



Objectives For Today

- Describe the concept of compassion fatigue and compassion satisfaction.
- Identify the symptoms and some methods to alleviate compassion fatigue and increase compassion satisfaction.





Small Group Activity #1

- Find a partner, someone you don't know, and:
 - Introduce yourself.
 - What you do and the roles you have in your life
 - 1 interesting thing about yourself that people wouldn't know about you just by looking at you
 - Discuss why you're here
 - Report back to group.





Caring for Others: Compassion/Empathy Fatigue (CF)

- Animal care professionals are caring people:
 - Care for clients and patients/animals.
- Overall depletion of empathy and hope for others and self.
- It's an occupational hazard:
 - CF does not develop because something is wrong but because we care or USED to care.





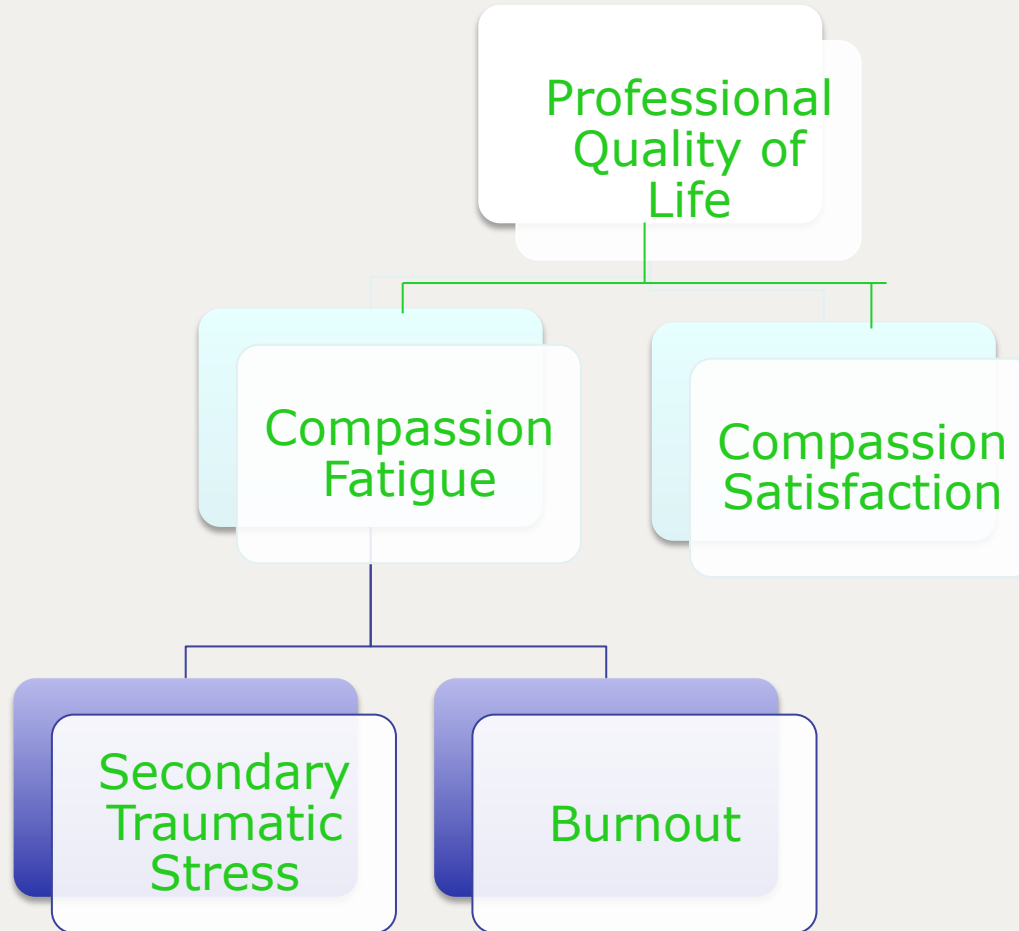
Who is Affected?

- Anyone in the helping professions/volunteers.
- Animal care workers may be at increased risk due to the dual roles they play (Figley and Roop, 2006).





Professional Quality of Life (Stamm, 2010)





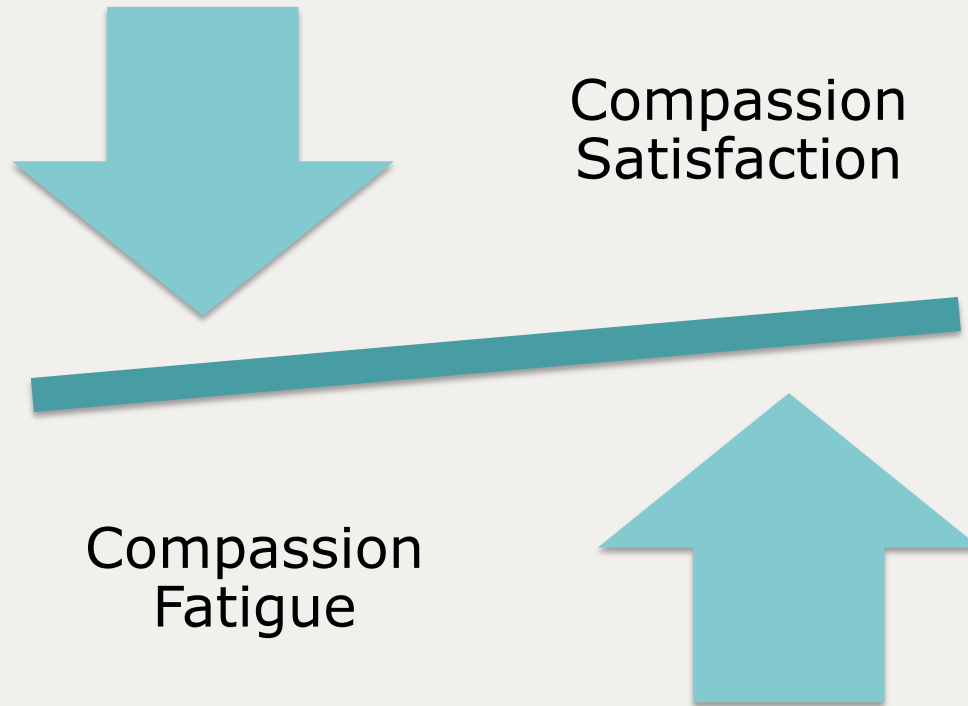
Moral Distress

- Policies which conflict with personal beliefs about patient/animal care.
- Perform tasks that you fundamentally do not agree with.
 - Can be a significant contributing factor to compassion fatigue.
- Small groups.





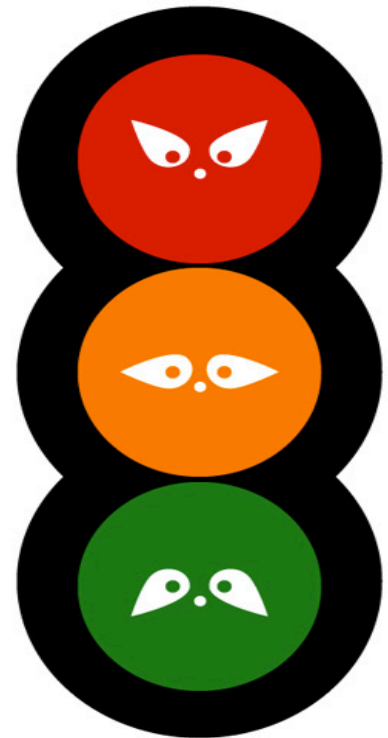
Finding Balance:





Warning Signs

- Physical signs of CF:
 - Physical exhaustion;
 - Sleep disturbance;
(autonomic nervous system)
 - Headaches;
 - Compromised immune system.





Warning signs

- Behavioural Signs:
 - Increased substance use;
 - Other addictions;
 - Irritability with co-workers, clients, family;
 - Inflated sense of responsibility;
 - Avoid or dread client contact;
 - Relationship difficulties;
 - Distract or avoid hearing client story.





Warning Signs

- Psychological Signs:
 - Emotional exhaustion;
 - Distancing self from others/feel estranged from others;
 - Depressed mood;
 - Reduced feelings of empathy and sympathy/insensitivity to emotional material;
 - Limited compassion for your coworkers;
 - Cynical;
 - Resentful of your work and also your clients;
 - Professional helplessness;
 - Low job satisfaction- feeling disillusioned;
 - Disruption of world view;
 - Hypervigilance;
 - Intrusive imagery;
 - Difficulty with boundaries;
 - Feel like there is no one to talk to about highly stressful events;
 - Loss of hope or meaning- existential despair.





Organisational Level Warning Signs

- High levels of absenteeism.
- Attrition.
- Tumultuous relationships between colleagues.
- Team dysfunction.
- Team inability to meet deadlines.
- Reduced flexibility of staff members.
- 'Us versus Them' mindset.
- Negative mindset in relation to change or possibility for improvement.






Small Group Exercise

- Individually, identify a case/situation that caused you to take it home with you or caused some symptoms of compassion fatigue.
- Identify what factors caused you to identify with the person/client/event.
- Choose a group of three to share these findings with the larger group.





Strategies to limit CF

- Self-test! AWARENESS IS KEY!
- http://www.proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_5_English_Self-Score_3-2012.pdf
- Understand YOUR OWN warning signs.
 - How do you know when you are reaching your limit? Intervene before 
 - Burnout and CF are different and may require different strategies.
- Social support at home/work.





Strategies to limit CF

- Reflect on your exposure to traumatic material:
 - Direct client contact, indirect through debriefing, on the radio/television programs.
- Life balance wheel.
 - Create a weekly life schedule which approaches your ideal.





Self-Care Basics

- Ensure sleep, rest, healthy diet, exercise, relaxation.
- Replenishing activities:
 - Say NO or YES more often.
- Grounding, pocket, body scan, self-talk (this is not..).
- End-of-day rituals.
- Acknowledge your grief and loss.
- Interact with your pets!
 - Unconditional positive regard.
- Meditation, yoga, mindfulness.





"The Prevalence and Psychological Factors Associated with Compassion Fatigue in Veterinary Students in Australia."

McArthur M, Andrews J, Brand C, Hazel S. In Press.

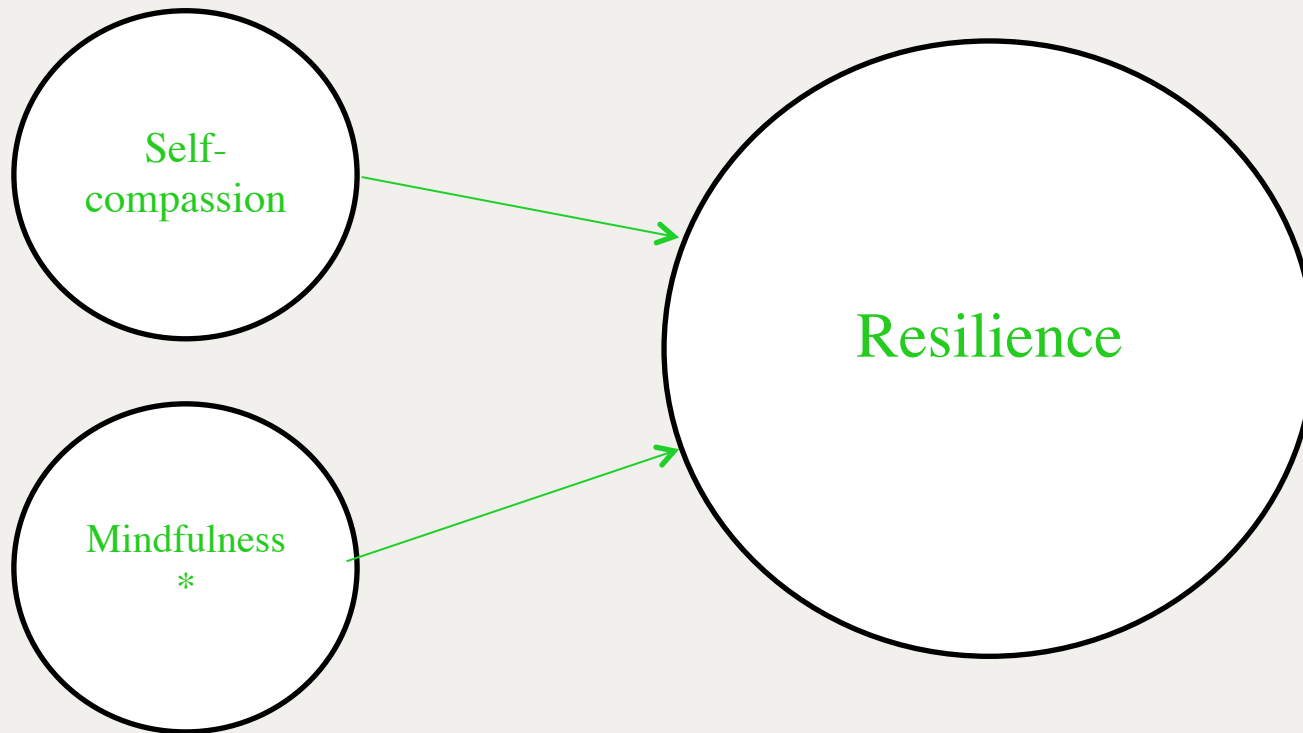
- 29.5% experiencing high burnout, 24.4% high secondary traumatic stress and only 21.2% high compassion satisfaction.
- Compassion satisfaction: Predictors: higher empathic concern and lower personal distress.
- Burnout: low mindfulness, low self-compassion, high dysfunctional coping.
- Secondary Traumatic Stress: high self-stigma, high dysfunctional coping, low mindfulness, high perspective taking, high personal distress.





Resilience in veterinary students and the predictive role of mindfulness and self-compassion.

McArthur et al, In Press



* Nonreactive and nonjudgemental mindfulness





Organisational Level Strategies to Manage Compassion Fatigue

- Culture in the workplace:
 - Go home on time (ish)!
- Job rotation:
 - where this is feasible.
- Ensure you take annual leave.
- Increase social support in the workplace.
- Recognition from colleagues and supervisors.





Organisational Level Strategies to Manage Compassion Fatigue

- Training opportunities:
 - CPD re: wellness.
 - CPD in area of interest (time off, interact with peers, build skills)
- EAPs in the workplace.
- Accessing counseling and supervision as needed.
 - Access to empowering and engaging relationship with supervisor is protective (Slattery and Goodman, 2009).
- Access to a regular debriefing process.





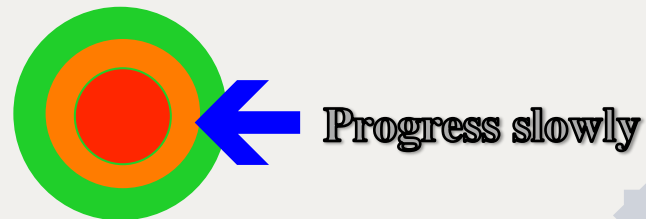
Debriefing

- Consider how debriefing occurs:
 - Informal versus formal
 - Low impact debriefing

- Avoid

Sliming

- Fair warning
- Consent
- Low impact disclosure





Mindful Self-Compassion (Kristin Neff)

- It is hard to give to others that which we do not afford ourselves.
- Three components of self-compassion
 - Self-kindness versus self-judgement
 - Common humanity versus isolation
 - Mindfulness versus overidentification
 - Mindfulness
 - MSC





Individual/Small Group Exercise

- List one mini-escape or diversion that worked well to restore and renew you.
- List one thing that brings you joy.
- List 3 things you are grateful for today.
- What made you laugh today?
- Who can you reach out to that you love?





Get Back to What Brought You Here... Small/Large Group Activity

- Compassion satisfaction:
 - What is rewarding about your job?
 - What made you choose this work?
 - Make sure you include and focus on these aspects that make you feel good about your job





Support

- Consider:
 - The Grieflink website
 - Self-help books
 - Argus Institute (CSU) (grief and loss)
 - Telephone counselling (Lifeline)
 - Psychologists and GPs.

“Compassion for myself is the most powerful healer of them all.”

Theodore Isaac Rubin (born 1923)

Psychiatrist, Author

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering, loss, pain, feelings ... daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet”

Rachel Remen (1996) Kitchen Table Wisdom

