Grief Following Trauma

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Critical Incident Stress Management

International Critical Incident Stress Foundation
Losses that Lead to Grief

- Material goods – house, car, memorabilia
- Physical – health, savings, body parts
- Relational – spouse, child, parent, friend
- Vocational – job, position, mission
- Spiritual – faith, hope, trust
- Intra-psychic – future, image, opportunities
- Special – homicide, suicide, dementia, abortion, MIA, rape, mental illness, etc.
“Phases” of Grief
Trauma & the Brain

How The Brain Divides Its Work

- Survival response & mental mobilization
- Trauma and the brain components
- Educating trauma survivors and preparing for post trauma reactions
- Building personal hardiness and resiliency
- Hemispheric specialization
A Tangled Ball of Emotions
## Patterns of Grief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrumental</th>
<th>Intuitive</th>
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### Blended

Have characteristics of both with preference for one
# Patterns of Grief

**Instrumental**
- Tends to be more cognitive
- Wants to “do” something
- Sticks to facts rather than feelings
- Shows less emotion
- May be unaware of internal struggle
- Uncomfortable with shows of emotion

**Intuitive**
- Focus on affect over cognition – “emotional”
- Longer period of cognitive impairment
- Don’t want to solve problems or deal with “needs”
- Tend to act like they feel
Blended Pattern of Grief

Have characteristics of both Instrumental and Intuitive patterns with preference for one

Terry Martin and Kenneth Doka
Grief is a Process

Living with the reality of loss

Expressing the pain of grief and loss

- Physical symptoms
- Emotional symptoms
- Behavioral symptoms
- Relational symptoms
- Spiritual symptoms

The on-going work of grief
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
• 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
Burnout Symptoms

- Procrastination
- Chronic fatigue
- Cynicism
- Chronic lateness
- Difficulty experiencing happiness
- Pessimism
- Sense of a foreshortened future
- Loss of satisfaction in one’s career or life
- Questioning one’s own faith
Self-Care for Burnout

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

• Typical causes
  – Non-compartmentalized compassionate care
  – “Owning” other people’s problems/issues/concerns
  – Over identifying with other people’s distress
Empathy Fatigue

• Typical reactions and 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
Empathy Fatigue

- 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
Vicarious Trauma

• Psychological trauma may be contagious
• Responders can experience many of same symptoms as survivors:
  – Depression
  – Difficulty sleeping
  – Startle, hyper-vigilance
  – Nightmares
  – Anxiety
  – Obsessive thoughts of the trauma
  – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
  – Other symptoms of burnout
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
    - Numbened 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
Relaxation Techniques

- Diaphragmatic Breathing
- Lifestyle Management
- Meditation
  - Opening up attention
  - Focusing of attention
- Social Support