

**Integrating Compassion Fatigue Awareness, Suicide Alertness & Resiliency  
Starburst Conversation, UKC, Dalhousie University, Halifax 19 June 2015  
Summary**

On June 19, Bill Sparks presented an hour and half lunch and learn at Resiliency III in Halifax on:

**Integrating Compassion Fatigue Awareness, Suicide Alertness & Resiliency**

This is a short summary of the structured conversation and resources available.

**1. Safety Contract.**

Even a short talk like this may trigger past insights requiring attention and possible referral. Info stays in room, insight triggers, heartbeat & sweat, grounding exercise, relaxation training, brightest object in room for present time focus., leave if need but come back.

**2. Why integrate CF-SA-Res.**

Compassion Fatigue Educators are often reluctant to discuss suicide. Suicide prevention and intervention workers are often reluctant to look at compassion fatigue and suicide in professional helpers and colleagues. Bill Sparks MSW, RSW, CATSM, a certified member of the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress, Traumatology Institute trained CF Specialist, ASIST Trained "safeTALK" Trainer, and Sessional Instructor in International Development at Humber College looked at making these links conscious to staff for self, co-worker, and agency wide awareness, intervention, recovery and resilience.

**3. Key Points Mentioned:**

- Francoise Mathieu has written: Compassion Fatigue can lead to very serious problems such as depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts. (Mathieu 2008).
- The author and Wallis Balog have commented there is a lack of suicide alertness training and intervention preparation in Compassion Fatigue Therapy trainings which both she and the author attended in separate years. (Balog 2014)
- Geela Giroux Patterson's tragic suicide example of a suicide prevention worker,
- Steven Stack ( Stack 2004) study of on 143,000 social workers found 1.56 odds ratio for suicide and 1.35 for professional managers or practitioners,
- Resiliency III conference materials on Resilience (Unger, M. et al), Vicarious Resilience (Hernandez-Wolfe, P. et al) and Practitioner Resilience (Hudson, C. et al) appear to fit with previous Compassion Fatigue and Compassion Satisfaction research (Stamm, B. et al, 2012).
- The author contends, "Suicide needs to be addressed as part of the Compassion Fatigue Symptom Cluster for early identification, reduction, recovery and resilience in workers"

**3. Workshop Process Model.**

Bill reviewed a process model available on PPT for a one day, half day and quarter day workshop based on the work of Charles Figley, Beth Stamm, Francoise Mathieu, Anna Baronowsky & Eric Gentry and others with several worksheets and exercises supplemented.

**The one day model included:**

## **1. Individual Self- Care**

- Attention grabber –usually a profession specific example of STS or a suicide with STS as a factor
- Suicide examples and statistics specific to the profession.
- Safety contract for confidentiality, and anxiety management.
- Definitions: Stress, Primary Trauma, Acute Trauma, Chronic-continuous Tr, PTSD, VT, STS, STSD, Tr Exposed Response, Trauma continuum, Who can suffer, symptoms, Psycho-Neuro Biology.
- Worker stresses worksheet, usually in pairs or small groups.
- Stamm ProQOL test, share results if want.
- Developmental Stress-Trauma sheet and exercise, Workplace Trauma sheet and exercise.
- How practitioners handle stress now (Coping Strategies Inventory of Cheryl Regher & Ted Bober 2005) and Findings,
- Tips on Handling Stress-Mindfulness Based Relaxation Training (Kristen Neff), UBuffalo/SUNY Self Care Starter Kit (Lisa Butler et al 2013), Francoise Mathieu's 12 best tips, and strategies from Laurie Ann Perlmann & Karen Saakvitne in 5 life areas.
- Resiliency lunch, low serotonin, low carbs, Thai, Med salads (brain food)
- Self Care Plans. Brainstorm in pairs. Creative ideas, report back. Barriers to overcome, Fill in seven day template (adapted from Stamm 2000 plus CAMH 2014). 30 minutes alone or pairs or small groups. Share if want.
- Local Therapeutic resources when needed. -Toronto Baronowsky at TI -ARP, CCFS list, EMDR list,
- Move to Organizations. CF symptoms (CompassionFatigue.org), EAP specific to agency (Youthwork, CAMH -FC, Hospices, Complex Care Units, Emergency Services and Units, DayCare-ECE, VAW. and more)

## **2. Organizational Supports, Trauma Informed Agencies, Organizational Resiliency.**

- Given CF is an occupational hazard what supports are helpful or could be helpful in your agencies policies and practices? Brainstorm pairs or small groups)
- Review of organizational supports that reduce CF in nurses (Boyle, D. 2011)); in youth workers (Hudson, C. 2015); in practitioners (Mathieu, F. 2010) in agency structure (Bloom, S. 2014), (Fisher, P. 2013) including peer support, clinical supervision, community immunity workshops, prof. org workshops. STS accepted in EAP, CISD, CISM, in house teams, resiliency workers in Community Health Centres. Org Resiliency building models, policy and practice examples (Klinic, CAMH, KonTerra, Headington, and a sample blank template for a Trauma Informed-Compassion Fatigue-Organizational Resiliency Policy.

## **3. Suicide Alertness.**

Presented once CF awareness established or to be inserted with agency resources section. Review ASIST, safeTALK, LivingWorks.net models (suicide alertness for everyone Tell Ask Listen Keepsafe -3 Hrs., Applied Suicide Intervention Skills -2 days . Prescribed program, copyrighted. Certified Trainers only. Costs for workshops or trainer certification. Democratization of suicide alertness for anyone over 18. Helpful for co-workers who may be reluctant to follow up with professional colleagues. “safeTALK” is a 3 hour workshop. “ASIST” is a two day workshop.

## **4. Vicarious Resilience & Recovery.**

Resiliency! End on the upper -Worker -VR Hernandez-Wolfe) what empowers workers list. VR scale

coming. ARM from RRC-Dalhousie Univ. Relate to ProQol Compassion Satisfaction Sub-scale and ARM, Conner Davidson. Questionnaire worksheets and scales. In small groups or pairs. Share if want.

### **5. Beyond the Agency: Changing Societal Context with Alliances and Movements.**

The CF-CS-SA-Res movement. GIFT Model mobilizing tips for your profession and building professional alliances for change.

**6. Closing.** review goals, missing items. Evaluation forms, End with example of resilience such as

- “KELEN – GAKU – TELLEGH – PAT” Centuries old Inuit Whale Hunters term-  
“We are watching out for each other”

**June 19 Closing:** Bill closed the Starburst Conversation Lunch and Learn with:

A great local example of resistance, resilience and resurgence: This is Halifax, Nova Scotia. Viola Desmond grew up in this town and in 1947 her car broke down in New Glasgow just up the highway... Guess what she started.

### **Citations:**

(Mathieu 2008) Compassion Fatigue Train the Trainer Workbook, Kingston, Canada.  
[www.compassionfatigue.ca](http://www.compassionfatigue.ca) 2008

(Balog 2014) Personal Communication, December 2014)

(Stack 2004) Stack, S. *Archives of Suicide Research*, 8:379-388, 2004

### **Online Resources to start with:**

.PPT on the above presentation from the facilitator. [William.sparks@rogers.com](mailto:William.sparks@rogers.com)

## **A. Individual Awareness and Self Care:**

**What is Stress? AIS**

<http://www.stress.org/what-is-stress/>

**Understanding and Dealing with Compassion Fatigue**

[Compassion Fatigue Solutions | Compassion fatigue, self ...](#)

[www.compassionfatigue.ca/](http://www.compassionfatigue.ca/)

Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue –B. Hudnall Stamm

<http://www.slideshare.net/chsbuffalo/compassion-satisfaction-and-compassion-fatigue>

### **CAMH Building a self-care plan**

[http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health\\_information/a\\_z\\_mental\\_health\\_and\\_addiction\\_information/concurrent\\_disorders/a\\_family\\_guide\\_to\\_concurrent\\_disorders/selfcare/Pages/building\\_selfcare\\_plan.aspx](http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health_information/a_z_mental_health_and_addiction_information/concurrent_disorders/a_family_guide_to_concurrent_disorders/selfcare/Pages/building_selfcare_plan.aspx)

Countering **Compassion Fatigue**: A Requisite Nursing Agenda. Deborah A. **Boyle**, MSN, RN, AOCNS®, FAAN. Disclosures. Online J Issues Nurs. 2011;16(1)

<https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1P3-2402605361/countering-compassion-fatigue-a-requisite-nursing>

[Compassion fatigue - PubMed Central \(PMC\)](#) Canadian Doctors  
[www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov) > ... > [Can Fam Physician](#) > **v.59(3); 2013 Mar**

### **Gift from Within Resources-**

Gift From Within CF and Resiliency in the caring professions

<http://www.giftfromwithin.org/html/prvntcf.html>

[Nurses and Compassion Fatigue - Gift From Within](#)

[www.giftfromwithin.org/html/Nurses-and-Compassion-Fatigue.html](http://www.giftfromwithin.org/html/Nurses-and-Compassion-Fatigue.html) [Cached](#)

Boyle, DA., Countering Compassion Fatigue: ...

## **B. Training Certifications in CF and Traumatology:**

### **Green Cross Academy**

<http://www.greencross.org/certifications.html>

### **TRAUMATOLOGY INSTITUTE OF CANADA**

[www.psychink.com](http://www.psychink.com)

## **C. Organizational Supports:**

**TI – CF –Resiliency -Organizational Policy and Practice.**

## **Creating Trauma Informed Organizations.**

### **Care 4 You and TEND -Pat Fisher and Francoise Mathieu**

<http://www.brockostrom.com/dev/compassion/index.php/agenda>  
annual conference

Mathieu Compassion Fatigue Solutions Workbook Ch.7-8

[www.compassionfatigue.ca/](http://www.compassionfatigue.ca/)

### ***Fisher & Associates Solutions 12 Factor Organizational Health Model***

<https://www.fisherandassociates.org/about-us-2/>

<http://www.bottomlineconference.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Trauma-Exposed-Workplaces.pdf>

### **Sandra Bloom-the Sanctuary Model,**

THE SANCTUARY MODEL: CREATING, DESTROYING, AND RESTORING SANCTUARY. Sandra L. Bloom, M.D.

<http://www.traumatalks.ca/presentations/pdf/6-Sandra-Bloom.pdf>

<http://www.thesanctuaryinstitute.org/about-us/the-sanctuary-model>

**CAST Canada - Ontario TI Agencies Working Group**

**Tom Reagher, Becca Partington, Bill Sparks, Lori Gill, and more**

<http://www.cast-canada.ca/>

### **CISAF-KonTerra Group**

<http://www.konterragroup.net/what-we-do/resilience/strengthening-team-resilience/>

### **Headington Institute, Organizational Consulting and Team Resilience**

<http://www.headington-institute.org/search/organizational>

### **Health Canada VAW Agency Care,**

<http://www.mollydragiewicz.com/VTguidebook.pdf>

Part 4. Organizational Solutions

### **Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project**

[www.compassionfatigue.org](http://www.compassionfatigue.org)

<http://www.compassionfatigue.org/pages/symptoms.html>

*Organizational Compassion Fatigue: Warning Signs and Symptoms*

<http://selfcarespecialists.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Workplace-Stress-Survey.pdf>

## **D. Professional and Social Movements:**

**CF-Resilience & Social Justice. Changing the Odds.**

**GIFT** [Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training | GIFT](#)

[www.grassrootsfundraising.org](http://www.grassrootsfundraising.org)

**Resilience Research Centre**

<http://resilienceresearch.org/research/projects/international-resilience>

<http://www.dal.ca/news/2011/06/27/resiliency-is-the-heart-of-the-matter.html>

**Social Justice means...**

**NSASW Social Justice Committee**

<http://www.nsasw.org/document/1670/Minutes%20-%20November%2029,%202013.pdf>

We need a frame of reference to address social justice issues...

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