Self-care and Professional Ethics

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1

Outline

- Self-care as an ethical principle within helping professions
  - What is self-care?
  - Professional code of ethics; NASW
  - Self-care assessment
  - Strategies to implement Self care
  - Our responsibility as professionals to ourselves and our colleagues
  - Trauma Informed Organization

2

Objectives

- Understand Self-care as an ethical principle
- Learn strategies to commit to self-care
- Learn strategies to bring self-care into the work place and to consult with colleagues
- Recognize Organizational Trauma Informed Care strategies to address self-care as an ethical responsibility

3

Principles/Standards of Professional Ethics

National Association of School Psychologists: "Self-monitoring and Peer Monitoring"

National Association of Social Workers: "Impairment of Colleagues"

American Nurses Association: "Addressing Impaired Practice"

American Psychological Association "Avoiding Harm"

4

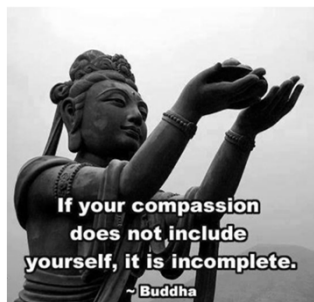## Social Work Code of Ethics

2.09 Impairment of Colleagues

Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's impairment should…

Consult (who?)

Assist (who?)

Take remedial action (when?)

5

6

Why Self-care?

Burnout

Providing self care for yourself and helping a colleague maintain professional standards must become reality

Workers on the frontline and workers that have been committed to the profession

People don't get the help they need.
• First Responders
• Vicarious Trauma

7

• Lets Play Family Feud!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RxX72u3WCc

8

Top 5 ways self/colleague(s) demonstrate impairment
(Cox & Steiner, 2013)

• Not observing your limits

• Loss of interest/motivation

• Excessive use of alcohol/Under the influence

• Drug use

• Uncaring/Numb/Staying in job anyway

9

- Lets Play Family Feud!

  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RxX72u
  3WCc

10

Top 5 Ways to Practice Self-Care

- Eating right

- Exercise

- Positive Sleep habits

- Stretching

- Establishing clear boundaries between work
  and home
  (Cox & Steiner, 2013, p. 33-37)

11

Partner Interview

Self Care Assessment

Adapted from Saakvitne, Pearlman, &
Staff of TSI/CAAP (1996).
Transforming the pain: A workbook on
vicarious traumatization. Norton

http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/stude
nts/self-care/documents/plan/Self-
Care_Assessment.pdf

12

Self-Care Assessment

- Are you more active in some areas of self-care?

- Any patterns in your self-care that surprise you?

- Do you ignore some areas of self-care?

- Is there any type of self-care you would like to include but just haven't gotten around to it?

Adapted from Saakvitne, Pearlman, & Staff of TSI/CAAP (1996). Transforming the pain: A workbook on vicarious traumatization. Norton

13

Strategies to implement self care

- Review calendar and identify small amounts of time each week
- Record the activity on your calendar and make a deal with yourself or for one month
- At the end of the month, observe any effects on physical, emotional , or professional functioning, slept better? Calmer? Less irritable?
- What got in the way of self care?

(Cox & Steiner, 2013, p.41)

14

Self-care specific to Mental Health Practice

KEEP CALM AND PRACTICE SELF-CARE

1. Start the day with a list of work to be achieved

2. Prioritize

3. Organize based on emotional intensity- breaking up those tasks.
   a. Looks differently for everyone
   b. Be aware of your trends and patterns
   c. Make necessary changes- practice maintenance

15

Workforce Studies

- 19 % of licensed social workers were no longer practicing within the profession[1]

- 30 % social workers did not plan to remain in their current position over the next two years[1]

- and of those 30%, nearly 5% plan to leave the profession for other work[1]

- 59.6% of mental health professionals acknowledge "working when too distressed to be effective"[2]

[1]Whitaker, Weismiller, & Clark, 2006, retrieved from Center for Workforce Studies at NASW, **http://workforce.socialworkers.org/studies/natstudy.asp**
[2]Norcross & Barnett, 2008, retrieved from National Register of Health Service Psychologists, http://www.nationalregister.org/trr_spring08_norcross.html

16

- The Social Work Code of Ethics requires us to consult with our colleague who we think may be providing impaired care when feasible and assist them in taking remedial action.

What does this look like? Has anyone ever experienced this before?

17

Vicarious Trauma

- Also called Secondary Trauma and/or Compassion Fatigue

  - Not direct trauma
  - Caused by second hand exposure
  - Accrual of exposure to other's trauma

18

Impact on Agencies/Organizations

- Emotional reactions can cause conflict over job assignments and professional limits
- Decreases productivity
- Loss of staff due to sick time and/or high turnover
- Reduced commitment to the organization
- Difficult to manage change
  - Being overwhelmed causes us to use primitive part of the brain

19

Impaired Organization

What does this look like? (Cox & Steiner, 2013)

- Lack of role clarification
- Lack of staff support
- Low morale on employee reward committee
- No accountability
- Punitive
- Uncaring/Numb
- High Turnover rate

20

Organizations can be Trauma Informed

- **Organizational Level**
  - Leaders need to ask what the agency, program or setting can do to support staff
  - Provide trauma informed opportunities to discuss and debrief about work related stressors
  - Mental health benefits
  - Variety of case load
- **Professional Level**
  - Staff and supervisors to enhance work related strengths
  - Allowing employees to take off work
  - Continued training on new skills
- **Personal Level**
  - Self Care

21

Self-Care & Organizational Self-Care Toolbox

- Examples of items for a self-care kit
- Conversations starters
  - Colleagues
  - Organization
  - Practitioner assessment
  - Self-Assessment of self-care
  - Professional code of ethics for multiple professions
- Certificate of commitment to self-care

22

Make Change Happen

Make A Tangible Change Plan

1. Assess what you value
2. Set your goal (S.M.A.R.T Goal)
3. Identify your sub-goals
4. Identify your skills and strategies
5. Continue practicing good self-care!

23

Questions

24

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- Brys, Shannon, "Professionals must take their own advice to avoid burnout". Common responses adapted from September 9, 2013 from online blog.
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25

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- Norcross & Barnett, 2008, retrieved on 12-31-13 from National Register of Health Service Psychologists, http://www.nationalregister.org/trr_spring08_norcross.html

26

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- The Third Metric, Fun Ways Mental Health Professionals De-stress http://www.huffingtonpost.com/danielle-hark/stress-tips_b_4044491.html

- Building a change plan is from the Behavioral Health and Wellness Program, University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus School of Medicine. Dimensions: Work and Well-being Toolkit for Physicians http://www.bhwellness.org/resources/toolkits/physicians/

27

Handouts

- http://www.leadership.umn.edu/news/document
  s/Gold_ResiliencyInventory.pdf = Skovholt
  Practitioner Resiliency and Self-Care Inventory

- http://proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_5_English_S
  elf-Score_3-2012.pdf = Professional Quality of
  Life Scale

- Self-care assessment.docx (32 KB);

28

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