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# Compassion Fatigue for Professionals

2018 Building Better Health  
Conference

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**Trauma &  
Resilience**

# **Taking Care of Ourselves Allows Us to Live a Healthier Life.**

# Why Self-Care?

- Recognize
- Prevent
- Reduce

# Recognize ...

- What Compassion Fatigue Is
- The Toll that Our Work Takes on Us

# Prevent

Compassion Fatigue  
and keep it from  
becoming a “Badge of  
Honor.”

# Reduce

Attrition

Turmoil

Negative Health Effects

# What is Compassion Fatigue?

- Compassion Fatigue occurs when the balance between secondary trauma, burnout and the satisfaction that we find in doing our job become unbalanced.

**Vicarious Trauma**  
**+**  
**Burnout**  
**+**  
**↓ Compassion Satisfaction**

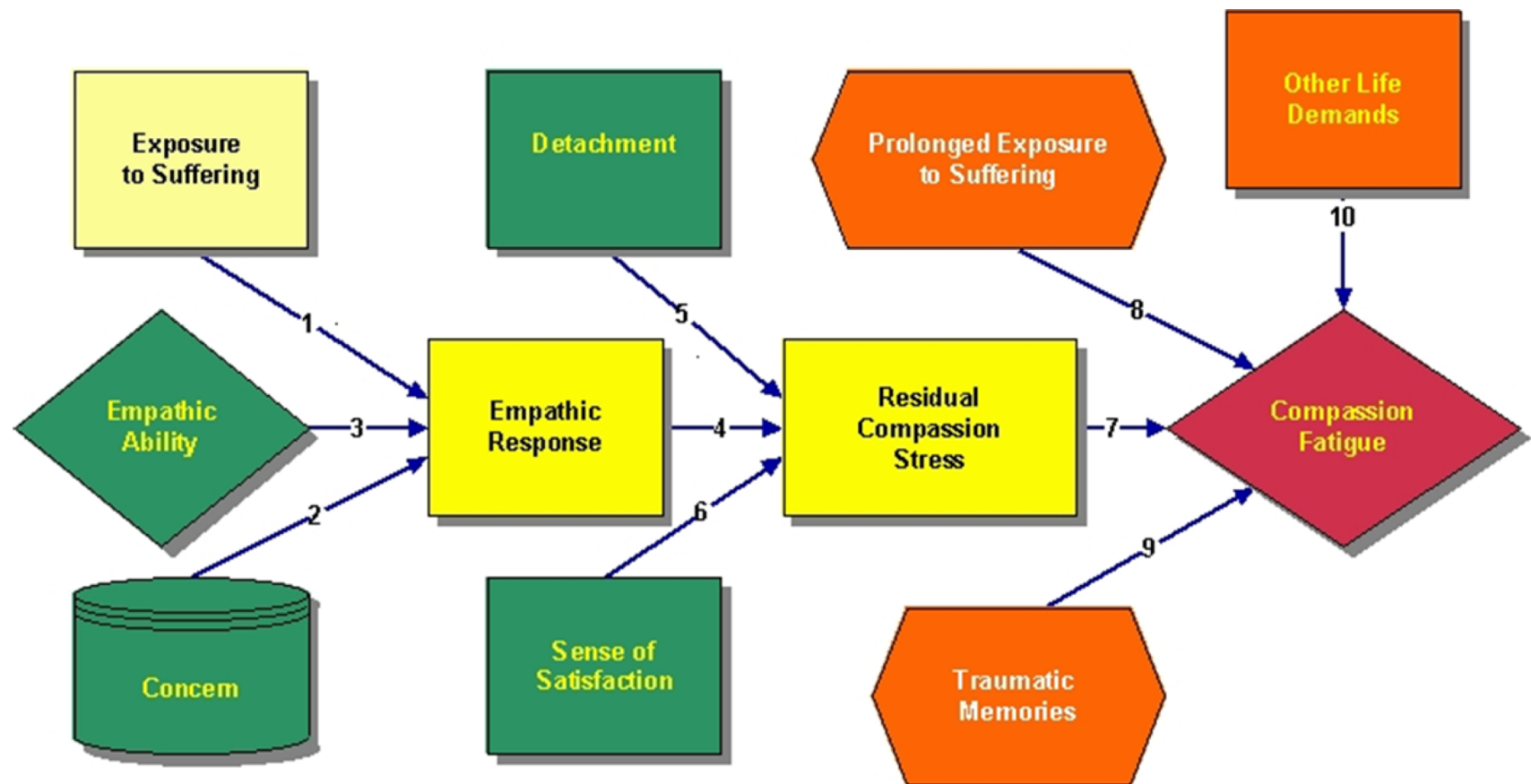
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**Compassion Fatigue**



This negative transformation results in the disruption of the providers spirituality, or meaning and hope.

*Charles Figley*



**The Compassion Fatigue Process (Figley, 2001)**

# What makes us vulnerable?

- Being present with people as they re-experience trauma
- Personal history of trauma
- The “Badge of Honor”
- Working in isolation
- An unsupportive work environment
  - Insufficient employee assistance
  - Insufficient opportunities to share experiences
  - Program or position is undervalued or has insufficient resources

# How Compassion Fatigue Shows up

- ◉ Absenteeism
- ◉ Tardiness
- ◉ Negative attitude toward client, employer, or co-worker
- ◉ Interpersonal conflicts
- ◉ Disorganization
- ◉ Procrastination
- ◉ Poor follow through

Predisposes to **heart** problems

Clotting issues

Increased muscle *tension*

Increased blood pressure

*Impaired* cognitive performance

**Suppresses** thyroid function

Blood sugar *imbalance*

Decreased bone density

Decreased **immunity**

Increased **inflammatory** response

*Slowed* wound healing

Increased abdominal fat

**Depression**

Damage to neuro receptor sites

**Reduced longevity**

“Resilience can help you endure loss, chronic stress, traumatic events and other challenges.

It'll enable you to develop a reservoir of internal resources that you can draw on.

Resilience will help you survive challenges and even thrive in the midst of chaos and hardship.”

—*Mayo Clinic*

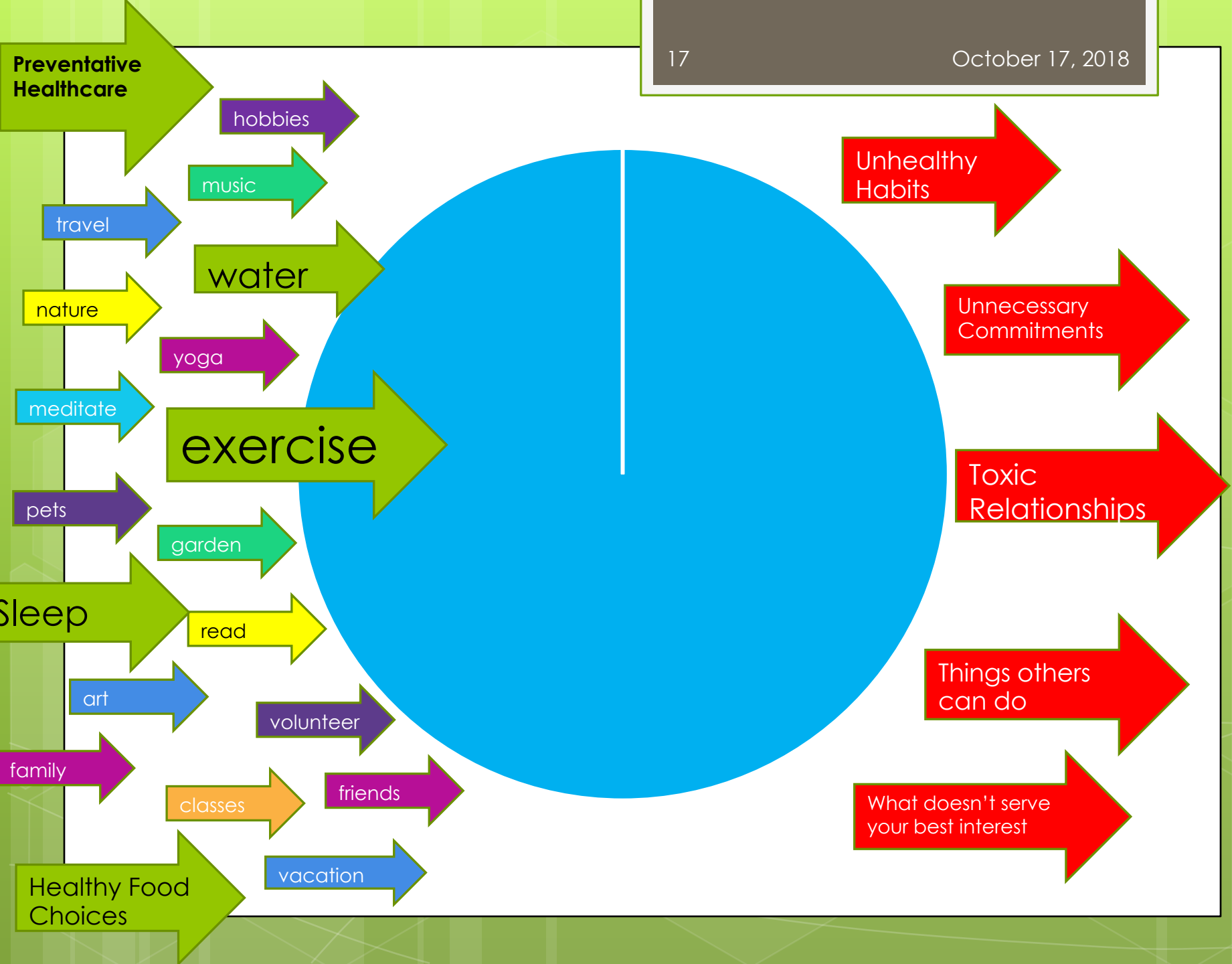
# Resilience

- The ability to protect yourself, and once you're able, to re-center and re-focus yourself
- The ability to regulate affective states.  
(Calming, breathing, soothing)
- The ability to stay grounded and in your body
- The willingness to examine and face inner strengths and weaknesses and begin to move on and regain life

# What Resilient People have in Common:

- Support
- Expectation for Success
- Participation
- Positive Bonds
- Boundaries
- Communication





# Developing Your Self Care Plan

## Components of a Self Care Plan

- Physical
- Emotional
- Financial
- Intellectual
- Spiritual

# Ask Yourself:

- What do I want to accomplish?
- How am I going to accomplish this?
- How will my progress be measured?
- What will be different?

# Physical Example:

- **What do I want to accomplish?**

*Learn to swim*

- **How am I going to accomplish this?**

*Take swimming lessons*

- **How will my progress be measured? (Measurable)**

*I will be able to swim across the length of a pool and back.*

## **What will be different?**

*I will be able to swim which will decrease my anxiety around water and can provide increased options and opportunities for me to enjoy myself.*

## **Additional Benefits:**

- \*Physical exercise

*Lose weight*

*Reduce blood pressure*

*Decrease medication*

*Decrease anxiety symptoms*

*Decrease depression symptoms*

- \*Relaxation in and around water

- \*Increase social support

- \*Increased options for family outings, travel, relaxation & exercise

# The Center for Trauma & Resilience

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