

# HARLEM UNITED

## **Vicarious Trauma**

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# What is Vicarious Trauma?

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- Vicarious trauma is:

“The negative transformation of the helper’s inner experience as a result of empathic engagement with and responsibility for traumatized clients.”

- Compassion Fatigue is:

“Experience of short-term exhaustion and traumatic stress reactions associated to exposure to the suffering of one’s client”

# **The Difference Between Vicarious Trauma & Compassion Fatigue**

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- Vicarious Trauma emphasizes the negative impact in the worker's world view in all domains.
- Compassion Fatigue focuses more heavily on symptoms and parallels PTSD diagnostic criteria.

# Symptoms

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- Apathy
- Hopelessness
- Fatigue
- Cynicism/Disillusionment
- Sadness
- Irritability
- Self-blame
- A sense of personal failure
- Burn out

# Context & Organizational Factors

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- High caseloads
- Deliverables vs. client-centered care
- Challenging clients
- Cultural factors
- Lack of training

# **What We Do at Harlem United**

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- Triad Model of Management
- Clinical Department
- Trainings
- Trauma Informed Care
- Promote Self Care
- EAP

# What does Advocacy look like

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- Informing funders of the successes, details, barriers and challenges of the work during audits and other discussions with them
- Going to Albany – informing lawmakers of context and needs of the client base
- Going to community board meetings
  - Building support among various stake holders
  - Helping staff understand how to advocate for themselves

# **How We as Managers and Supervisors Support Staff to Over Come Vicarious Trauma and Compassion Fatigue**

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- Be empathetic
- Normalize Staff's Feelings and Experiences
- Help Staff Identify Client Issues vs. Staff Identification with Client Issues
- Help Staff Problem-Solve
- Identify Various Resources for staff
- Support Self Care, Internally and Externally