



NWM2025

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA • 3-7 NOVEMBER 2025

Tuesday, 4 November 2025

Session 4

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Workshop: Healing the Healers: Building Holistic Wellness and Coping with Secondary Trauma

Ms. Shalom Malongwa,
Mr. Evan Hall,
Ms. Happiness Minja,
Dr. Evance Mgeyi,
Dr. Lilian Komba





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Dr. Khanh Linh Nguyen



Agenda

Healthcare Worker Burnout: Causes, Costs, and Team-Based Remedies

Opening Reflection

Why This Workshop Matters

Burnout Among Botswana
Healthcare Workers

Understanding 'Healing the Healer'

The Science of Self-Care

Group Activity - Our Sources of
Stress and Renewal

The Science Behind Burnout Active
Wellness Strategies (dimensions) at

Botswana-Baylor

Linking Wellness to Patient
Outcomes

Secondary Trauma: Recognition, Risk Factors, and Support Strategies

Understanding Secondary trauma

Risk Factors

Common signs and symptoms

Impact

Prevention and Coping Strategies

Conclusion

Educational Learning Objectives

1. Analyze the eight dimensions of wellness and their impact on healthcare worker burnout.
2. Design a team-specific wellness plan aligned to local needs and resources.
3. Evaluate existing wellness initiatives using evidence-based criteria and metrics.
4. Define and differentiate secondary trauma, and articulate that it is a natural occupational hazard rather than a personal weakness.
5. Identify individual and contextual risk factors (e.g., prior experiences such as HIV diagnosis or parental death) that increase susceptibility to secondary trauma.
6. Explain how education, support, and a safe working environment improve staff effectiveness, service quality, and organizational outcomes.

Healthcare Worker Burnout: Causes, Costs, and Team-Based Remedies

Why This Workshop Matters

Despite Botswana's HIV success story, burnout among HCWs is still high.

Over 60% of nurses experience emotional exhaustion; half report reduced accomplishment

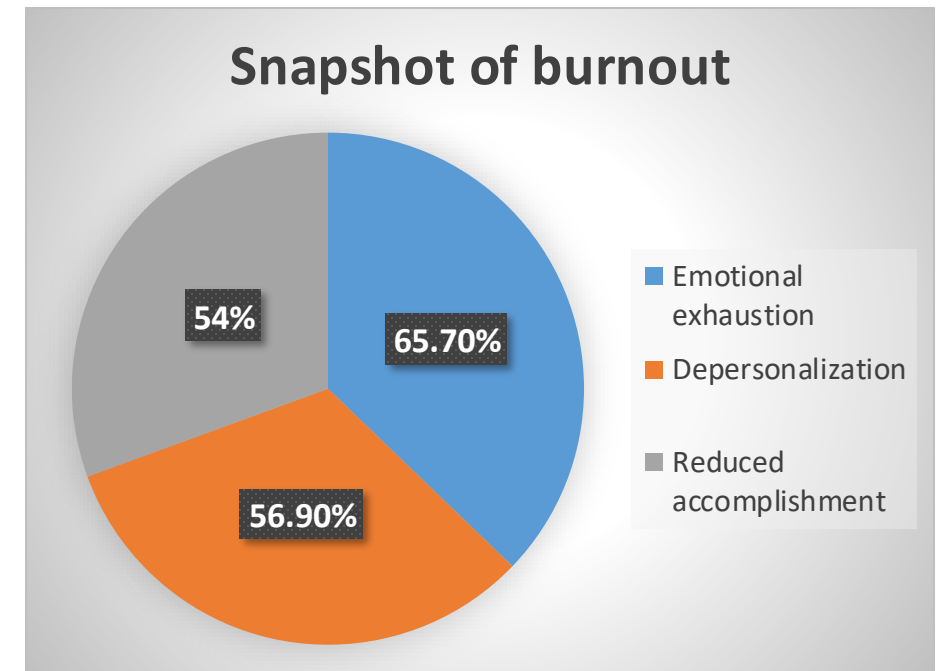
Burnout = reduced care quality, absenteeism, compassion fatigue, and low retention.

Wellness is not a luxury — it's a professional necessity.

Research Snapshot - Burnout Among Botswana Healthcare Workers

National survey: Wellness participation = lower stress and exhaustion.

~52% of global HCWs faced burnout during COVID-19.



Welcome & Opening Reflection

“We spend our days healing others — but who heals the healer?”

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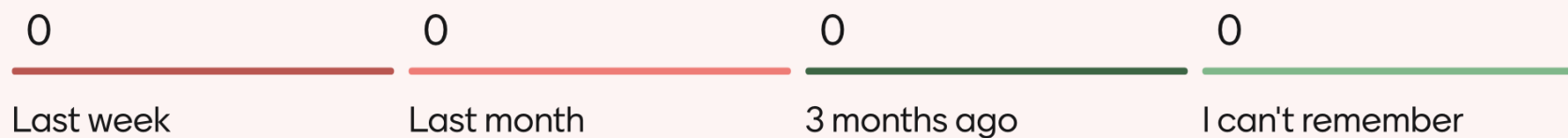
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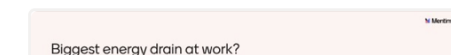
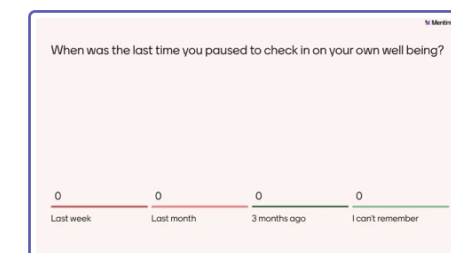
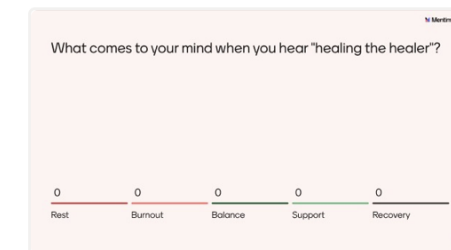


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Understanding 'Healing the Healer'

Healing means creating safe spaces to restore balance.

Core dimensions of wellness (focusing on 4)

1. **Physical wellness:** State of having a healthy body that can perform daily activities without undue fatigue
2. **Psychological wellness:** Psychological well-being is a multifaceted construct, state of mind where an individual is able to develop their potential, work productively, and cope with normal stresses of life.
3. **Spiritual wellness:** Affirms one's beliefs and values as well as principles (sense of purpose).
4. **Social wellness:** The ability to interact well with others, build and maintain meaningful and supportive relationships.

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What comes to your mind when you hear "healing the healer"?



When was the last time you paused to check in on your own well being?



How often do you make time for self-care?



Biggest energy drain at work?

The Science of Self-Care

Mindfulness reduces burnout and improves empathy.

Physical activity enhances mood and focus.

Social support protects against compassion fatigue.

Spirituality reinforces oneness and close relationship with the Super-being and people around. Affirms one's beliefs and values as well as principles (sense of purpose).

Group Activity - Our Sources of Stress and Renewal

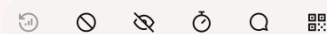
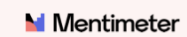
Form small groups (10 people).

Discuss:

What drains your energy most at work?

❖ Interactive: Share one insight with everyone.

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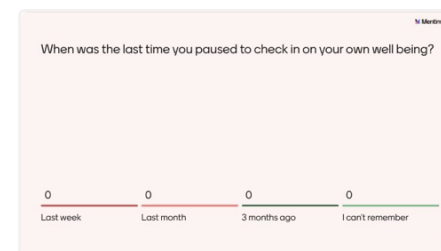
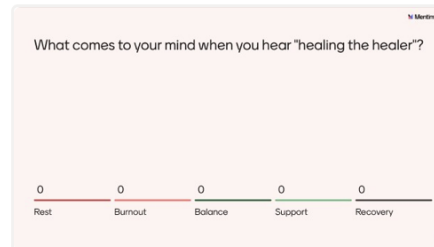


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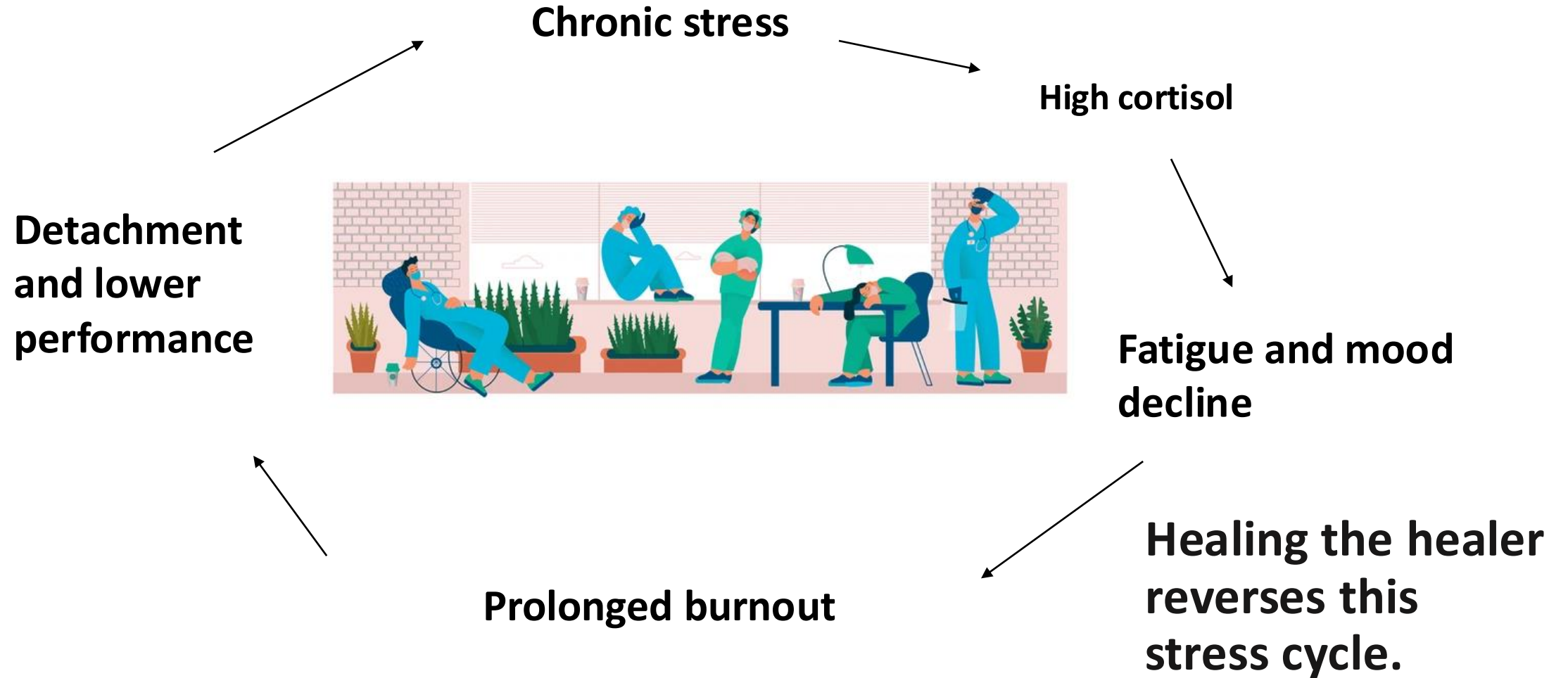


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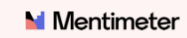


Biggest energy drain at work?

The Science Behind Burnout



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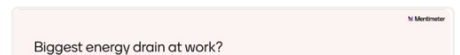
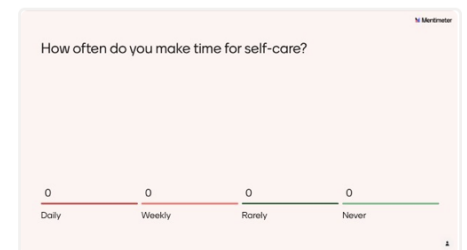
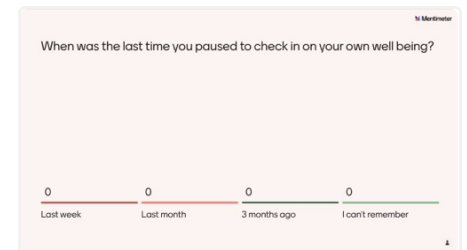


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What comes to your mind when you hear "healing the healer"?



When was the last time you paused to check in on your own well being?



How often do you make time for self-care?



Biggest energy drain at work?

Active Wellness Strategies (dimensions) at Botswana-Baylor

Physical	Spiritual	Social	Psychological
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily stretch breaks• Peer circles• Mindful Mondays• Fitness challenges• Staff gym	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morning prayers• The chaplain weekly visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fruit Friday• Staff birthday celebrations• Holiday celebrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peer support program• Wellness check-in every Friday meetings

Interactive: Write one personal and one workplace wellness goal

Linking Wellness to Patient Outcomes

Burnout linked to more medical errors and lower satisfaction.

Healing ourselves heals our patients.

Activity: Could you share a moment when your work was affected by a burnout.

Secondary Trauma: Recognition, Risk Factors, and Support Strategies

Poll Question #1

Have you heard of the term “secondary trauma” or “vicarious trauma” before today's presentation?

☐

Yes

☐

No

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"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"

(Remen, 1996)

Understanding Secondary trauma

Secondary or Vicarious Trauma is About:

- The effect for you of working with persons who have experienced loss, violence, abuse, other trauma in their lives
- The change in your own inner life as the result of being with those who have experienced these difficulties; and
- What happens for you as the result of hearing people talk about what happened to them.

“Secondary” or “Vicarious” is what happens to us from the experience of another person when we watch, read, listen.

- People can experience pleasure through watching silly movies.
- People can experience secondary or vicarious distress by listening to the news about war, shootings, and so forth.
- We can experience loss when a friend’s mother dies.
- We can experience personal distress watching crime on a TV show.

Our case (Social workers, Counselors, Doctors, Nurses, Mental Health professionals...)

- Listening to distressing patient stories.
- Witnessing repeated suffering or loss.
- Feeling helpless in patient outcomes.

Why is It Important to be Aware of Secondary Trauma?

The effects of our work on us can be **internal**, even if we are not consciously aware of those effects on us.

They can show **externally** by how we behave with others, even if we are not aware of why it is happening.

Vicarious trauma can present an **understandable** but **difficult situation**

Protecting the health of workers and ensuring that beneficiaries of care consistently receive the best possible care from those who are committed to helping them.

Risk Factors

- ❖ Prolonged exposure to traumatic events and insufficient recovery time
- ❖ Lack of emotional support and debriefing
- ❖ Social isolation and tendency to avoid feelings
- ❖ Personal history of trauma or mental health issues.
- ❖ Inadequate self care practices

Poll Question #2

Which of the following emotional symptoms have you personally experienced related to your work with COE patients?

- ☐ Feelings of helplessness and powerlessness
- ☐ Increased anxiety, fear and irritability
- ☐ Mood swings and emotional exhaustion
- ☐ Intrusive thoughts or nightmares about patients' experiences

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Common signs and symptoms

Signs:

- Emotional fatigue, detachment, irritability, physical exhaustion

❖ Cognitive Symptoms:

- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Memory problems
- Hyper vigilance and constant alertness

❖ Emotional Symptoms:

- Feelings of helplessness and powerlessness
- Increased anxiety, fear and irritability
- Mood swings and emotional exhaustion
- Intrusive thoughts or nightmares about patients experiences

❖ Behavioral Symptoms:

- Withdrawal from colleagues and friends
- Reduced job satisfaction and burnout
- Decreased empathy and compassion
- Substance abuse as a coping mechanism

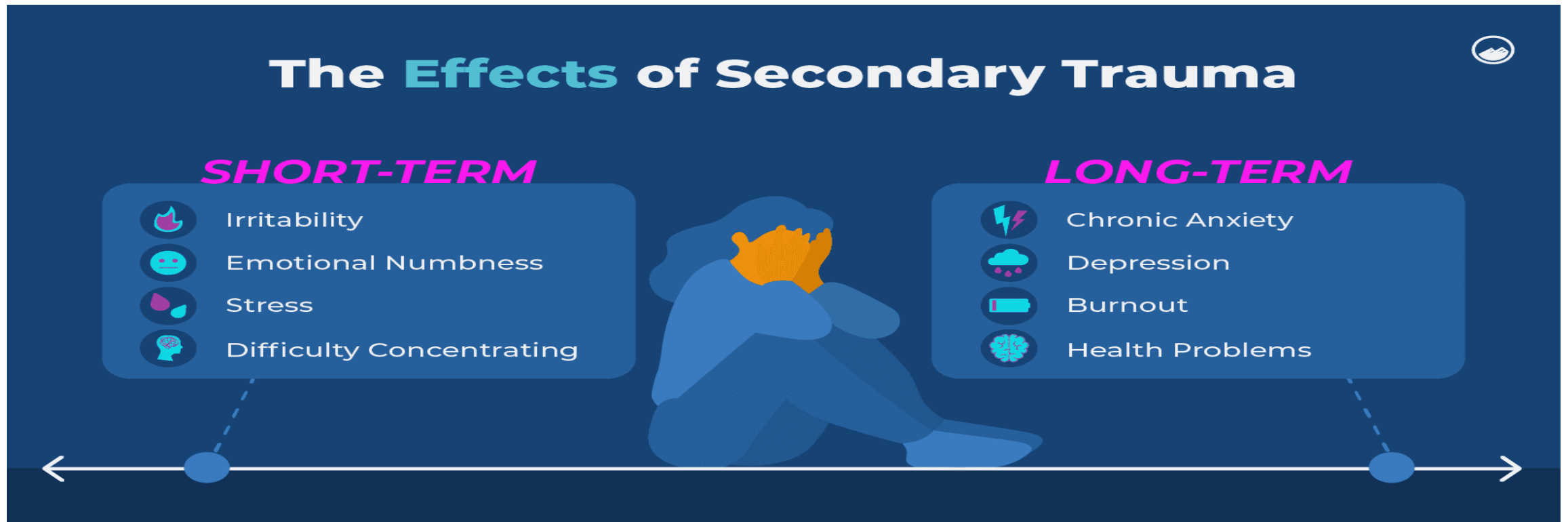
❖ Physical Symptoms:

- Fatigue, sleep disturbances and insomnia
- Headaches and body aches
- Digestive issues and changes in appetite

Impact of Secondary Trauma

The impact of working with abuse and trauma day after day can begin to take its toll **on the person and the professional**, which goes on to have an **impact on the organization** and the **service users we support**.

- ❖ **Impact on you as a person:** Effects on a person's mental and physical wellbeing. Profound effect on family life, relationships, physical and mental health or faith.



Impact of Secondary Trauma

❖ Impact on you as a professional

- **Job performance:** Decrease in quality, decrease in quantity, low motivation, avoidance of job tasks, increase in mistakes, setting perfectionist standards, obsession about detail
- **Morale:** Decrease in confidence, loss of interest, dissatisfaction, negative attitude, apathy, demoralization, lack of appreciation, detachment, feelings of incompleteness
- **Interpersonal:** Withdrawal from colleagues, impatience, decrease in quality of relationship, poor communication, staff conflicts
- **Behavioral:** Absenteeism, exhaustion, faulty judgment, irritability, tardiness, irresponsibility, overwork, frequent job changes

❖ Impact on the organization

- Workers experiencing high levels of secondary trauma tend to have higher levels of tardiness and absenteeism, including long-term sick leave for issues such as depression and anxiety

❖ Impact on service users

- The combined impact on a person, professional and the organization means that the biggest effect falls on the service users we are working to support and protect. E.g. making poor assessments and dangerous decisions, putting people at risk.

Prevention and Coping Strategies

❖ Self-Care(Key):

- Engage in restorative practices: sleep, prioritize regular exercise, healthy eating, adequate sleep, prayer, mindfulness
- Engage in activities that bring joy and relaxation
- Practice mindfulness, meditation and deep breathing



❖ Professional support:

- Regular debriefing sessions with colleagues or mental health professionals
- Seek supervision and counselling to process emotions

❖ Setting boundaries:

- Establish emotional boundaries to prevent becoming overly involved
- Learn to say no when additional tasks could overwhelm you

❖ Education:

- Training on recognizing and managing secondary trauma
- Understand the importance of seeking help when needed

❖ Workplace support :

- Create culture of open communication and support
- Provide access to employee assistance programs
- Rotate tasks to reduce constant exposure to trauma

Conclusion

- ❖ Secondary trauma is not weakness — it's a natural human response to caring deeply, an occupational hazard for people working in helping professions
- ❖ Individual differences matter, persons with similar personal history may be more likely to be affected by hearing it from others. e.g., Learning about HIV diagnosis, Death of a parent
- ❖ Providing education, support, and a safe working environment will support staff to work more effectively, provide better support/services for service users, enabling more effective/positive outcomes, and overall strengthening the organization.

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Workshop: Healing the Healers: Building Holistic Wellness and Coping with Secondary Trauma Session Evaluation

A quick, 1-minute “check in” to listen
to your views. Your voice matters!

Please Scan the QR code to
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Evaluation.



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NWM2025SessionEval>



Quality Improvement Community of Practice (QI CoP) Meeting

16:30 - 17:30

Global Health Café: A Taste of Collaboration

18:00 - 20:00 - Dinner & Network Showcase

Global Health Café Booth Set Up Now



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Quality Improvement Community of Practice (QI CoP) Meeting

