Down for the Count

Who’s Supporting the Supporters?

NaQuaina Moore (she/her/hers)
Academic Advisor, Animal Science
Herbert College of Agriculture
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Cody Harrison (he/him/his)
Director of Academic Support
DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine
Lincoln Memorial University

#NACADA19
Look Familiar?
Session Outline

- Objectives
- Introductions
- Definitions, signs, and assessments of compassion fatigue and burnout
- Small group discussions and activities
- Wrap-up and questions
Session Objectives

- Attendees will:
  - Learn to recognize signs of burnout and compassion fatigue
  - Consider sources of support at their own place of employment
  - Explore practical strategies for their own experiences
Who are we?

NaQuaina Moore
4.5 years advising/related experience
Identify as a cisgender black female and first generation student

Cody Harrison
6 years advising experience
Identify as a gay male and first generation student
Compassion Fatigue

▪ What is it?
  ▪ Merriam-Webster
    ▪ “apathy or indifference toward the suffering of others as the result of overexposure to tragic news stories and images and the subsequent appeals for assistance”
    ▪ “medical: the physical and mental exhaustion and emotional withdrawal experienced by those who care for sick or traumatized people over an extended period of time”

▪ Wait, what?
  ▪ We care too much to care anymore
Burnout

▪ What is it?
  ▪ Merriam-Webster
    ▪ “exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration”
    ▪ “the condition of someone who has become very physically and emotionally tired after doing a difficult job for a long time”

▪ Wait, what?
  ▪ We’re worn out
What’s the Difference?

Compassion
Fatigue

- Taking home the negative
- Years of advising
- Never hearing a “thank you”

Burnout

- Another meeting
- Advising load
- Salary
- "Advising Season"
- Red Tape
Signs and Impact

- Compassion Fatigue
  - Physical/Emotional Exhaustion
  - Poor Job Satisfaction
  - Irritability
  - An Uncaring Attitude

- Burnout
  - Low Occupational Motivation
  - Resentment Toward Coworkers
  - Tardiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signs</th>
<th>Compassion Fatigue</th>
<th>Vicarious Traumatisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Sadness &amp; Grief</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Avoidance or dread of working with some patients</td>
<td>Sadness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>Reduced ability to feel empathy towards patients or families</td>
<td>Confusion</td>
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<td>Negative reactions towards others</td>
<td>Somatic complaints</td>
<td>Apathy</td>
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<td>Cynicism</td>
<td>Addiction</td>
<td>Intrusive imagery</td>
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<td>Negativity</td>
<td>Nightmares</td>
<td>Loss of control, trust &amp; independence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>Frequent use of sick days</td>
<td>Somatic complaints</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Increased psychological arousal</td>
<td>Relational disturbances</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Changes in beliefs, expectations, assumptions</td>
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<td>Detachment</td>
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<td>Decreased intimacy</td>
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<th>Symptoms</th>
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<td>Digestive problems</td>
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<td>Relational</td>
<td>Muscle tension</td>
<td>Relational Disturbances</td>
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<td>Disturbances</td>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Poor concentration, focus &amp; judgement</td>
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<td>Psychological distress</td>
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<td>Cognitive shifts</td>
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<td>Personal characteristics</td>
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<td>Work-related attributes</td>
<td>Previous exposure to trauma</td>
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<td>Work organisational characteristics</td>
<td>Empathy &amp; emotional energy</td>
<td>Type of therapy</td>
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<td>Prolonged exposure to trauma material of clients</td>
<td>Organisational context</td>
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<td>Response to stressor</td>
<td>Resources</td>
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<td>Work environment</td>
<td>Re-enactment</td>
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<td>Work-related attitudes</td>
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What Now?

- Ways to avoid or deal with Compassion Fatigue and Burnout
  - Self Care
  - Professional Care
- Examples of how we have approached it in the past/now
  - Identity groups
  - Change jobs
  - Work/Life balance
  - Counseling
Assess...Because Higher Ed

- Take professional quality of life assessment
  - Self-score
Discussion

- What is your reaction to your assessment results?
  - Don’t have to share scores
  - Does it fit with what you’re feeling? Why? Why not?
  - Can you see how this could be an indicator?

- Why is difficult for us to stop, reflect, and take care of ourselves?

- What methods of self-care are available to you at your place of employment?

- Who can you go to when you’re feeling burnt out to re-fuel?

- Share your thoughts and stories with the whole group.
References


▪ Compassion Fatigue. (2019, August 5). Retrieved from https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/psychpedia/compassion-fatigue


▪ The Center for Victims of Torture, www.ProQOL.org
Questions?

NaQuaina Moore (she/her/hers)
Herbert College of Agriculture
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
nmoore25@utk.edu

Cody Harrison (he/him/his)
DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine
Lincoln Memorial University, Knoxville
christopher.harrison@lmunet.edu