

STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR THE TRAUMA SERVICE PROVIDER



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What are Stress and Coping?

“STRESS”

Any challenge to the body or mind

- Necessary for life and accomplishment

“DANGER”

Chinese pictogram
for “STRESS”

“OPPORTUNITY”



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機

“COPING”

Changes in our bodies, minds, or environments
to adapt to stress

- Coping is how we manage stress

Sources of Personal Stress

PHYSICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heat• Cold• Dehydration• Sleep deprivation• Injury or illness• Toxins• Noise
THINKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being hyper-focused• Lack of information• Boredom• Too much information• Uncertainty
EMOTIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fear of injury or death• Grief• Fear of failure• Horror• Anger• Guilt or shame
SOCIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being away from loved ones• Congregants• Administration• Committees• Loss of personal space• Isolation• Broken relationships
FINANCIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Debt• Lack of funds• Poor economy• Great needs• Taxes• Poverty
SPIRITUAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Life doesn't make sense like it used to• Challenge of faith• Ambiguous mission• Moral conflict• Lack of ministry calling



PERSONALITY TRAITS

- ▶ Obsessive – Compulsive
- ▶ Action oriented
- ▶ Risk takers/Thrill seekers
- ▶ Controllers
- ▶ Histrionic
- ▶ Rescue personality
- ▶ Dedicated
- ▶ Desire instant gratification



INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

- ▶ Age/development phase
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Previous traumatic life events
- ▶ Social support
- ▶ Coping skills
- ▶ Expectations of self/others
- ▶ Ethnic/cultural environment
- ▶ Perception/interpretation of the life and the event



BIOECOLOGICAL

- ▶ Extreme temperatures
- ▶ High levels of noise
- ▶ Hazardous materials
- ▶ Infectious agents
- ▶ Hostile people
- ▶ Visual impact of destruction
- ▶ Odors
- ▶ Dangerous situations – explosions, building collapse, violent acts, hostages



PSYCHOSOCIAL – FAMILY

- ▶ Financial
- ▶ Relatives
- ▶ Relationships
- ▶ Parenting
- ▶ Status of family
- ▶ Heightened awareness of danger through media



PSYCHOSOCIAL – JOB

- ▶ Multiple role responsibilities
- ▶ Unfinished tasks
- ▶ Angry or confused citizens
- ▶ Meeting continuous time lines
- ▶ Absence of challenge
- ▶ Over-demand on time, energy, ability, or emotional control



PSYCHOSOCIAL – JOB, continued

- ▶ Necessary (and unnecessary) restrictions on scope of work.
- ▶ Unpredictable changes in the work place.
- ▶ Lack of upward mobility in career
- ▶ Use of force
- ▶ Abusive clients
- ▶ Lack of recognition
- ▶ Dangerous situations



Three intensity levels of stress:

Eustress = Positive, motivating stress

Distress = Excessive stress

Dysfunction = Impairment



Eustress

Stress

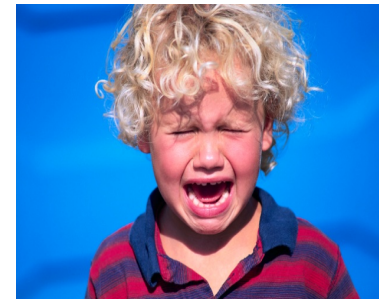
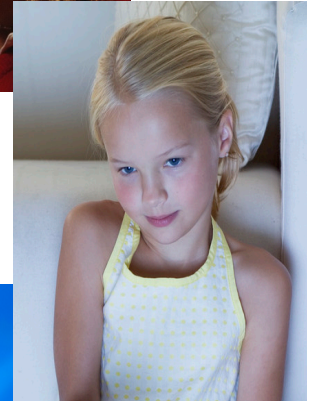
Distress

Dysfunction

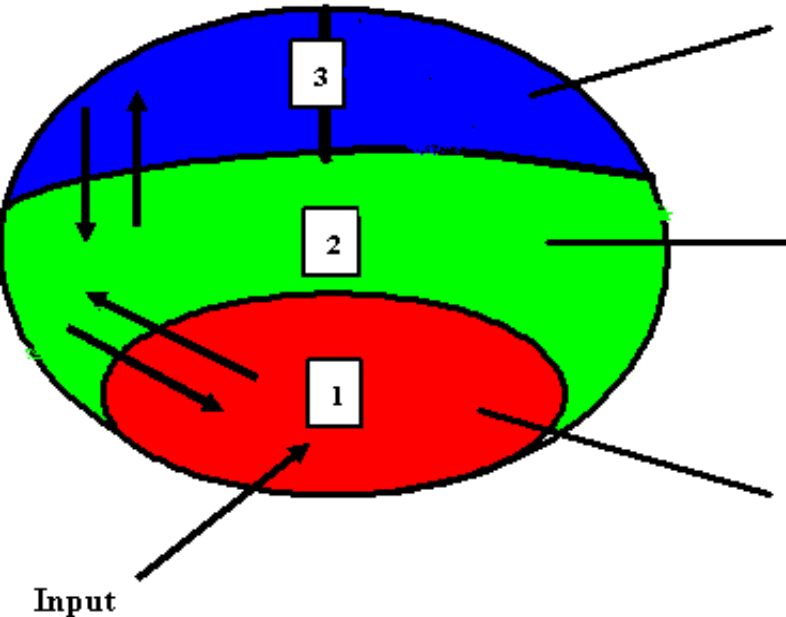


The Subjective Experience

- ▶ Proximity to event
- ▶ Perception of threat
- ▶ History (i.e. age & prior trauma)
- ▶ Personality
- ▶ Support System



BRAIN FUNCTION FOLLOWING CRISIS



The Thinking Brain (Cortex)

- Intellectual
- Abstract Imagery

The Emotional Brain (Limbic System)

- Emotional
- Dream Imagery
- Metaphoric Imagery

The Physical Brain (Brain Stem)

- Physical Input/Output
- Concrete Imagery

Managing School Crisis:
Barbara Ertyl & Mary Schoenfeldt

FIGHT - FLIGHT - FREEZE

What's really happening when we go into

"Survival Mode"

Learning/Thinking Brain

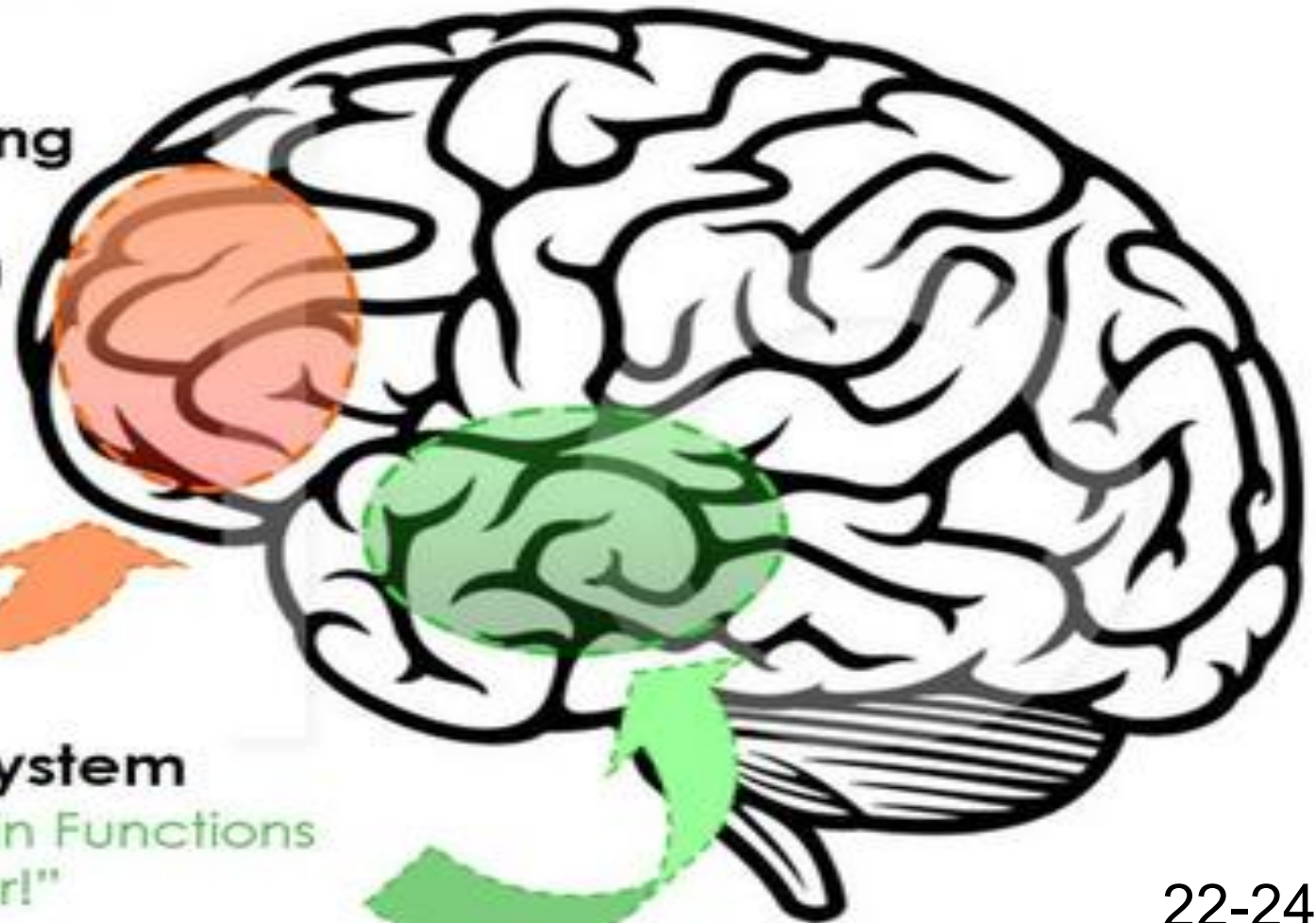
(Prefrontal Cortex)

The logical smart
part of your brain
goes "off line"



Limbic System

Lower Brain Functions
"Take over!"



Basic Response Patterns to Trauma

- ▶ Hypoactive = 75 % of population (sheep)
- Hyperactive = 25 % of population (wolves)



Burnout

- ▶ Typical causes
 - Tasks
 - Deadlines
 - Expectations



Too much to do, too little time, insufficient resources, lack of validation, unrealistic expectations, cumulative physical and emotional distress

Burnout



- ▶ Typical reactions and symptoms
 - Emotional and physical exhaustion
 - Depersonalization
 - Reduced vocational productivity
 - Reduced personal accomplishment
 - Lack of confidence or self-esteem
 - Changes in beliefs, values, and view of workplace or world

Self-Care for Burnout

- ▶ Delegate
- ▶ Negotiate
- ▶ Redefine success
- ▶ Set personal boundaries
- ▶ Create margin
- ▶ Make changes in your life
- ▶ Others???



Empathy fatigue is emotional and physical fatigue resulting from empathizing with other people's pain, grief, anxiety, anger, and other strong emotions over an extended period of time.



Typical Causes

- ▶ Non-compartmentalized compassionate care
- ▶ “Owning” other people’s problems/issues/concerns
- ▶ Over identifying with other people’s distress



Typical reactions/symptoms

- Emotional exhaustion
- Over-personalization
- Reduced compassionate attitude
- Reduced personal ministry satisfaction
- Lack of ministry confidence or self-esteem
- Changes in beliefs, values, and view of workplace or world



Self Care for Empathy Fatigue

- ▶ Systematic, strategic, intentional breaks, rest, restoration periods
- ▶ Set personal boundaries
- ▶ Redefine ministry expectations



Compassion fatigue is the costly result of providing care to those suffering from the consequences of traumatic events. Chaplains are especially vulnerable to compassion fatigue.



Compassion Fatigue



- ▶ Typical causes
 - Empathic connection to trauma survivor
 - Secondary traumatization from experiencing the traumatic event as though it was a personal experience

Compassion Fatigue

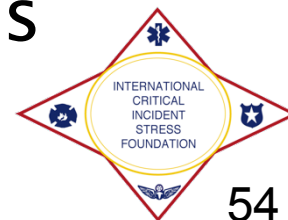


- ▶ Typical Reactions and Symptoms
 - Secondary traumatic stress symptoms
 - Intrusive memories
 - Avoidance or distancing
 - Stress arousal
 - Physical
 - Exhaustion
 - Insomnia
 - Headaches
 - Increased susceptibility to illness

Compassion Fatigue



- ▶ Typical Reactions and Symptoms
 - Behavioral
 - Increased use of drugs, alcohol
 - Absenteeism
 - Anger, irritability
 - Psychological
 - Emotional exhaustion
 - Negative self image
 - Numbed out, Depression, Hopelessness

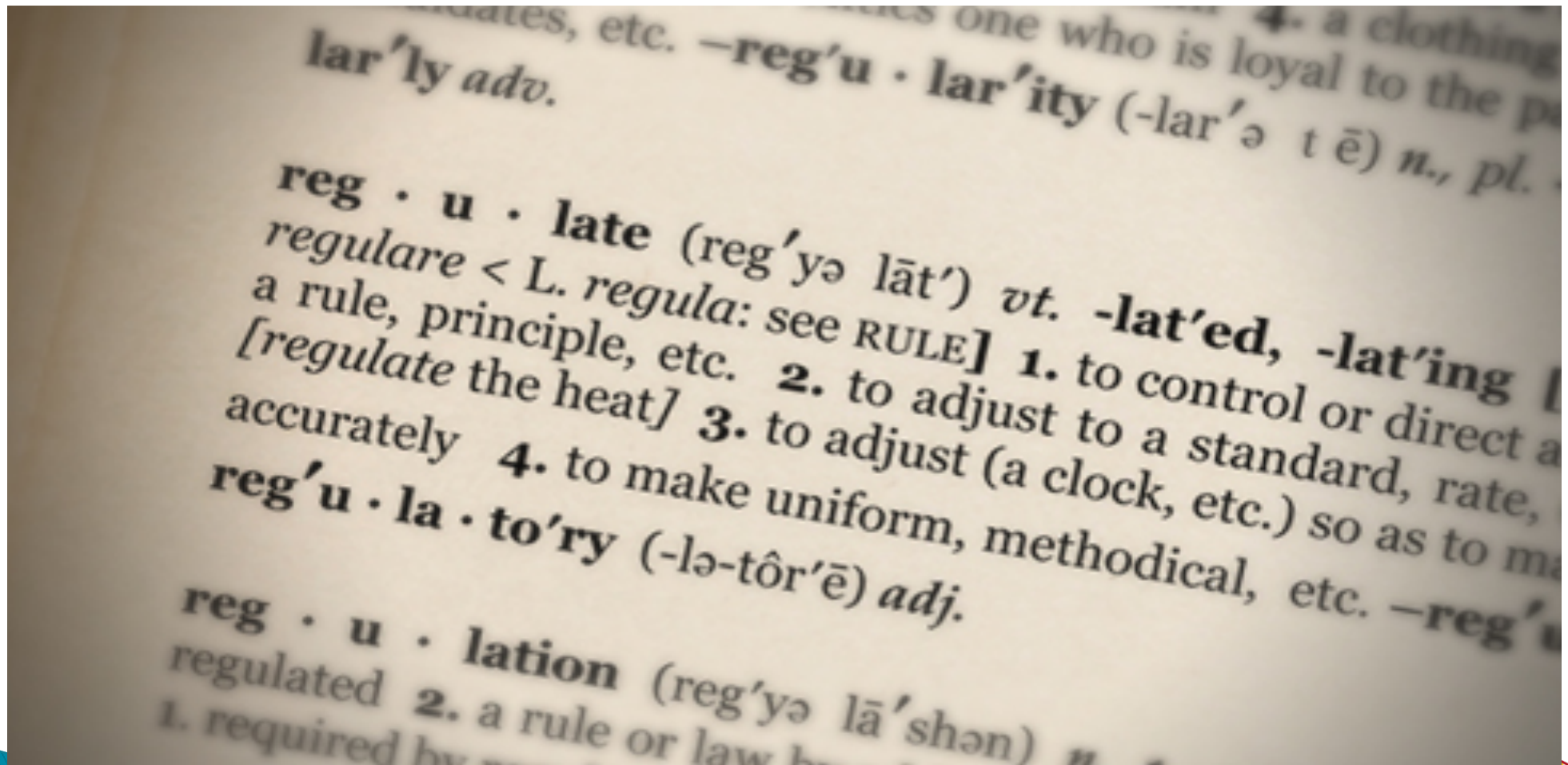


Self Care for Compassion Fatigue

- ▶ Personal stress management
- ▶ Catharsis
- ▶ Self awareness
- ▶ Clarifying options
- ▶ Reframing circumstances or situations
- ▶ Intercession
- ▶ Relaxation techniques
- ▶ Pastoral counsel, therapeutic intervention



Dn: Self Regulation



Traditional ways to build resiliency

- ▶ Education, preparation, training
 - Learn about stress, crisis, resilience
 - Prepare for duties, responsibilities, aftermath
 - Train under supervision to increase skills
- ▶ Catharsis, reflection, cognitive restructuring
 - Processing the experience in the cognitive realm while being informed by the affective realm
 - Verbal, written, art, music
 - Considering the event and reactions through multiple lens
 - Maintain perspective



Traditional ways to build resiliency

- ▶ Emotional regulation, thought awareness
 - Diaphragmatic breathing
 - Progressive muscle relaxation
 - Grounding
 - Never a victim but a survivor
 - Optimism, positive thinking
- ▶ Stress management
 - Regular exercise and rest
 - Healthy diet and hydration
 - Control over alcohol, drugs, prescriptions



Traditional ways to build resiliency

- ▶ **Social support**
 - Maintain healthy relationships
 - Family, friends, colleagues
 - Provide and expect respectful treatment
 - Maintain community spirit and morale
- ▶ **Values and beliefs**
 - Clarify personal values
 - Define personal and corporate mission
 - Set challenging and achievable goals
- ▶ **Practice spiritual disciplines**
 - Prayer, meditation, scripture reading, worship



Innovative way to build resiliency

- Build self confidence
 - Trust your instincts
 - Consider your strengths and accomplishments
 - Be your best self: dress, act, speak and think like your best self
 - Strive for church readiness and competency
 - Avoid people who make you feel bad about yourself
- Self regulate
 - Choose your response in the midst of adversity
 - Fill the space between stimulus and response with positive personal change
 - Motivate yourself towards changing your attitude through self-discipline



Factors that influence resiliency

Internal Characteristics

- ▶ Optimism
- ▶ Self confidence
- ▶ Flexibility
- ▶ Receptivity
- ▶ Self-reliance
- ▶ Patience
- ▶ Hopefulness
- ▶ Creativity
- ▶ Self-regulation



Factors that influence resiliency

External Characteristics

- ▶ Positive reinterpretation
- ▶ Cognitive restructuring
- ▶ Social support fulfillment
- ▶ Emotional regulation
- ▶ Adequacy of resources
- ▶ Positive coping mechanisms
- ▶ Community spirit and morale
- ▶ Open communication
- ▶ Belief in mission, purpose, calling, goals



Factors that influence resiliency

Spiritual Resilience Possibilities

- ▶ Accentuate the positive
- ▶ Have mission and purpose
- ▶ Have a heart of gratitude
- ▶ Act consistent with values and beliefs
- ▶ Practice the 3x3A Action/Reflection Model
- ▶ Can laugh at themselves
- ▶ Cling to their faith
- ▶ Honor self and others through ritual and symbolism



Victor Frankl



*Between stimulus and response there is a space.
In that space is our power to choose our response.
In our response lies our growth and our freedom.*



Self Regulation – choosing our response

- ▶ Joshua
 - “...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”
- ▶ Isaiah
 - “...send me Lord”
- ▶ Ruth
 - “...where you go, I will go”
- ▶ Daniel
 - “...resolved to not defile himself with the royal food and wine”
- ▶ Peter
 - “...got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus”



Begin with a Self Assessment



Let the wise listen and add
to their learning,
and let the discerning
get guidance.

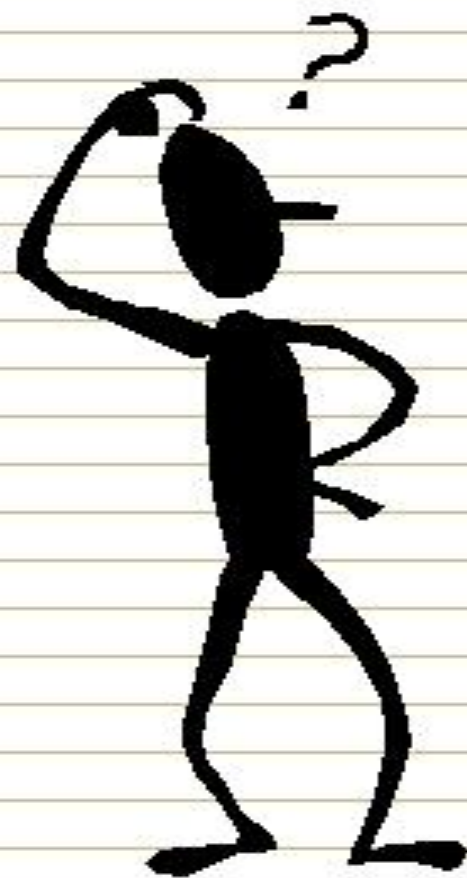
Proverbs 1:5



Self- Regulation Learning Strategies



- Deliberating about appropriate learning strategy
- Setting goals
- Monitoring progress



*When we are no longer able
to change a situation,
we are challenged
to change ourselves.*
Victor Frankl

