

# PROMOTING RESILIENCE AGAINST BURNOUT

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Westside Regional Center

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# Workshop Objectives

At the completion of this workshop you will be able to:

1. define burnout, compassion fatigue and vicarious traumatization;
2. describe how stress and trauma affect key brain structures and the body;
3. list 3 behaviors associated with psychological resilience in people who work with vulnerable populations;
4. describe 4 stress coping styles and how to facilitate healthy coping in light of each style

“The most obvious, important realities are often the ones that are hardest to see and talk about.”



Illus: This is Water by David Foster Wallace

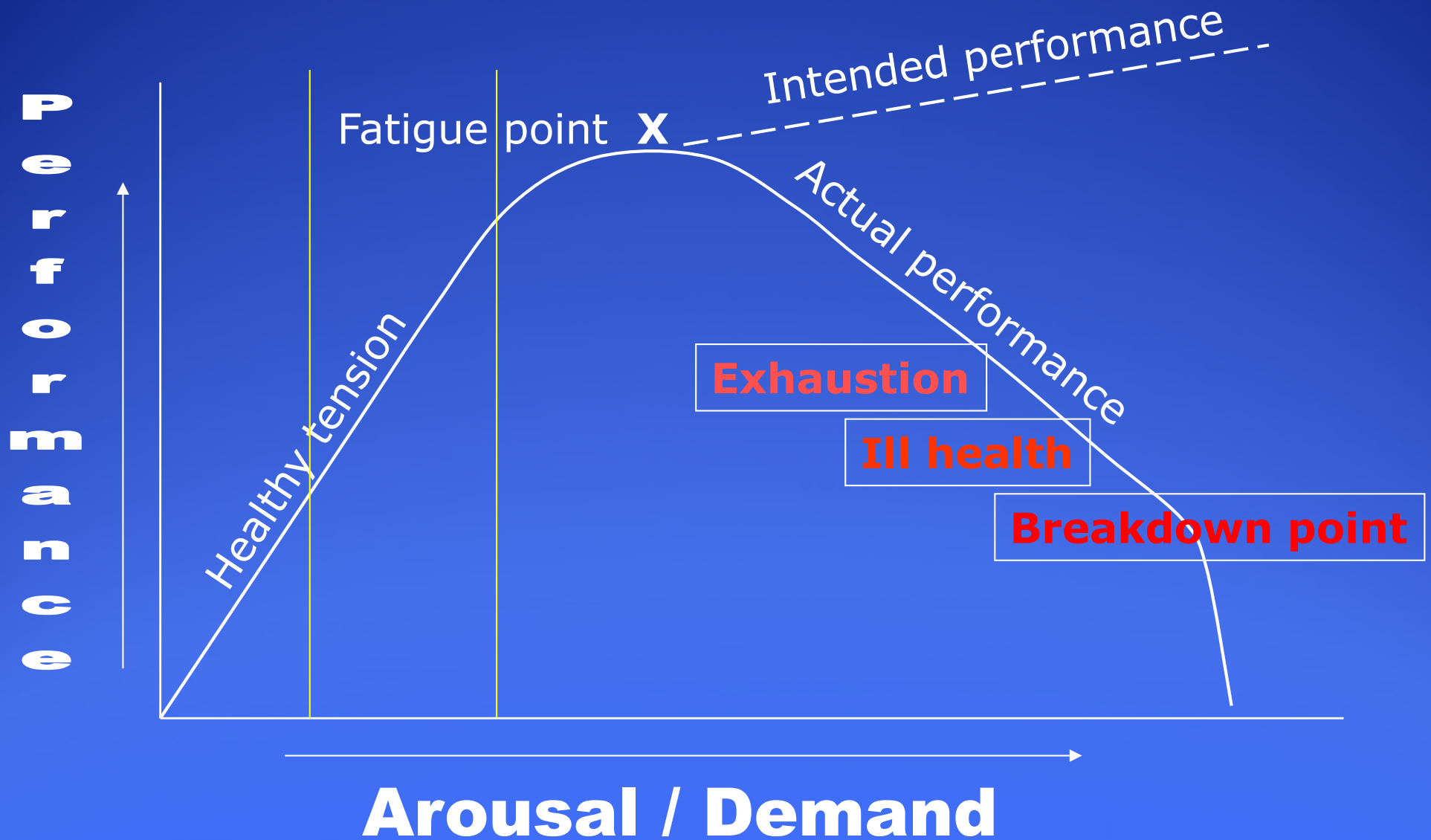
# Purpose

Provide a conceptual framework:

1. for understanding the impact your work has on you
2. that will guard against the stress hazards of your work



# Stress and human functioning



# Chronic Stress



# Chronic Stress: Work Related

Interpersonal problems with direct supervisor

Strained Team Dynamics

Mismatch between Work Style and Work Environment



# Work Culture

## Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)

Gosling, S. D., Rentfrow, P. J., & Swann, W. B., Jr. (2003). A Very Brief Measure of the Big Five Personality Domains. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 37, 504-528.

- [http://homepage.psy.utexas.edu/homepage/faculty/gosling/scales\\_we.htm](http://homepage.psy.utexas.edu/homepage/faculty/gosling/scales_we.htm)

Extraversion

Agreeableness

Conscientiousness

Emotional Stability

Openness

|                     | Low | Medium Low | Medium High | High |
|---------------------|-----|------------|-------------|------|
| Extraversion        |     |            |             |      |
| Agreeableness       |     |            |             |      |
| Conscientiousness   |     |            |             |      |
| Emotional Stability |     |            |             |      |
| Openness            |     |            |             |      |

Which scales have scores that are fairly evenly distributed along the scales? Which scales have clustered scores?

As a group, which traits seem to be dominant or have more clusters?

What strengths could these clusters indicate for team interactions and work processes?

What potential weaknesses could the clusters indicate for team interactions and work processes?

Over what issues or in what situations could this team potentially experience conflict?

Which members of the team could potentially feel left out or excluded from interactions unless we pay close attention to their points of view?

# Sources of Chronic Stress





# Acute Stress

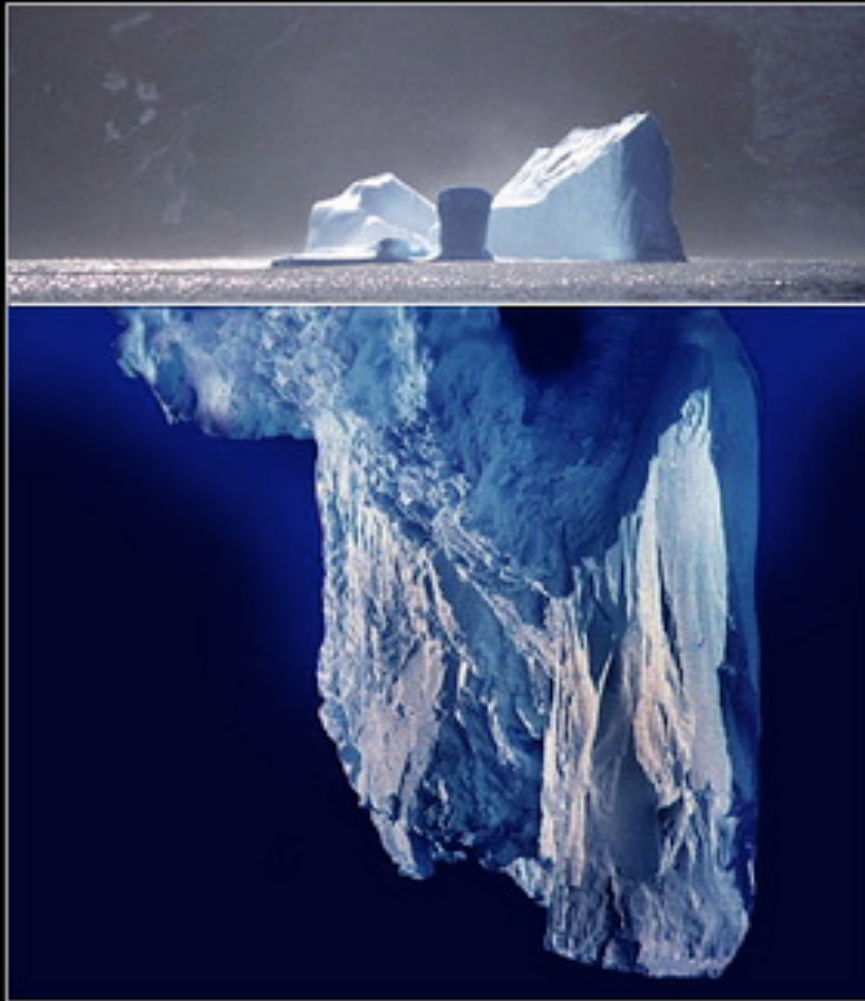
# Acute/Traumatic Stress Response Sequence

Critical  
incident

Personal  
impact

Fight, flight  
or freeze  
response

# How Does Stress Affect Your Brain and Body?



5%

Conscious brain activities

95%

Unconscious brain activities



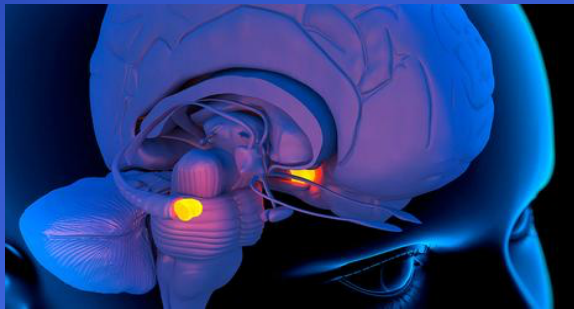
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# The Three Primary Stress Circuits



**PreFrontal  
Cortex**



**The  
Amygdala**



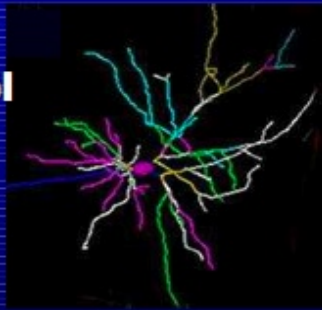
**The  
Hippocampus**



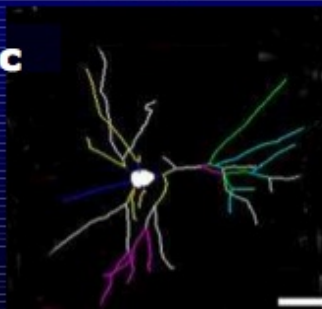
# Stress causes neurons to shrink or grow

....but not necessarily to die

**Control**



**Chronic stress**

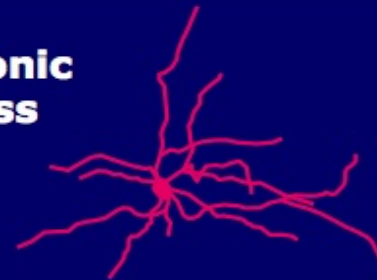


**Prefrontal Cortex  
And Hippocampus**

**Control**



**Chronic stress**



**Amygdala  
OFC**

# Signs of Stress Effect:

Emotional agitation: short temper, anxious, depressed.

Prone to conflict, withdrawing, or both.

A feeling of no room inside, everything affects us, no shock absorbers.

Being unable to think well: everything is important and nothing is important.

Self-medicating with alcohol, tobacco, drugs or sex.

Prone to flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, avoidance.

Feeling mistrustful and paranoid.

Memory problems



**BREAK**

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Compassion Fatigue

Burnout

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Vicarious Trauma

# Compassion Fatigue

**Compassion** – “feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by suffering or misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the pain or remove its cause” – *Webster's*, 1989.

Charles Figley, 1995, 2002

# Compassion Fatigue

Lack of empathy/compassion towards clients.

“The Gap”  
Effort and Outcome  
Consumer Need and Clinician Resource



Consumer  
Need

Clinician  
Resource

# Compassion Satisfaction

Larsen & Stamm, 2008

The pleasure you derive from being able to do your work well.

- Feeling happy to help others.
- Feeling willing to help others.
- Feeling competent in your work.
- Being pleasant and helpful to others.
- Contributing to the team and coworkers.
- Realistically recognizing your own needs (tiredness, fear, grumpiness)
  - Realistically caring for yourself



# Burnout

- Refers to the draining of energy. The exhaustion of an employee's capacity to provide intense contributions that make an impact in their work context. As they continue working, they accomplish less and less.
- **Hallmark is emotional exhaustion:** emotional and physical
- Decreased professional competence
- Depersonalization
- Organizational Stress is a major factor in burnout

# Self-Assessment

Compassion Fatigue/Burnout

# Compassion Satisfaction/Fatigue Self-Test for Helpers

- Change Careers: H Burnout, H CF, L CS
- Change Jobs: H Burnout, L CF, H CS
- Stay & Manage Stress: L Burnout, H CF, Mod CS
- Change Clients: L Burnout, L CF, L CS

**Stamm & Figley, 1998, 1995**

# Vicarious Traumatization (VT)

The negative effects of caring about and caring for others.

**(McCann & Pearlman, 1990; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995)**

# Vicarious Traumatization

The negative transformation in the therapist that comes about through...

- empathic engagement with trauma survivors and their trauma material, *and*
- a commitment or sense of responsibility to help

# Signs of VT

- **Disrupted spirituality**
- Difficulty managing your emotions
- Difficulty making good decisions
- Problems managing your boundaries (feeling overly responsible for others, difficulty leaving work, etc.)
- Problems in relationships

# Resilience



# Resilience Components

- **Health & Fitness** – cardiovascular exercise, sleep, diet
- **Social Support** – coworkers vs friends & family
- **Self-Efficacy** – competence in your job and confidence in your capability
- **Meaning & Purpose** – larger frame by which to view your present experience



# Stress Signatures

- *Avoidant*
- *Intrusive*
- *Hypervigilant*



Thank you

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