

Maintenance Required

Content Alert:

PTSD/PTSI, Stress, Suicide

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The Elevator



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The Conversation Somewhere In North Carolina...

Me: How Are Things Going?

Elevator Friend: Hi Carla! Things Are Great!

Me: Are They?

Elevator Friend: Yeah, Yeah! Of Course They Are Great!



Conversation

Me:

Would You Tell Me If Things Weren't Great?

Elevator Friend:

Absolutely Not!

Me:

I Appreciate The Honesty

Elevator Friend:

Of Course → Exits Elevator



**Me: Internal Dialogue With Myself Thinking
About How We Change The Narrative That We
Have To Be:**

- 
- **Strong (weak)**
 - **Together (falling apart)**
 - **Perfect (human)**
 - **Self-sacrificing (healthy boundaries)**

**We are not
machines**



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Cost and Consequence of Caring

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

~R.N. Remen



COMPASSION FATIGUE-exhaustion and result is lowered empathy or support

CHRONIC STRESS-long term NS arousal

SECONDARY TRAUMA-exposure to another person's traumatic experience/s

BURNOUT-severe exhaustion, cynicism, detachment, reduced professional efficacy



How are you self-assessing for ...

COMPASSION FATIGUE

CHRONIC STRESS,

the impacts of SECONDARY TRAUMA and

BURNOUT?



Leaders/Supervisors

How are you assessing your staff for ...

COMPASSION FATIGUE

CHRONIC STRESS,

the impacts of SECONDARY TRAUMA and

BURNOUT?



DATA~

Suicide consideration

Adults	4.2%
Attorneys	10-12%
Law School Students	11%
Military Veterans	14%

Substance Use

US general population

Attorneys

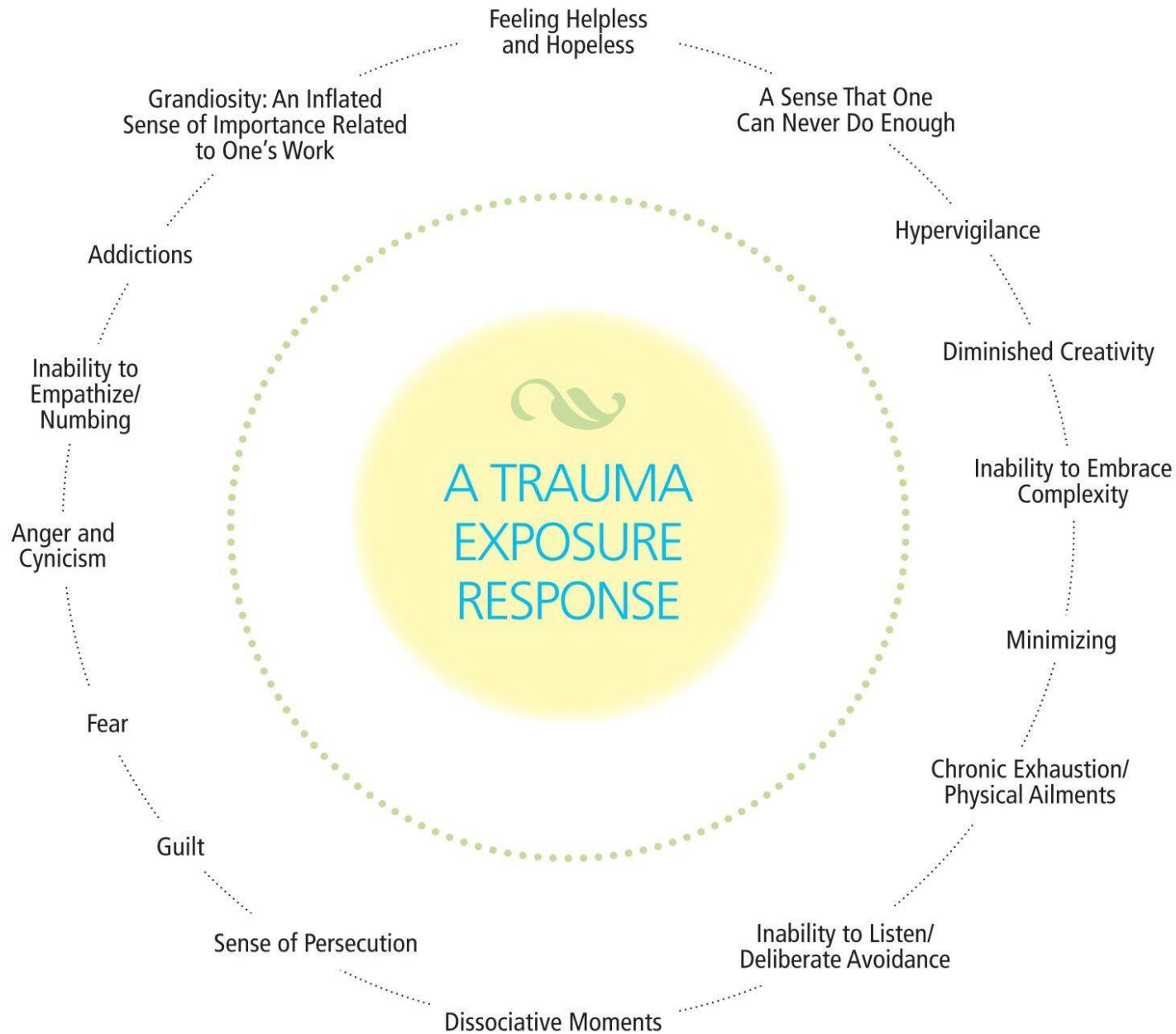
Attorneys < 30

6-10%

21%

32%





Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide To Caring For Self While Caring For Others

-Laura van Dernoot Lipsky

- 
- One of the following:
 - Directly experiencing traumatic event
 - Witnessing event as it occurs
 - Learning of events occurring to close family member/close friend
 - Experiencing repeated/extreme exposure to details of traumatic event(s) **law enforcement **first responders **defenders
**prosecutors **judges **court staff

- 
- **Intrusion: (1 or >)**
 - Recurrent, involuntary and intrusive distressing memories
 - Recurrent, distressing dreams related to event
 - Dissociative reactions (flashbacks) as if traumatic event(s) reoccurring
 - Intense/prolonged psychological distress or physiological reactions
 - *Marked physiological reactions to internal/external cues that symbolize/resemble an aspect of the traumatic event—hypo or hyper

- 
- Avoidance-efforts to avoid... (1 or both)
 - Distressing memories, thoughts, feelings associated with traumatic event(s)
 - External reminders that arouse memories, thoughts, feelings

- 
- Negative Mood and Dissociation: (2 or >)
 - Inability to remember important aspects of traumatic events (dissociative amnesia)
 - Persistent/exaggerated: negative beliefs
 - Persistent, distorted cognitions about cause/consequences of trauma
 - Persistent negative emotional state
 - Diminished interest
 - Feelings of detachment
 - Inability to experience positive emotions

- 
- Arousal and Reactivity Symptoms: (2 or >)
 - Irritable behavior
 - Reckless or self-destructive behavior
 - Hypervigilance
 - Exaggerated startle response
 - Concentration difficulties
 - Sleep disturbance



Signs of Depression

Depressed Mood

Weight/Appetite Changes

Psychomotor Agitation

Feelings of Worthless/ > Guilt

Recurrent thoughts of death, SI w/o plan, attempt or plan for S

Loss of Interest/Pleasure

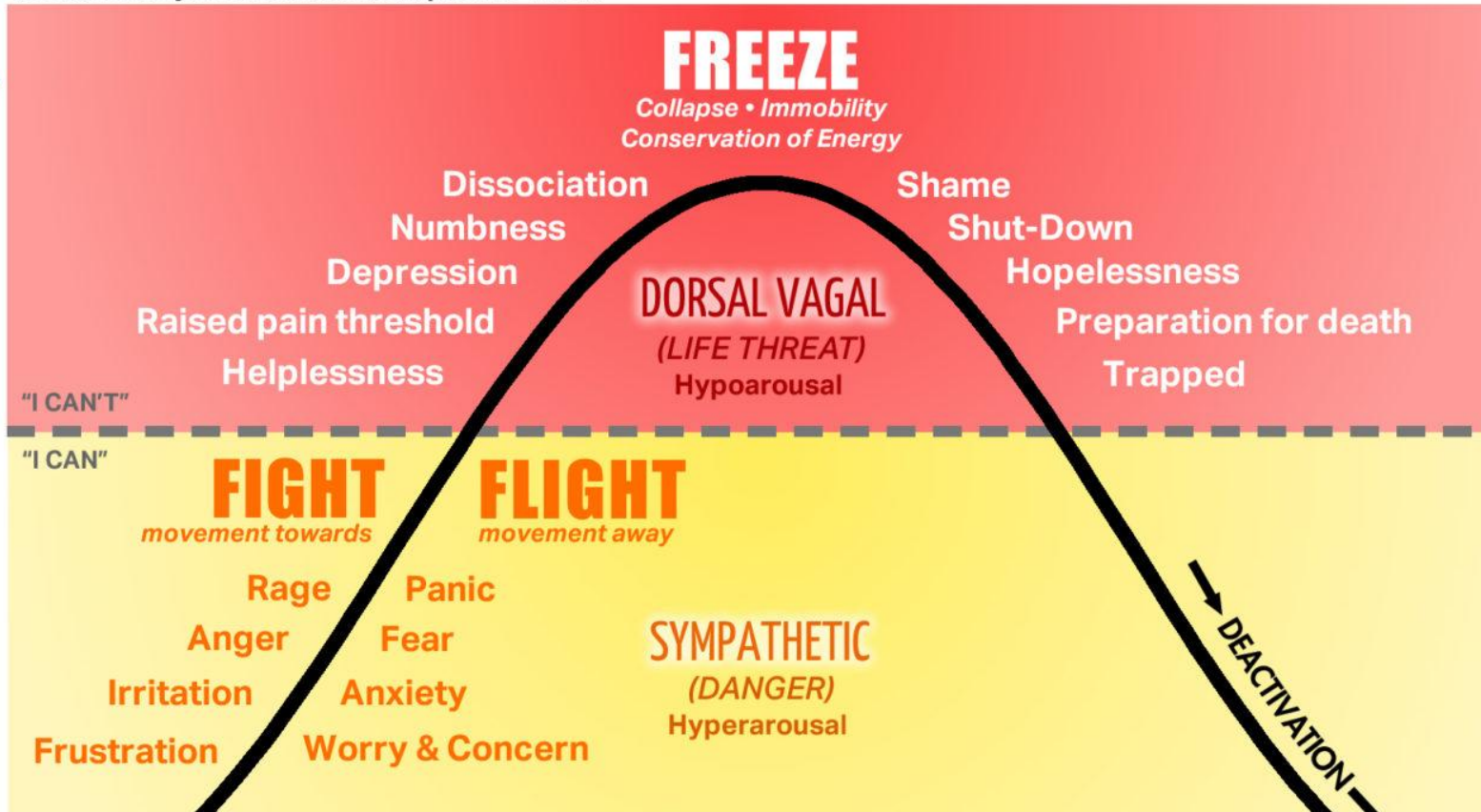
Insomnia/Hypersomnia

Fatigue/Loss of Energy

- Ability To Think/Concentrate/Decision

POLYVAGAL CHART

The nervous system with a neuroception of threat:



PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

DORSAL VAGAL COMPLEX

Increases

Fuel storage & insulin activity • Immobilization behavior (with fear)
Endorphins that help numb and raise the pain threshold
Conservation of metabolic resources

Decreases

Heart Rate • Blood Pressure • Temperature • Muscle Tone
Facial Expressions & Eye Contact • Depth of Breath • Social Behavior
Attunement to Human Voice • Sexual Responses • Immune Response

SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

Increases

Blood Pressure • Heart Rate • Fuel Availability • Adrenaline
Oxygen Circulation to Vital Organs • Blood Clotting • Pupil Size
Dilation of Bronchi • Defensive Responses

Decreases

Fuel Storage • Insulin Activity • Digestion • Salivation
Relational Ability • Immune Response

The nervous system with a neuroception of safety:



VVC is the beginning and end of stress response.

When VVC is dominant, SNS and DVC are in transient blends which promote healthy physiological functioning.

PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

VENTRAL VAGAL COMPLEX

Increases

Digestion • Intestinal Motility • Resistance to Infection
Immune Response • Rest and Recuperation • Health & Vitality
Circulation to non-vital organs (skin, extremities)
Oxytocin (neuromodulator involved in social bonds that allows immobility without fear) • Ability to Relate and Connect
Movement in eyes and head turning • Prosody in voice • Breath

Decreases

Defensive Responses

**You can do something 100s
of times and one time can
change everything**



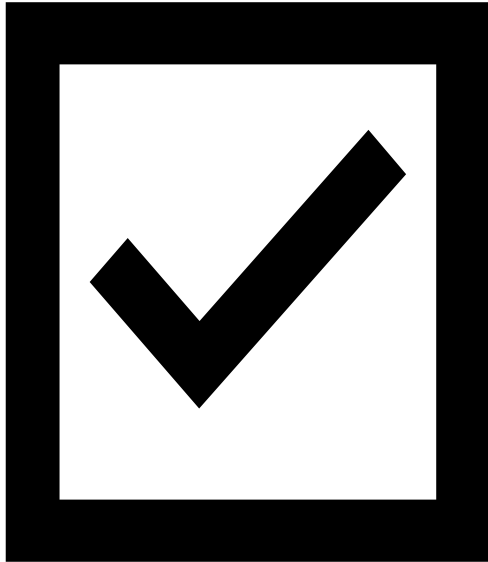
**You can do too much as a
helper... and it can cost
you big time**



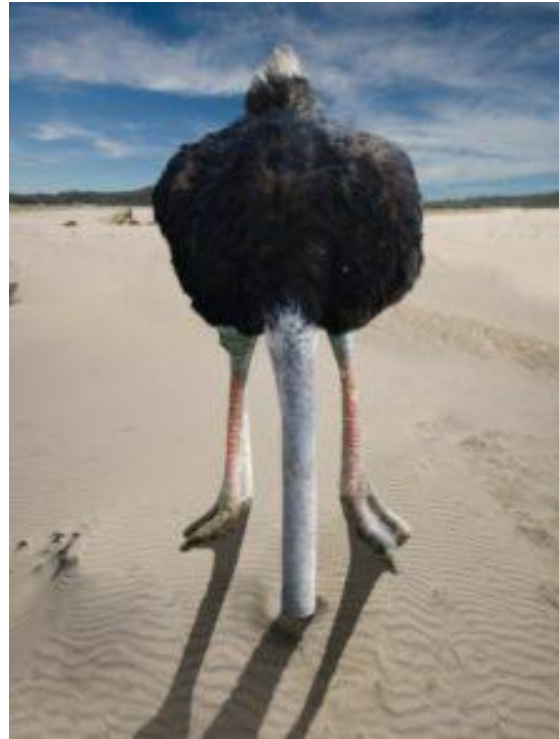
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**Professional self-care is
paramount for
competent and ethical
defender practice**



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Considerations:

SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS SCALE – DSM 5

The following is a list of statements made by persons who have been impacted by their work with traumatized clients. Read each statement then indicate how frequently the statement was true for you in the past seven (7) days by circling the corresponding number next to the statement.

NOTE: "Client" is used to indicate persons with whom you have been engaged in a helping relationship. You may substitute another noun that better represents your work such as consumer, patient, recipient, etc.

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very Often
1. I felt emotionally numb.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. My heart started pounding when I thought about my work with clients.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. It seemed as if I was reliving the trauma(s) experienced by my client(s).....	1	2	3	4	5
4. I had trouble sleeping.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. I felt discouraged about the future.....	1	2	3	4	5
6. Reminders of my work with clients upset me.....	1	2	3	4	5
7. I had little interest in being around others.....	1	2	3	4	5
8. I felt jumpy.....	1	2	3	4	5
9. I was less active than usual.....	1	2	3	4	5
10. I thought about my work with clients when I didn't intend to.....	1	2	3	4	5
11. I had trouble concentrating.....	1	2	3	4	5
12. I avoided people, places, or things that reminded me of my work with clients.....	1	2	3	4	5
13. I had disturbing dreams about my work with clients.....	1	2	3	4	5
14. I wanted to avoid working with some clients.....	1	2	3	4	5
15. I was easily annoyed.....	1	2	3	4	5
16. I expected something bad to happen.....	1	2	3	4	5
17. I noticed gaps in my memory about client sessions.....	1	2	3	4	5
18. I experienced negative emotions.....	1	2	3	4	5
19. I engaged in reckless or self-destructive behavior.....	1	2	3	4	5
20. I unrealistically blamed others for the cause or consequences of the trauma(s) experienced by my client(s).....	1	2	3	4	5
21. I had negative expectations about myself, others, or the world.....	1	2	3	4	5

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Citation: Bride, B.E. (2013). The Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale, DSM 5 Revision. Unpublished Manuscript.

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)

COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION FATIGUE

(PROQOL) VERSION 5 (2009)

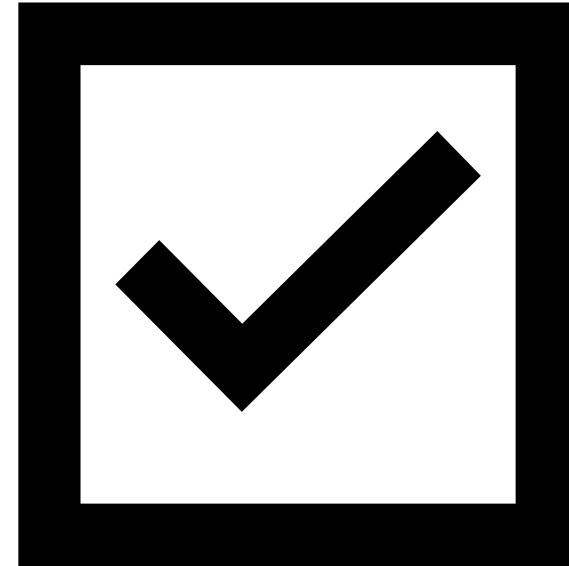
When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you [help] can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the last 30 days.

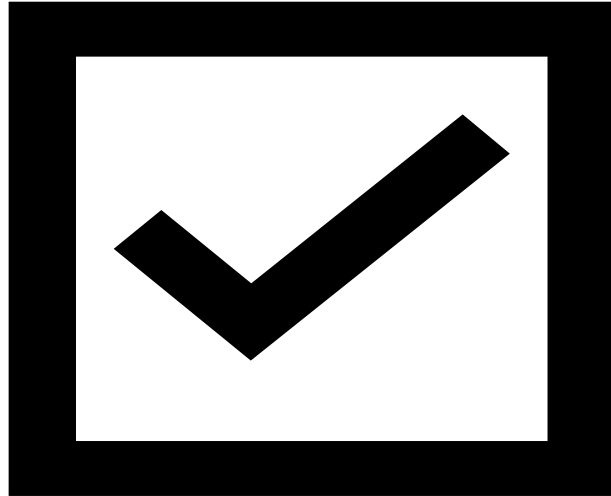
	1=Never	2=Rarely	3=Sometimes	4=Often	5=Very Often
1. I am happy.					
2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].					
3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.					
4. I feel connected to others.					
5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.					
6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].					
7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].					
8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].					
9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].					
10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].					
11. Because of my [helping], I have felt "on edge" about various things.					
12. I like my work as a [helper].					
13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].					
14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].					
15. I have beliefs that sustain me.					
16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.					
17. I am the person I always wanted to be.					
18. My work makes me feel satisfied.					
19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].					
20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.					
21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.					
22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.					
23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].					
24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].					
25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.					
26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.					
27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a [helper].					
28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.					
29. I am a very caring person.					
30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.					

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Track Leave

0-5 years	9.33 hrs
5-10 years	11.33 hrs
10-15 years	13.33 hrs
15-20 years	15.33 hrs
20+ years	17.33 hrs



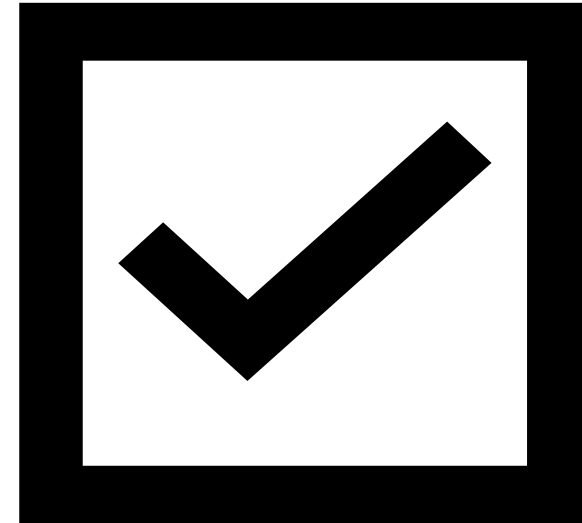


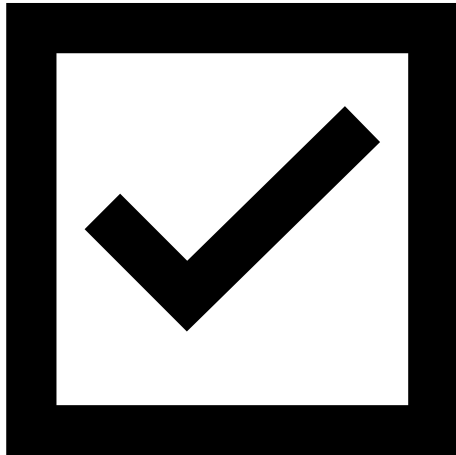
**Set yourself up for a
better tomorrow**

What Can I Not Control?

Then Accept It...

Or Advocate For It



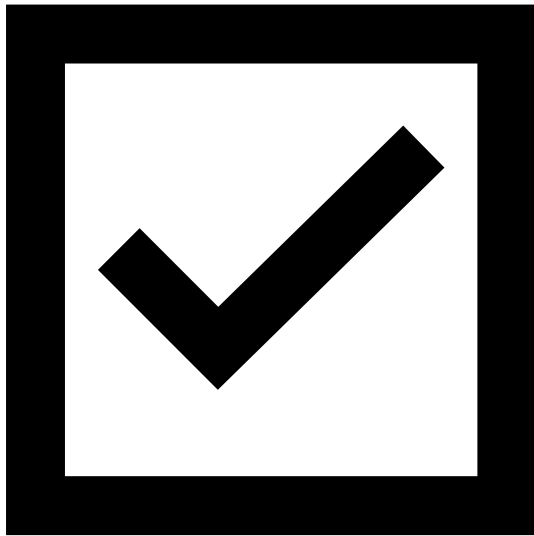


What do I need to let go of?

Choices: I have to versus I choose to

**Honor The Decision That Matters
Most To You**

**Radical Acceptance? Or pushing for
Radical Change?**

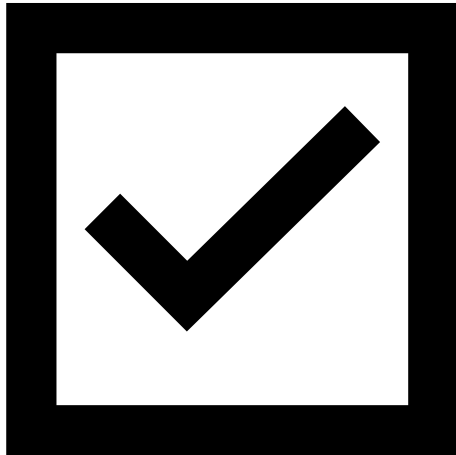


Gratitude

Highlights What Is
Meaningful

Threat Response →
Restoration

Broadens Our Focus *



Caring for/Representing clients to the best of our ability without taking on their paths as our paths

Responding vs. Reacting

Autopilot and its cost

Mind Full vs. Mindful

Releasing Control



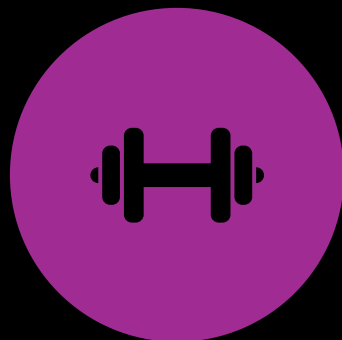
**BREATHING
EXERCISES**



**MOVEMENT
EXERCISES**



**MINDFULNESS
PRACTICES**



**PROGRESSIVE
MUSCLE RELAXATION**



SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT



RELEASING CONTROL



Dentist
Annual Physical + Sblood Panel + Skin
Eye Exam
Mammogram
Pap
Colorectal Cancer Screening
Prostate Cancer Screening
Hearing Screening
Bone Density
Aortic Aneurysm Ultrasound



Self At “Best” Things To Look Forward To Incorporating the 5 senses

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4 Core *SEFS*-Sleep-Exercise-Food-Social
Hobbies and Activities
Friends that are not lawyers...
What Else?

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Remember this?



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“Every morning, I cannot wait to go back to sleep. Every Monday, I cannot wait for Friday to come. Every single day and every single week for life.”

“Elmo I’m depressed and broke.”



“Elmo sorry but this above Elmo’s pay grade.”



*"Elmo I'm gonna be real I am at my
f***ing limit."*

"I'm at my lowest, thanks for asking."



HELP ME. HELP ME.
HELP ME. HELP ME.
HELP ME. HELP ME.
HELP ME. HELP ME.
HELP ME. HELP ME.
HELP ME. HELP ME.
HELP ME. HELP ME.
HELP ME. HELP ME.
HELP ME. HELP ME.
HELP ME. HELP ME.
HELP ME. HELP ME.

I'm FINE..



Buddy Check

Check in with your colleagues

...and move away from the

“how are you”



Checking in can look like:

- What has been the theme of your week?
- Is there a particular challenge that has been weighing you down?
- How can I help you?



Checking in can look like:

- What is something you are looking forward to?
- Share something that you are proud of.
- How have you taken care of yourself this week?



Checking in can look like:

- Did you eat lunch? Let's go grab lunch
- Let's go get coffee
- Sending a random text or leaving a voicemail



We cannot necessarily fix things for people we care about

What we *can* do is listen and let them know that they matter

We all can give 8 minutes

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ACTION STEPS

Think About Your Current Stress Levels...
If Nothing Changes, What Does It Look Like...

For you...and people you care about



ACTION STEPS

Intervene Early and Intervene Often

Talk with People....Do Not Isolate

Talk About Access and Intent- Then Remove It

-medications* and firearms* **

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ACTION STEPS

How does your office mitigate or exacerbate trauma?

How are you assessing for burnout/vicarious trauma?

BUILD YOUR TOOL KIT



A Sheltie dog with a white ruff and chest, and brown and black markings on its face and body, is sitting on a grassy hill. The dog is looking towards the camera with its mouth slightly open. The background is a clear blue sky with some blurred trees in the distance.

**I has been a
fantastic, stress-
free day. I locked
Timmy in his room.**

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide To Caring For Self While Caring For Others
-Laura van Dernoot Lipsky

When The Body Says No: The Cost of Hidden Stress
-Gabor Mate

Healing Secondary Trauma: Proven Strategies for Caregivers
-Trudy Gilbert-Eliot, PhD

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BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

Polyvagal Exercises for Safety and Connection
-Deb Dana

Help For The Helper
-Babette Rothschild

101 Trauma-Informed Interventions
-Linda Curran

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RESOURCES

Albert, L and Krill, P. "Charting a sustainable path forward: what the ABA/Hazeldon Betty Ford study on substance use and mental health use means for the future of the profession". September 15, 2016. www.americanbar.org

Bride, B.E. (2013). "The secondary traumatic stress scale, DSM V Revision." Unpublished Manuscript

Krill, P, Thomas, H, Kramer, M, et al. "Stressed, lonely and overcommitted: predictors of lawyer suicide risk. *Healthcare*, 11(4), 536.

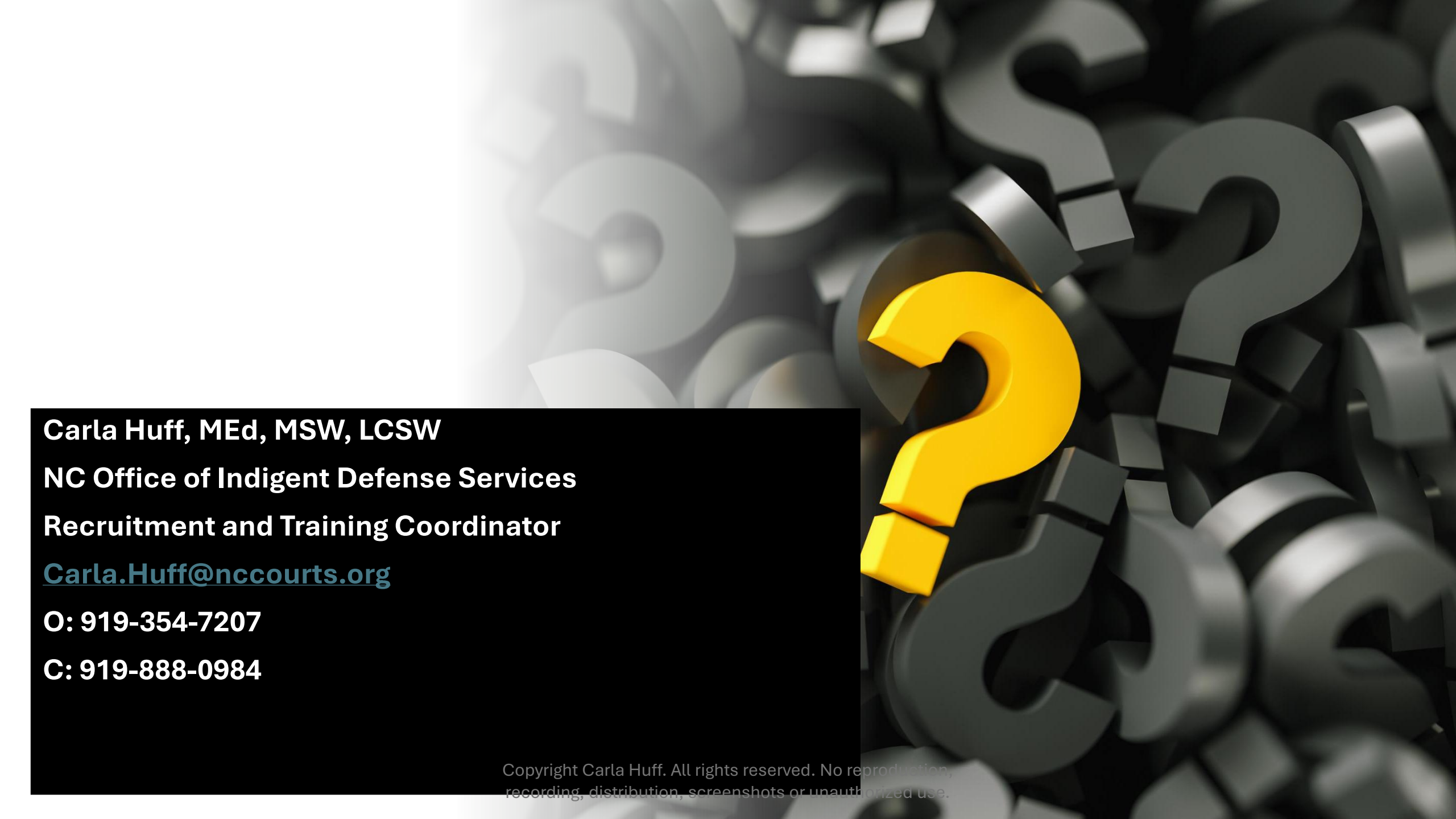
Elmo asked people online how they were doing. He got an earful | CNN: <https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/31/health/elmo-checkingin-x-wellness-cec/index.html>

<https://www.reuters.com/legal/legalindustry/our-law-students-need-help-study-finds-higher-rates-mental-health-problems-2022-07-13/>

<https://www.reuters.com/legal/litigation/burnout-depression-red-flags-abound-massachusetts-lawyer-study-2023-02-01/>

Professional Quality of Life Scale: [ProQOL](#)

Walker, Ruby Jo. *Polyvagal Theory Chart Trauma Response*. Southwest Trauma Training, www.SwTraumaTraining.com



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