



# FORWARD-FACING® PROFESSIONAL RESILIENCE

as taught by

## ENTRAINMENT COUNSELING, LLC

**David S White, Ph.D., LADC-1, CADC II, CCTP II, BCPCC, CSM,  
FFF Consultant, FFPR Consultant, BSP Therapist/Consultant  
Member of the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress**



*Healing the Past  
Transforming the Present  
A Future on Purpose -FFI.*

# The Problem: Compassion Fatigue



A condition that occurs when helping professionals absorb the emotional and psychological distress of those they help, leading to trauma-like symptoms.

# Compassion Fatigue



CF = Secondary Traumatization + Burnout  
(Figley, 1995)

- Dr. Charles Figley, a pioneer in the study of compassion fatigue and trauma psychology, coined the term to describe **the emotional and physical exhaustion experienced by those helping trauma survivors** (therapists, first responders, healthcare workers, mental health professionals, teachers, pastors, caregivers, volunteers, etc.)
- He developed the Compassion Fatigue Resilience Model, which emphasizes the mechanism by which real or perceived distress of another, in turn, distresses us and the process by which we become dysregulated
- Dr. Figley was the dissertation advisor and mentor for Dr. J. Eric Gentry, the developer of Forward-Facing Professional Resilience

# Professional Quality of Life

Pro-QOL (1998; 2009)

**Beth Hudnal-Stamm**



Researcher/Author University of Idaho

- Developed the definitive instrument for measuring Compassion Fatigue in 1998
  - 3 subscales
    - Compassion Satisfaction;
    - Secondary Traumatic Stress
    - Burnout
- Redesigned in 2009
- Excellent psychometrics

# Professional Quality of Life

(Pro-QOL; Stamm, 2009)

- **Compassion Satisfaction** - resilience and work satisfaction
- **Burnout** – The level of negative effect that your work environment has upon you.
- **Secondary Traumatic Stress** – The negative effects caused by your interaction with suffering and/or traumatized patients/clients

# Compassion Fatigue



*"That which is to give light  
must endure  
burning."*

*- Viktor Frankl*

# Traumagenesis

Neutral  
Stimulus



NS + Charged Exposure = CR (Stress/ Trauma)



Exposure to any dog = CR



This response (CR) gets stored as implicit memory

# Secondary Traumatic Stress Symptoms

Intrusion (Criterion B)	Avoidance (Criterion C)	
Nightmares & Flashbacks of client's traumatic material (can be very subtle)	Procrastination	Dread
Worrying about work; inability to separate from work	Depression	Hopeless
Overly concerned about clients or co-workers	Blame	Constriction
Emotional distress after exposure to traumatic reminders	Relational problems	Diminishing Self-care activities
Unwanted memories	Isolation	Rumination
Physical reactivity after exposure to traumatic reminders		
<b>Increase in Perception of Threats</b>	<b>Silencing Response (Figley)</b>	



# Secondary Traumatic Stress Symptoms

Alterations of Cognition/Mood (Criterion D)
Inability to recall key features of the traumatic event (difficulty remembering aspects of clients' stories)
Overly negative thoughts and assumptions about oneself or the world (i.e. <i>everyone is either a victim or perpetrator</i> )
Exaggerated blame of self or others for causing the trauma (i.e. <i>It's my fault; I am weak</i> )
Negative affect (i.e., dysthymia)
Decreased interest in activities
Feeling Isolated
Difficulty experiencing positive affect

Arousal (Criterion E)	
Fear/Anxiety	Compulsive Behavior
Obsessive Thoughts	Poor Concentration
Sleep Problems	Weight +/-
Irritability/easily angered	Somatization (Digestive; Hypertension)
Impulsive	Immune Problems
Dis-ease	Stress
<b>Increase in Perception of Threats</b>	

# PTSD Dx Criteria

- A. The event
- B. Intrusion symptoms
- C. Avoidance symptoms
- D. Alterations in cognition and/or mood
- E. Alterations in arousal and reactivity
- F. Duration
- G. Clinically significant distress or impairment
- H. Not attributable to the physiological effects

# RECIPROCAL INHIBITION

The engine of trauma resolution

CR (Dysregulated Nervous System) + Relaxed Body (Reciprocal Inhibition) =  
Neutral Stimulus (Regulated Nervous System)

CR (Sympathetic Activation/ Threat Response)



CR + Relaxed Body (reciprocal Inhibition)=  
Parasympathetic Activation/Self-Regulation



Neutral Stimulus



# Resolving Secondary Traumatic Stress

## Imaginal Exposure

1. **Self-Regulation** – Intentional interruption of the **threat response**; when listening to clients or when remembering experiences
2. **Building & Maintaining Relationships** – getting support; allowing others to confront you when symptomatic; telling on ourselves when we breach integrity; accountability
3. **Sharing Narratives** – of painful work experiences (with clients or co-workers) with safe other while self-regulating

# Burnout



# Burnout

“Burnout is a psychological syndrome of **emotional exhaustion**, **depersonalization** and **reduced personal accomplishment**”

(Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; 2003; Lubbadah, T. (2020)

“The chronic condition of ***perceived demands*** outweighing ***perceived resources***”

- Gentry & Baranowsky, 1998

- Gentry & Dietz, 2020

# Symptoms of Burnout

## Behavioral Symptoms

- Withdrawal from responsibilities or social interactions
- Reduced performance or productivity
- Procrastination or difficulty concentrating
- Increased use of substances (alcohol, drugs, or caffeine)
- Avoiding work or necessary tasks
- Increased absenteeism

# Symptoms of Burnout

## Physical Symptoms

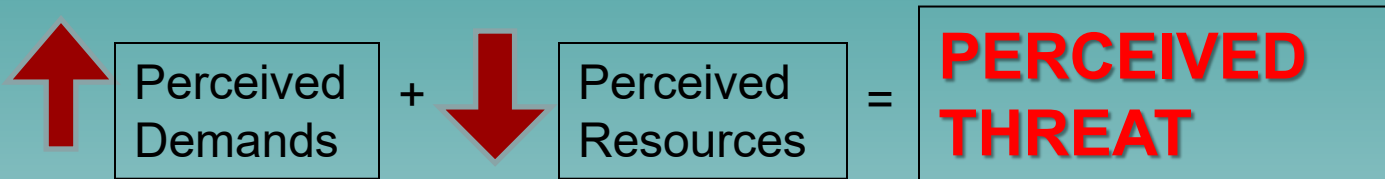
- Chronic fatigue or exhaustion
- Frequent headaches or muscle pain
- Sleep disturbances (insomnia or excessive sleep)
- Lowered immunity (frequent colds or illnesses)
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Gastrointestinal issues (nausea, bloating, or stomach pain)

## Emotional Symptoms

- Feeling overwhelmed or emotionally drained
- Increased irritability or frustration
- Decreased motivation or enthusiasm
- Feelings of cynicism or detachment
- Sense of helplessness or failure
- Increased feelings of anxiety or depression



# Burnout: Cause



**Perceived Threat** = Fight/Flight/Freeze =  
Sympathetic Dominance = Chronic Anxiety =  
**Burnout**

# From Burnout to Resolution & Resilience

**SELF-REGULATION/RELAXATION  
+  
PERCEPTUAL CHANGE & MATURATION**

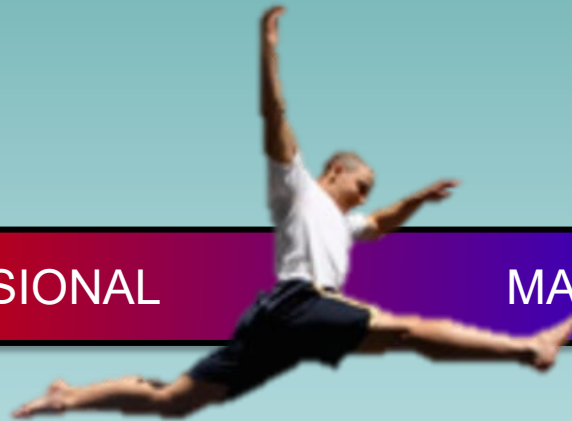


# Resilience

## The Solution



PROFESSIONAL



MATURATION



# What is Forward-Facing®?

Developed as a way to treat trauma in the present without re-visiting painful memories

Expanded to become a simple method for resolving stress-related issues while simultaneously optimizing our lives.



Forward-Facing® involves learning and practicing skills for self-regulation and living intentionally

# RESILIENCE

## Compassion Fatigue Immune System

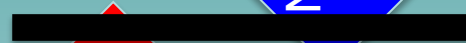
1. **Self-regulation** – ability to immediately shift from sympathetic to parasympathetic dominance (VVC), especially when perceiving threat); harmonizing ANS for optimization
2. **Intentionality** – Principle-based vs. demand driven; living mission; maintaining integrity
3. **Perceptual Maturation**– Evolving perceptions of self, others, and context to “detoxify” workplace
4. **Connection/Support** – develop and utilize support network
5. **Self-care/Revitalization** – refueling and sustainability, aerobic activity, healthy pursuits; joy

# STRESS !!!

- Is your job stressful?
- If so, what are some of the causes?
- What are some of the effects?



**STRESS AND  
REACTIVITY**



**ENERGY**

**Neocortical  
LEX**

**THRESHOLD**

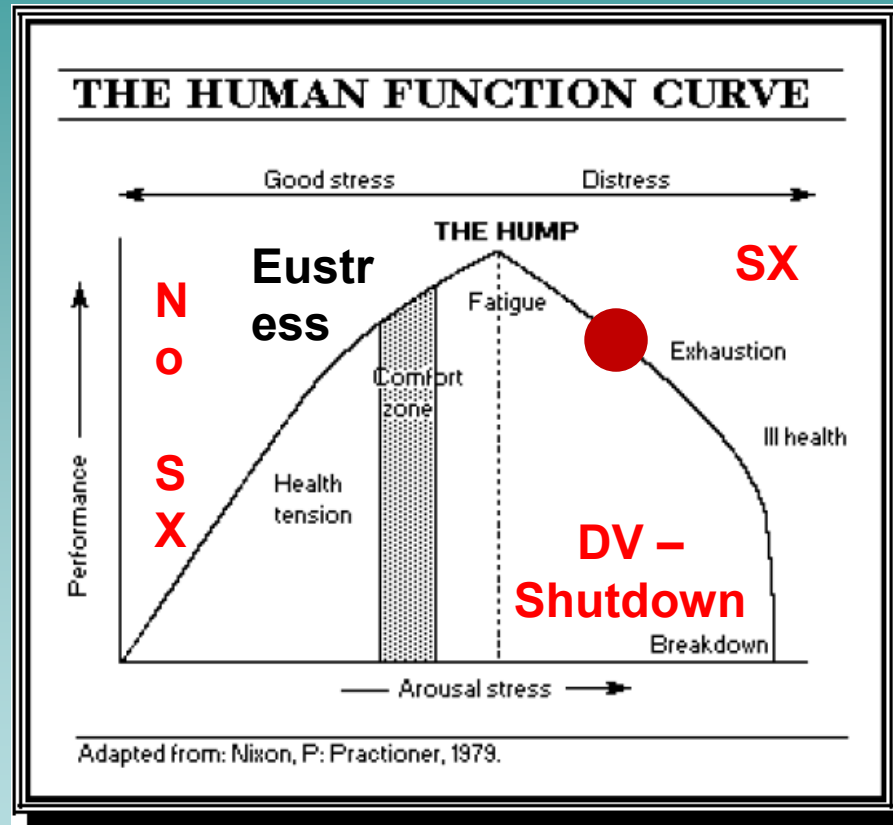
**Compulsive Action  
Aggression or Avoidance**

Constricted  
Muscles



**Breaches of Integrity**

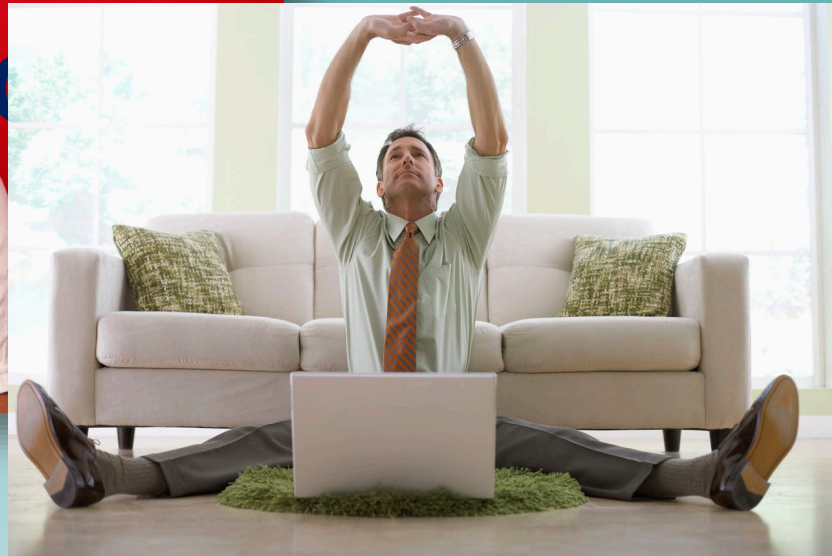
# Optimal Performance:





# RESILIENCE SKILL

## Antibody # 1 SELF REGULATION



**Developing “bodyfull-ness”**

Neuroception + Interoception + Acute Relaxation (x 100/day)  
= Self-Regulation

# Interoception

*You want to know what heals trauma? ...*

*Interoception heals trauma*

- Bessel van der Kolk

- Present “felt sense” on one’s own physiological processes
- Becoming sensitive to “feedback” from one’s body
- Lowering threshold of awareness of dysregulation
- Monitoring rising levels of energy (SNS activation) and recognizing when there is the need for conscious and intentional intervention (i.e., releasing constricted muscles)

# RESILIENCY SKILLS

## ANTIBODY 2: INTENTIONALITY

### DO I GO WHERE I AIM MYSELF?

- Living/working in accordance with Mission/Covenant, Code of Honor & Vision
- Requires self-regulation
- Internal locus of control
- Principle-based living



**INTENTIONALITY**

PLAN.  
EXECUTE.  
ACHIEVE.

# DOCUMENTS OF INTENTION

## Three Documents

- Covenant
- Code of Honor
- Vision

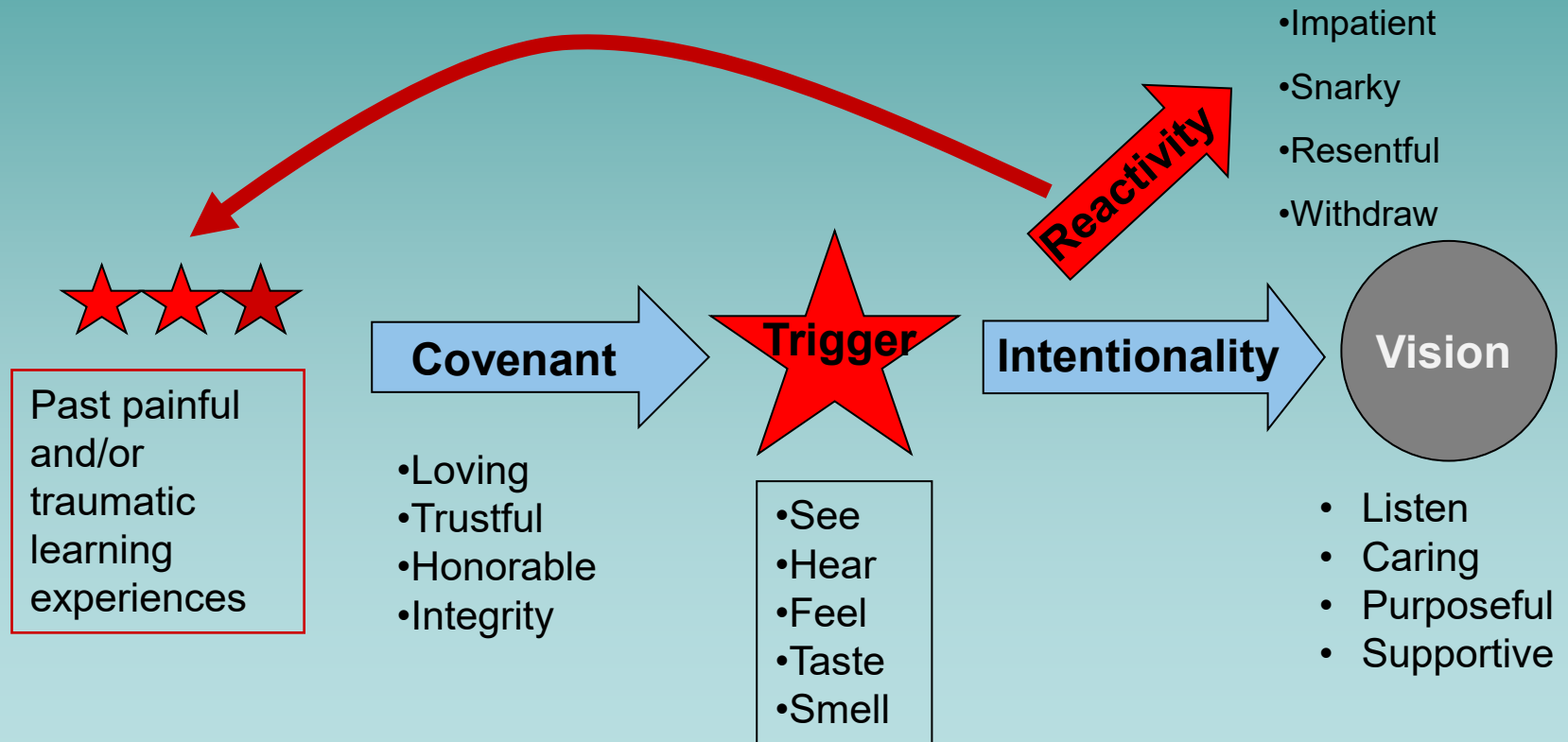
Writing  
Template (60 –  
90min of  
contemplative  
writing)

Bring  
Documents  
to Next  
Session

Record  
Client  
Reading  
these two  
Documents

Send them  
home with or  
email the  
video to  
watch with  
caring and  
self-  
compassion

# Triggers = The Threat Response



*you should/you need to...*

# INTERRUPTING THREAT RESPONSE – HEALING MORAL INJURY



Past painful and/or traumatic learning experiences

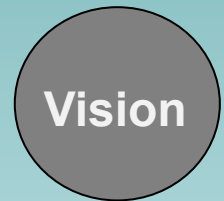
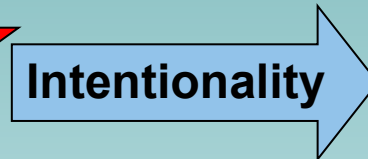


- Loving & Supportive

*You should/you need to...*



- See
- Hear
- Feel
- Taste
- Smell



- Listening
- Supporting
- Feeling Love

# Resilience Skill #3

## Perceptual Maturation



“Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change.”

# Perceptual Maturation

## Detoxifying Workplace

- External vs. internal locus of control
- Real vs. Perceived Threat
- Demand vs. choice
- Outcome Driven vs. personal best practice
- Acceptance of Anxious Systems
- Intention, Purpose & Meaning





# RESILIENCY SKILL #4

## Connection/Support –Your Peeps



- Created sanctuary and community
- Ability to safely “tell on yourself”
- Licensing others to confront symptoms
- **Opportunity to narrate secondary traumatic stress experiences**
- Resolving attachment trauma
- Responsibility to “train” support group

# Resiliency Skill # 5

## Self-Care & Revitalization



# Self-Care & Revitalization

- **Physical Self-Care**

- **Regular Exercise:** Engage in activities that you enjoy—whether it's walking, yoga, or strength training—to boost your energy and release endorphins.
- **Nutrition & Hydration:** Prioritize balanced meals and proper hydration to support overall health.
- **Sleep Hygiene:** Establish a consistent sleep schedule and create a restful environment to ensure quality sleep.

- **Mental & Emotional Self-Care**

- **Mindfulness & Meditation:** Incorporate practices like meditation, deep breathing, or progressive muscle relaxation to reduce stress and increase mental clarity.
- **Journaling:** Reflect on your thoughts, achievements, and feelings to gain insight and practice gratitude.
- **Stress Management:** Identify stressors and develop strategies (like time management or creative outlets) to cope effectively.

# Self-Care & revitalization

## • Social Self-Care

- **Meaningful Connections:** Foster supportive relationships by spending time with friends and family or engaging in community activities.
- **Boundaries:** Set clear boundaries to protect your time and energy, ensuring you have space to recharge.

## • Lifestyle Adjustments

- **Digital Detox:** Allocate time away from screens to reduce information overload and enhance in-person interactions.
- **Nature & Relaxation:** Spend time outdoors or create a calming space at home where you can unwind and connect with nature.
- **Professional Support:** If needed, seek help from a therapist, coach, or support group to guide your self-care journey.

# Self-Care & Revitalization

- **Revitalization Strategies**

- **Hobbies & Creative Outlets:** Dedicate time to hobbies that spark joy and creativity, such as painting, playing music, or reading.
- **Goal Setting:** Break down your revitalization goals into manageable steps, celebrating progress.
- **Self-Compassion:** Practice being kind to yourself and recognize that self-care is a continuous

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

David S. White, Ph.D.  
Entrainment Counseling, LLC  
4402 Lawrenceville Rd., Ste 214  
Loganville, GA 30052

Phone: 404-594-2926

Email: [admin@entrainmentcounseling.com](mailto:admin@entrainmentcounseling.com)

Website: [www.entrainmentcounseling.com](http://www.entrainmentcounseling.com)

