Caring for Caregivers: How to Improve Employee & Patient Satisfaction

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Workshop Objectives

Participants will:

- Be able to identify and understand the impact of effective leadership in creating a healthy work environment.
- Gain knowledge of the brain-body connection, and long term physiological effects of chronic sympathetic nervous system activation.
- Develop self-regulation skills for decreasing anxiety and increasing overall well-being and workplace efficiency.
Your Responses

- As a healthcare worker, what are your concerns about your workplace environment?
- If you are in a leadership position, what do you believe to be your employees’ concerns?
- What feedback do you receive from your patients and their families, both positive and negative?
- Do you consider your organization to have a healthy environment?
Statistics

- Number one reported source of stress for adults is workplace/occupational pressure
- Job stress costs US economy $300 billion annually
- Violence in the workplace costs U.S. industry between $6 and $36 billion annually
- Social workers recognize we must take care of ourselves in order to be effective healthcare workers!

Stress

40% = Workers report that their jobs are very or extremely stressful

25% = Workers who view their jobs as the number one stressor in their life

29% = Workers who report that they feel quite a bit or extremely stressed at work

75% = Number of employees that believe works have more on-the-job stress than a generation ago

26% = Number of workers who report they were “often or very often burned out or stressed by their work”

Consequences of Workplace Stress

Behavioral, psychological and physiological effects:

- Management
- Workers
- Patients and Families
- Organization
Physiological Effects of Stress

- When we feel stress, our body reacts.
  - What are symptoms that you feel?

- Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)
  - Sympathetic Nervous System
    - “Fight or Flight”
    - Useful in stressful situations
    - Overtime will negatively affect health
  - Parasympathetic nervous system
    - Rest and Recuperation
    - Can be enhanced through self-regulation
“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

-Rachel Remen
The Origins of Compassion Fatigue

- 1906: Carl Jung
- 1972: Henri Nouwen
- 1980: DSM III lists PTSD
- 1990: Vicarious Trauma; Pearlman & McCann
- **1995: COMPASSION FATIGUE**
  - Compassion Fatigue, Charles Figley
  - Secondary Traumatic Stress, Beth Stamm
  - Trauma and the Therapist, Laurie Pearlman & Karen Saakvitne
- 1998 & 2002: Eric Gentry & colleagues
  - Accelerated Recovery Program for Compassion Fatigue
Compassion Fatigue

- Negative aspect of our work as professional caregivers.
- Exhaustion, frustration, anger and depression typical of burnout.
- It is important to remember that some trauma at work can be direct (primary) trauma. In other cases, work-related trauma be a combination of both primary and secondary trauma.
- The symptoms of CF/STS are usually rapid in onset.

www.proqol.org
Secondary Traumatic Stress

- Caused by ongoing exposure to stress and trauma of others.
- Caused by being a frequent target of others anger, blaming, manipulation.
- Feeling responsible for the safety/success of another.
- Creates a feeling of vulnerability and need for defense.
- Creates need to identify our own triggers and resiliencies.
Burnout

- Feelings of hopelessness and difficulties in dealing with work or in doing your job effectively.
- Can reflect the feeling that your efforts make no difference.
- Often associated with a very high workload or a non-supportive work environment.
- These negative feelings usually have a gradual onset.

http://friedsocialworker.net/blog/27/is-it-burnout-or-compassion-fatigue/
Compassion Satisfaction

- Positive aspects of professional caregiving
- Pleasure and satisfaction we derive from our work
- May come from our work with clients, coworkers, and/or systems
- Increased with stronger correlation between personal and professional values
Organizational Risk Factors

- Unclear expectations/job ambiguity
- Performance demands: caseloads, deadlines, productivity
- Lack of or non-existent supervision/leadership
- Low level of organizational support
- Low level of decision making authority
- Toxic environment - emotional and environmental
Effective leaders exercise flexibility in their style of management

- Directive leadership –
  - Decision maker
  - Taskmaster
- Participative Leadership –
  - Engage employees in conversation
  - Final decision maker
- Delegative Leadership
  - Give decision making authority to employees

Emotional Intelligence – Characteristics of a Successful Leader

- Self-Awareness
- Self-regulation
- Motivation
- Empathy
- Social Skills

Self-Awareness & Self-Regulation

- **Self-Awareness**
  - Reflect on emotions and cognitions

- **Self-Regulation**
  - Cognitive Reframe
  - Helps us achieve restoration

- **Self-Efficacy**
  - Judgments we make of our capability to carry out activities
  - Our skills and what we believe about them

Recognize Internal and External Factors

Cox, K. & Steiner, S. Self-Care in Social Work, 2013
Solutions:

- Seek continuing education in leadership
- Coach and mentor new staff
- Provide clear expectations for employees
- Provide ongoing supervision
- Implement a well-being program
- Seek to understand needs/concerns of employees
- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
Self-Regulation - Self-Care

- Spiritual
- Professional
- Balance
- Physical
- Psychological
- Emotional

Cox & Steiner (2013)
Relaxation Activities

- My Calm Beat
  - https://www.mybrainsolutions.com/mycalmbeat

- Calm
  - http://www.calm.com/

- Stop, Breathe, Think
  - http://stopbreathethink.org/

- Smiling Mind
Self-Care

- PROFESSIONAL
- EMOTIONAL
- SOCIAL
- PHYSICAL
- PSYCHOLOGICAL
- SPIRITUAL

- BALANCE
- MIND
- BODY
- SPIRIT
The Formula

- Self-Care
- Effective Leader
- Healthy Organization
- Satisfied Employees
- Increased Productivity
- Improved Patient & Family Care
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- Self-Care
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Improved Patient & Family Care
Homework: Self-Care Basics

- *Lifestyle Choices*

- *Workplace Adaptations*

Cox & Steiner (2013)
Questions?

Thank you for attending!
References

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