. And you've come back from it each time. And you learned from it. So now, you know what your limits are. You know to say no.



And then you recover. But when you're new, sometimes you want to save the world.

Here's my question let us chat. What responsibility do you think is of the school to help manage your burnout, and what responsibility is your responsibility to manage your own burnout? Would you put two numbers there, the first number being the school's responsibility, the second number being your own responsibility? And it should add up to 100%. Is it 50-50? Is it 70-30, 30-70, 20-80? Whose responsibility is it to manage your burnout?

JEN WINSLOW: We have folks saying 30-70, 40-60, 0%, 100% my own, 25-75, 60-40, 10-90, all over the board.

MARK SANDERS: Yes. Yes. Well, most even acknowledge that, hey, we both can do something to help with this. If I ruled the world, it would be 100-100, that the school or the organization would put 100% into helping you deal with burnout. And then you would put 100% into preventing it and recovering from it.

Factors contributing to burnout. Number one is gossip, backbiting, and backstabbing, toxic organizational dynamics is what facilitates burnout, not challenging students, not difficult parents who are challenging, but toxic organizational dynamics contributes to burnout. Another factor that contributes to burnout is unhealthy boundaries. And we tend to learn our boundaries in our families of origin.

How many you, by show of hands, come from families? That's my way of seeing if you're still listening at this early hour on a Monday morning. We tend to learn our boundaries in our families of origin. Some of you and some of the students you work with come from families where the boundaries are loose, everybody doing their own thing, every man, woman, and child for themselves.

An example would be the Smith family. Little Cheryl Smith, the daughter, made the cheerleading team. The family is so busy that no one knew she made the team. Her brother, Jason was cut from the basketball team. He cried in his room. No one in the family knew that he was cut from the team. Mom was promoted at work eight months ago. The family didn't know. They're like ships passing through the night. Her friends took her to Applebee's.

Dad was fired at work six months ago. The family didn't know the dad was fired. He'd go to the bar to drink. Uncle Ned is up in the attic dead. He's been up there dead for about nine months because everybody in the family is doing their own thing. No one went up to the attic and checked on Uncle Ned.

Have you ever seen a family that's so busy, everybody doing their own thing, that the dog gets the leash and he walks himself, and the four-year-old cooks a hamburger for himself. Let you in on a secret. Every family that I've ever



worked with that have loose boundaries, they often suffered a big loss. And they avoid contact with each other because to look at each other and see the pain on your family member's faces is to remind you of the bad thing that happened. So everyone goes their own way.

Some of you and some of the students you work with come from families where the boundaries are enmeshed. Things are a little too close. You ever seen the family where things were just a little bit too close? You can always tell when the family is enmeshed because one family member is talking, and then the other one will finish their sentences. You ever seen the family that finish each other's sentences, talk over each other, talk at the same time?

You know how you can really tell when the family has enmeshment? You ask one of the children a question and before they can answer the question, they look at their parents to see if it's OK to answer those questions. Every member of the family where you have enmeshment feels like all the other members of the family can read their mind. They're like mind readers. Let you in on a secret. Every family that I've ever worked with that have enmeshed boundaries, things are a little bit too close, they tend to have a lot of secrets. And they band together to protect the secrets.

And some of you come from families of origin, we're talking families of origin, where the boundaries are pretty healthy. You can always tell when a family has healthy boundaries because each member of the family is allowed what's called the five freedoms. Here are the five freedoms. The freedom to think what you think rather than what you should think. You see, when you have enmeshment, everybody has to think the same thoughts.

The freedom to feel what you feel rather than what you should feel. The freedom to want what you want rather than what you should want. Should children get everything they want? Of course not. Should they be allowed to want what they want? Of course. Because when your wants are shamed, you become a social worker. [INAUDIBLE]. I'm a social worker.

The freedom to see what you see rather than what you should see. So Samuel Jackson starred in a movie called *Eve's Bayou* out of New Orleans. He played the role of a doctor that made house calls. He had a daughter, Eve, about nine years old. And she opened the door and saw her father having sex with one of his female patients. She slammed the door.

Later that night, Eve, went to her big sister who was about two years older than Eve and said, I saw daddy with Mrs. Such-and-such, and this is what they were doing. And her big sister put her arm around Eve. She said, Eve, though that's not what you saw. This is what you saw. There's some families that are so enmeshed, you can't even see what you see.

My aunt Annie died, my favorite aunt. And I was asked to speak at her funeral. So I told the congregation that when we were kids growing up, me



and my four siblings, the five of us, for a short period of time, we lived in a three bedroom apartment with our grandparents and their 14 kids. Do the math. 21 people in a three bedroom apartment.

And I told the congregation that there were not enough beds, so I slept at the foot of my aunt Annie's bed. She was this amazing artist. Every night at the foot of her bed, I would pull out her paintings, these beautiful paintings. I told the congregation that my first dream was to be an artist like my aunt Annie.

And as I took my seat, my mother whispered, nice story. We never live with them. You never slept on the floor. Later that night, my oldest sister called me and said, Mark, I heard what she said. We did live with them. You did sleep on the floor. There are some families that are so enmeshed, that you can't even see what you see.

And then finally, the freedom to imagine your own self-actualization. There's a student in your school who wants to be a physical education teacher because he admires the school's physical education teacher. He wants to be just like the physical education teacher. He tells his parents. His parents say to him, why would you be a physical education teacher when you can be a lawyer, or a judge, or an engineer? Translation, our family has too many secrets. You're being a physical education teacher can't protect our secrets. You have to be a judge or a doctor, therefore, nobody would ever suspect the problems in our family when our son is a doctor. You see, when boundaries are healthy, children can choose their own career path.

So I want you to take a moment to think about it. I don't want to ask you about it, but just make a mental note of the boundaries in your family of origin. That is the family you grew up in as a kid. Were those boundaries more loose, every member of your family doing their own thing? Were the boundaries enmeshed? Were things a little bit too close? Or do you feel like the boundaries in your family of origin were pretty healthy? Take a moment to think about that, the boundaries in your family of origin.

Next, I invite you to think about the boundaries in your current family, that is, the family that you live with now. Are those boundaries more loose, everybody doing their own thing? Are those boundaries enmeshed in your current family, or do you feel like the boundaries in your current family are pretty healthy, everyone is allowed to find freedom to think what you think, feel what you feel, want what you want?

Let me tell you what I've learned is that when people say that the boundaries in their current family is different than the boundaries in their family of origin, they made a conscious decision, that is, if they partnered up or married, they chose a partner that wanted to do things different and they do things different. For example, if you came from a family of origin where the kids were not allowed to talk-- you've heard the expression, children should be seen and not



heard. --you make sure that your children, if you have children, are able to talk.

Here's what you might find it interesting. Every school also has boundaries. Some schools have loose boundaries where everyone working in the school is doing their own thing. No one supports anyone else. When the final bell rings, you rush to your car in the parking lot. You go back the next day. No one's supporting anyone else.

If you work in an environment where everyone is doing their own thing and no one is supporting anyone else, then you become vulnerable to burnout because we all need support from our coworkers. If you work in a school or an environment that's enmeshed, staff are talking to each other all the time on the weekends, calling you at home on Sunday, gossiping about work, calling you when you're on vacation to Tahiti, talking about work, things are a little bit too close, then you're vulnerable for burnout because we need some space sometimes even from our coworkers.

Let me share this with you. Every time I've ever worked with a counselor, or a teacher, or social worker that established unhealthy boundaries with their clients or their students, moving students in, moving clients in, marrying a client's mother or father, adopting a student, anytime I've ever seen someone overdo it or have unhealthy boundaries with their students, they tend to come from families where the boundaries were enmeshed, and they never learned how to create healthy boundaries. At the end of the day, if we can create healthy boundaries in all of our relationships, then we can preserve energy. To not be able to do that can lead to burnout.

Closed systems what we mean by closed systems are those type of systems where you can't talk about what's happening. Again, you can't talk about the stress. Extremes, too much or too little. If you have a coworker that's doing all of your work and all of their work, you have to snatch your work back, that can facilitate burnout. If you get no support from co-workers whatsoever, that can facilitate burnout.

Too little supervision. We need support from our supervisors. Too much supervision is called micromanagement, which is stressful. Workload size. If your workload is too big, depersonalization can set in, the attitude of next, which is a sign of burnout. Too small a workload, lots of time to stir up mischief, and gossip, and backstab, et cetera, which can facilitate burnout. A lack of creativity can contribute to burnout. Tension in work relationships.

I imagine that some of you are attending our webinar today with a coworker. I'm so happy I have coworkers now. I spent three decades on the road with no co-workers. When I think about people and their co-workers, I'm reminded of an experience I had 36 years ago in July.



A month before I married, my wife came to me with an album, not a CD, an album. Remember albums? And she said, I want you to rehearse the first song on the second side of the album. We're going to sing to each other in our wedding. The song was sung by a man named Marvin Gaye and a woman named Tammi Terrell.

So I'm practicing this song. And it dawned on me that I could rehearse for 300 years, and I would not be able to sing as well as Marvin Gaye. So I went to my wife and said, I love you, and I can't sing that song. She's said, OK. I'll sing to you.

In our wedding party was my wife's maid of honor, her best friend. My wife's maid of honor is one of the three or four best singers in the world, yet the world's never heard of her. That'd be an interesting seminar, how you can be one of the best in the world at something, and the world's never heard of you. She works at the post office. Anyway, during our wedding, my wife was singing this song, and she could not hit the high note. She looked back at her best friend who hit the note for her.

I know in my lifetime when I've had difficulties, next to an immediate family member, there's nothing like a really good co-worker. Incredible story about this American soldier who was stationed in Afghanistan. And she flew home to New Jersey to get married. Then she flew back to Afghanistan. And she lost her hand in battle.

Her best friends at work went back on the battlefield and found her hand so they could give her back that wedding band that was lost lives on her finger. Where would we be without co-workers? The research says that when you have a best friend at work, that's a protective factor against burnout. And when you have a best friend at work, it increases job satisfaction.

The two foremost magical words in the workplace, when you look at one of your friends at work you say to them, let's go to lunch. That camaraderie helps. Continuous stress or feeling ineffective-- I encourage all of you-- we can't do it now, but at some point really soon is define your definition of success in your work because when we don't feel effective or when we don't feel successful, that's a protective factor against burnout.

I have a friend, Greg Wisburg. He started off as a fourth grade teacher. The backdrop of the school where he taught was public housing in Chicago. Then he went from being a public school teacher to a social worker and then a professional speaker.

Greg told me one day, a man called him at night at midnight and woke him up. The man asked, are you the same Greg Wisberg, who taught fourth grade across the street from Robert Taylor public housing 30 years ago? Greg said, yeah, that's me. He says, I was a student in your fourth grade class. You were my teacher.



Because I'm a decorated military man. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if I wouldn't wind up achieving the rank of a Colin Powell. I was just calling to tell you you really made a difference in my life. And Greg said, what did I do? He says, every Friday, you would stop teaching. You would sit the whole fourth grade class on a large circle, and you would have us to read the newspaper from cover to cover.

And the reading the newspaper from cover to cover what I learned was there was more happening in the world than simply what was happening in public housing. So it made me curious about the world. I [INAUDIBLE] graduated high school, joined the military. I went around the world twice, he said.

But you did something that was more special than that. One day, you invited an entire fourth grade class to a special field trip. You invited the whole class to your house. You asked everybody to bring a bag lunch to your house. And I looked at my refrigerator that night, and I saw that I had no food. When I went into your house with no food, you went in your refrigerator, and you fixed me a sandwich. Anyway, the reason I'm calling is because we still have a home in Chicago. And I'll be coming home next month. And I wanted to invite you over to my house so I could fix you a sandwich.

When he told me that story, it dawned on him. It took 30 years to see the fruits of his labor. Your work is like that. Administrators, teachers, counselors, you're like farmers who plant seeds who may not see the fruits of your labor in the season that you plant the seed. Sometimes, it takes many seasons to see the fruits of your labor. I know your work is based in faith.

Let's talk about compassion fatigue, the stress of caring too much. Compassion fatigue difference in burnout in that burnout is caused by stress, toxic organizational dynamics, and feeling ineffective in your work. Compassion fatigue is caused by caring. The more you care about the students, the more vulnerable you are. Emotional residue as a result of working with those who suffer, secondary trauma, secondary PTSD.

Who's vulnerable to compassion fatigue? Receptionist because everybody who calls and walks through that door is on their caseload. Counselors are vulnerable, teachers, people who work with children, attorneys, especially those who read lots of crime scene situations, emergency care workers, medical professionals, the clergy, volunteers are vulnerable, soldiers, police officers, firefighters, and nurses.

The signs included in compassion fatigue includes anger. You were going to work happy every day. The tension mounted. Compassion fatigue sets in. Now you go to work angry, frustration, tardiness, exhaustion, depression, feeling hopeless, blaming others, irritability, sleeping problems as you dream about the bad things that happen to one of your students or one of your



clients, rudeness and gossiping, erosion of idealism, flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, spiritual distress.

I used to work with child welfare workers during the era of crack cocaine. And sometimes, they'd have caseloads to 250 clients. Some of them said they stopped believing in God as much as they used to because if there really is a God, how are there so many children suffering? If you hear enough stories of pain and suffering, it can make you suspicious in the world, make you believe that the world is a bad place.

So here's the question. Are you more vulnerable to burnout, which is caused by organizational stress, or are you more vulnerable to compassion fatigue caused by caring? Would you put one, either burnout or compassion fatigue in the chat? We want to know, which are you more vulnerable to, burnout or compassion fatigue? This is our informal poll.

JEN WINSLOW: We have compassion fatigue, compassion fatigue, burnout, compassion fatigue, compassion fatigue.

MARK SANDERS: It looks like, Jen, that compassion fatigue is in the lead. I kind of thought so. And would you respond to the second question in the chat, what are some things you do to take care of yourself? How do you avoid the occupational hazards of burnout and compassion fatigue?

JEN WINSLOW: Someone said play tennis, exercise, debrief with trusted friends, listen to music, talk with others, exercise.

MARK SANDERS: That is a really nice life, even the first one like tennis because so much of our stresses in our head. When you do something physical like play tennis, or paint, or vacuum, it's taking you out of your head, which is where the stress lies.

This next slide is based on research. My mentor did a study on helping professionals who have more protection against burnout and compassion fatigue and found that there are four things they do on a regular basis compared to those who are most vulnerable to burnout and compassion fatigue. Those of you who are less vulnerable, the research says you laugh more than your peers at home and at work.

Let me ask you a question. You ever hurt so bad that all you can do is laugh? I'm serious. A relative of mine called me and told me he was a quarter of a million dollars in debt. He was laughing like a hyena. Why are you laughing? Sometimes things hurt so bad that all you can do is laugh.

How many you have kids? February 3, 1995 was the scariest and happiest day of my life all wrapped up in one, if you can imagine such a day. It was the day my son was born. He came out weighing five pounds, five ounces looking exactly like his dad. Scared me to death.



Specifically, my son was born with a frame this big. He had my nose, my adult nose on a frame this big. The kid was all nose. So I walked around the hospital room to get different angles. It looked like everywhere I walked, his nose was following me. You would have sworn his nose had eyes. Then I wonder why nobody ever told me.

The second my son was born, I had more love than people I know my entire life. So strong was my love for my son, that everywhere the nurses took him, I followed. My mind was that my son will get mixed up with someone else's. And someone else would want to bring in the future NBA star home. Just kidding. In a hospital where my son was born, most of the babies were born weighing between 5 to 8 pounds at birth. And they were sleeping in the fetal position.

There was one baby that I never will forget, that baby boy weighing 12 pounds sleeping like this, like a grown man, like he's ready to say, give me a pillow, some popcorn, and put the TV on Channel 7. He was huge. We brought our son home.

And after a while, he learned to smile. I smiled with him. He's learned to laugh. I laughed with him. I felt better. Nothing was funny. Then I was losing it. Then I heard on Nightline the fastest growing movement is what we call laughing clinics.

There are these individuals who are clinically depressed. They show up every evening in the town square. They do 15 minutes of yoga stretching. They laugh for 45 minutes. Nothing is funny. They eat better. They sleep better, bright outlook on life. In short, there's a value in laughing even if nothing is funny.

So here's what I encourage you to do for the rest of your career. Every day you get off work, I want you to go to your car, and get in, and lock the door. Look around in both directions. Make sure nobody's watching and simply laugh. It's the best medicine for burnout and compassion fatigue.

Centering rituals. Those of you who have the most resistance to burnout and compassion fatigue were more likely to do something to censor yourself every day, prayer, meditation, quiet time. Every day you center yourself. You might take your whole lunch. Close your door. You get centered every day. Spending time alone replenishes us.

And the fourth finding was counterintuitive. Those of you who have more resistance against burnout, the research says you do more meaningful volunteerism than the rest. And what meaningful volunteerism does, it helps to recharge your battery because it reminds you of why you decided to become a helping professional or a teacher in the first place. As we wind down, I invite you to take a piece of paper and write down on that piece of



paper one, two, three, four. Would you write down one, two, three, four on a piece of paper?

If you were to ask me what's most important to me, without blinking, I would tell you my children are most important to me. And I can't tell you how often I walked past one of my children and went right to the computer to see if one of you sent me an email. Where you wrote down one, two, three, four, I invite you to take a moment to write down the four things that are most important to you in the world. What are the most foremost important things to you in the world? What are the four most important things to you in the world?

Now, next to each one, would you write down yes or no to the question, does each of them receive the time and attention for you that they deserve? A yes or no next to each one, does each received the time and attention from you that they deserve? Now would you put in chat the number of yeses you wrote down? How many yeses? Four yeses? Three yeses? Two? One?

JEN WINSLOW: We have two, four, two, zero, two, a four, one.

MARK SANDERS: And thank you, Jen. The average across the country is two. So most people are not really putting the energy into things that are most important to them. So part of the recovery from burnout and compassion fatigue is to put first things first. In other words, you can do your job so well that because of your great work, every student in your district winds up going to Harvard, Princeton, or Yale. But then if you don't have that kind of balance, you can lose everything that's close to you.

I heard a billionaire say that you are successful if the people that you want to love you actually love you. So we lead our time different. We take vacations when we can. How many of you, by show of hands, have ever gone to Vegas? Vegas is proof that even someone who has a life of crime, those gangsters created that big strip in Vegas. And yet no matter how many times I've gone to Vegas, by the fourth day, I'm ready to get home.

Last time I'm in Vegas, I'm at the airport. I can't wait to get home. And the announcement came over the loudspeaker, your plane has been delayed. I'm angry my plane is delayed. But while I'm at the airport waiting for the next plane, I played the slot machines at the airport. I won \$1.7 million. I'm only kidding. I don't gamble.

Anyway, my next stop was to a small town called Galena, Illinois. And I left that small town really replenished ready to take on the world. I agree with Norman Vincent Peale who said that busy people like you who help others for a living, teachers, counselors, administrators, it's mandatory for you to spend at least 15 minutes alone each day just to replenish yourself, and you have that much more to offer the world. Dale Carnegie said if he had 10 hours of work to do and five hours to do it, the first thing he'd do is take a 15 minute break just to replenish yourself.



What I've learned over the years is not so much of what I teach, but it's more about the action you take. Would you find your chat feature one last time? What I invite you to put in chat is what's the action you're going to take when this webinar is over as a result of our time together today? What will you do? What's your action?

JEN WINSLOW: People are putting in the chat, take 15 minutes laugh break, time for prayer and meditation, prioritize my top four, and take me time, prioritizing what's important to me, including time for myself, get more time to my nose. God deserves more.

MARK SANDERS: I don't know of anyone in the world whose work is more important than your work because you prepare the future. I used to work downtown Chicago. And the receptionist would ask me periodically to go look out the window at all these tall buildings. And she said that every one of those tall buildings went to a school.

So here's the story. My mentor's mentor was dying. And he called my mentor and asked my mentor, would you fly from Florida to Kalamazoo, Michigan to sit near my bedside to help me write one more article before I die? My mentor got on the plane, flew from Florida to Kalamazoo, Michigan. He's sitting at his mentor's bedside. He said, I love you, but this is really strange.

He says, why are you writing this article on your deathbed? You've written 500 articles. You've revolutionized behavioral health through your pen. Why are you writing this article in your deathbed? His mentor quoted a philosopher who said that each of us dies twice. He said the first time you die, it's a physical death. They'll have a funeral for you. And the next time you die is the last time someone on Earth speaks your name. And if you keep helping children, if you keep working with children, there'll be people speaking your name for a long time. Thank you for what you do. Thank you for spending this time with me. I'm going to turn it over to Jen for our next step. Thank you.

JEN WINSLOW: Thank you so much, Mark. That was excellent. And as a parent with a child who has an IEP, I also want to echo Mark's gratitude for you all doing what you do. You are going to be automatically redirected as we close this webinar to a very, very short survey. This survey helps us continue to provide free trainings and webinars to you all. So we would really appreciate if you could take just a quick moment to fill that out. Please look on our schedule, our website, and our social media for upcoming trainings and webinars. We would love to see you again, and we hope you have a great rest of your day.