Self-Care in High Intensity Work
HANDOUTS

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Work Setting Stress

- Lack of Referral Agencies
- Funding Pressures
- Frustration with Criminal Justice System
- Irregular Work Schedule
- Extensive Paperwork
- Threat of Job Loss
- Job Ambiguity
- Work Overload
- Interpersonal Conflicts
- Upset or Upsetting People
- Change

Work Setting Stress

- Concerns about Safety
- External Agency Conflicts
- Work Climate
- Retention Problems
- Insufficient Resources
- Inadequate Job Training
- Unwelcome or Unanticipated Change
- Inconsistent/Lack of Policy
- Supervisor/Staff Conflict/Differences in Style
- Communication Lapses
Five Purposes of Rituals

- RELATING: Shaping, Expressing and Maintaining Relationships
- CHANGING: Making and Marking Transitions for Ourselves and Others
- HEALING: Recovering from Relationship Betrayal, Trauma or Loss
- BELIEVING: Voicing Beliefs and Making Meaning
- CELEBRATING: Affirming Deep Joy and Honoring Life with Festivity

RESILIENCY STRATEGIES

For Sense of Hope:
- Develop opportunities to succeed
- Practice gratitude
- Change or expand your job description
- Give praise
- Diversify client types
- Seek advanced professional development
- Decorate your office
- Find appropriate ways to have fun

For Self-Knowledge and Insight:
- Explore your motivation for working with victims of crime
- Identify your own strengths and challenges
- Clarify goals, mission, and boundaries of the organization
- Be aware of your role of victims
- Get adequate training
- Individualize services to each victim

For Healthy Coping:
- Learn to identify your physical stress reactions
- Balance your life
- Get adequate sleep
- Change the pace
- Develop calming and modulation techniques
- Assess safety in your work environment
- Use regular supervision
- Use technology and resources wisely

For Strong Relationships:
- Enhance communication skills
- Learn boundaries at confidentiality
- Collaboration
- Shared values
- Shared involvement and diversity
- Foster a team approach
- Address conflict resolution proactively
- Stress to be genuine, empathetic, and warm

For Personal Perspective and Meaning:
- Assess your personal values
- Integrate new understandings in your work
- Assess your perspective on suffering
- Foster reaffirmation
- Support
- Engage in social activities
- Include spirituality in assessment of victims’ strengths
- Identify activities that are not aligned with values

Making Positive Lifestyle Changes

- Managing time
- Thinking positively
- Healthy boundaries
- Eating healthy food
- Exercising
- Relaxing
- Experiencing humor and laughter
- Spending time with people who are important in your life

From the list, choose one area that you would like to focus on:
I would like to change my behavior in the area of:_______________________.
Making Positive Lifestyle Changes

Think back to a time in your life when you believe you were practicing behaviors that supported this area of your life. Jot down answers to the following questions:

- What were you doing to practice these behaviors?
- How did you feel when you were practicing these behaviors?
- What were your thoughts as you were practicing these behaviors?
- What made it possible for you to practice these behaviors?
- What made this a good experience?
- What are three things you need to do to bring these behaviors into your life now?

STRESS REDUCING WORKPLACE STRATEGIES

- Create a board of advisors. Find two or three people you admire and ask them to lunch a few times a year. Include someone at work who understands your agency better than you do, someone who has a broader understanding of your field, and someone who understands what you want from life.
- Spread the word. Tell your own successes. If you receive a compliment, ask if the person would be willing to discuss it with your boss.
- Try something new. Begin with what you would like to achieve or acquire for the year. One way to find additional work is to review past performance evaluations. Once you have a couple of goals in mind, put your list of your advisor list for feedback. You may also consider volunteering for a project or task on a new responsibility.
- Take inventory. Review what you have done and learned over the past few years, and write down your skills and accomplishments. Use this list to identify your strengths and whether you are qualified for a new job. Make sure your resume clearly represents your talents and not just your job.
- Get involved. Join a professional association or networking group. This will help you stay current on trends in the field. Compare your skills and experience to that of your peers.
- Assert yourself. SPEAK UP when it is time for an evaluation or when you believe your accomplishments warrant recognition, either monetarily, position or status change or through public recognition.
- Employees should never be made to feel they are suffering from compassion stress or fatigue or they are not fit to do their job. Discuss the importance of the agency taking responsibility to do everything it can to educate about, prevent, and treat compassion fatigue. Discuss the importance of the agency taking responsibility to do everything it can to educate about, prevent, and treat compassion fatigue. Discuss the importance of the agency taking responsibility to do everything it can to educate about, prevent, and treat compassion fatigue. Discuss the importance of the agency taking responsibility to do everything it can to educate about, prevent, and treat compassion fatigue.

Coping Strategies

- Accept - Do not continue ‘knocking’ on same door with same response
- Avoid - No need for unnecessary stress
- Alter - Change for the good
- Adapt - Try something different or new
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