

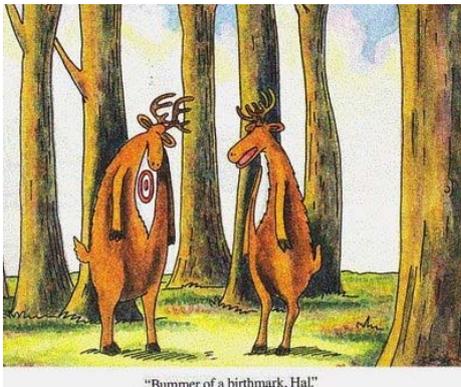
# Practical Self Care

A few simple tools for you  
and your staff



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# Appreciating the Risk



- Child Welfare affiliation proved very significant as a predictor of burnout as compared to belonging to any other professional group.

Sprang, G. et al, *Child Welfare*; Vol 90, No.6 149-168

- Social Workers engaged in direct practice are highly likely to be secondarily exposed to traumatic events through their work with traumatised populations, many social workers are likely to experience at least some symptoms of STS and a significant minority (15%) may meet the diagnostic criteria for PTSD.

Bride, B. *Social Work*, Jan 2007 52, 1 p63-7

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# Trauma Exposure Types

- **Compassion Fatigue**

Caring for people is draining, it takes something out of us

- **Vicarious Trauma**

Being exposed to the pain of others can profoundly impact us

- **Moral Distress**

The result of the environment we work in, complex morality, limited resources, high expectations.

- **Direct Trauma**

Verbal, Physical and Sexual

Our Trauma Exposure requires Stewardship

## So Why Do We Ignore The Trauma?

- A Culture of Self Sacrifice
  - We are so other focused that we simply fail to care for ourselves
- It Won't Get Me
  - We simply think we are the exception or fail to appreciate the risks.
- It's All Too Hard
  - Effective Self-Care takes planning and commitment
- Lack Self-Awareness
  - Sadly some staff simply lack the self-awareness to recognise they are being negatively impacted by their work.  
(Although those around them usually know!)

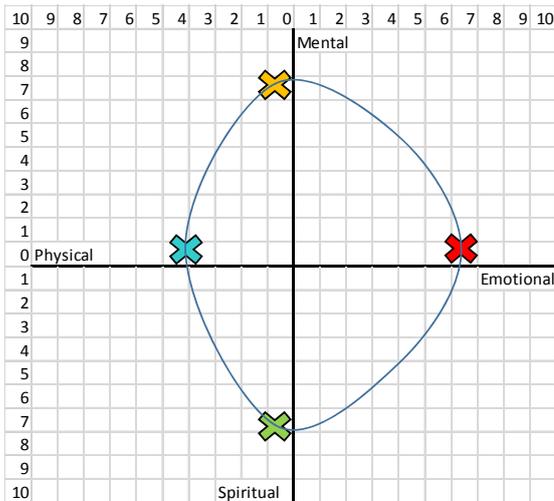
# Four Domains of Self Care



We Need To Be Maintaining Each Domain

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# Four Domains Exercise



Early experiments in transportation

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## Taking 10 (or 20 or 30....)



Take Time every Day to check your vitals.

- Ask Yourself
  - How Balanced is my life right now?
  - How am I managing my trauma exposure?
  - Are there any warning signs?
- Identify actions required and when you will do them

Activity – In pairs identify times in your day when you may be able to Take 10

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## Healthy Debriefing



- Increased Self-Awareness
  - Is this the right time, person and place
- Fair Warning
  - In informal settings always ask if they would mind you sharing something
  - eg “I heard something really hard today, and I could really use a debrief; could I talk to you about it?”

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# Healthy Debriefing



- Consent
  - Only proceed with permission
  - When asked feel free to place boundaries, “I only have 15min” or “could you do it without sharing the gruesome details.”
- Limited Disclosure
  - stick to the boundaries that were set.
  - Move from least traumatic towards the most traumatic. (Peel the onion and let the hearer tell you when to stop).

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# Other things we explore



- Treat our Self Care with the same seriousness that we treat our work
- Critical Incident Frequency and Residue
- Personal Story, Wounded Healers and Trauma Mastery
- Purpose and finding hope and meaning in our work
- Remembering to do the basics
  - Keep to our hours
  - Take our leave in blocks

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