

Domestic Violence Advocacy: A Disaster Response

Presented By:

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Sandy Project: training for disaster responders

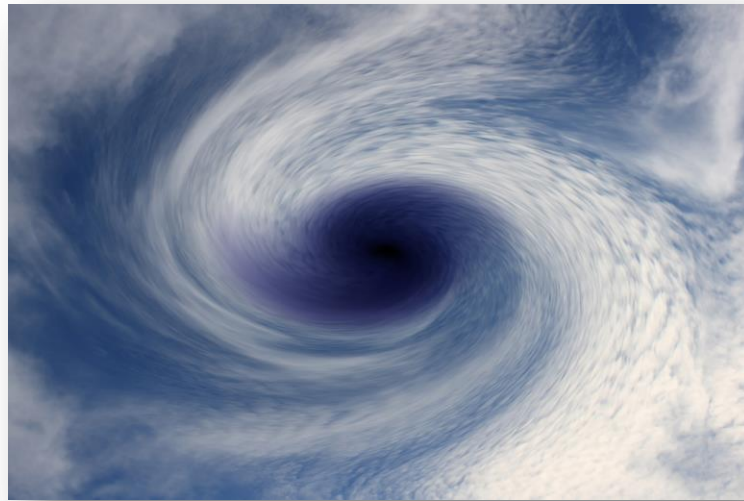
- NYSCADV provided trainings for Disaster Response Workers and the objectives were:
- Define domestic violence, myths and barriers
- Identify the intersection between DV and disaster
- Assessing and responding to domestic violence
- Explore warning signs of domestic violence
- Develop ways to assess, support and safety plan for victims of domestic violence in disasters

OBJECTIVES: training for advocates

- Identify the intersection between domestic violence and disasters.
- Explore additional barriers for domestic violence disaster victims.
- Identify best practices for disaster preparedness.
- Identify characteristics of compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma.
- Discuss the importance of self care and holistic wellness.

Section 1: Intersection of Domestic Violence and Disasters

The word disaster implies an incident that is intense, powerful, damaging, adverse and extreme.



Domestic violence is an ongoing disaster experienced at a personal level.

Intersection of Domestic Violence and Disaster



“One client’s ex-husband came by and took all the blankets so he would be warm--leaving her and her children in the cold.”

-Advocate from NJ

Disasters and Domestic Violence: Understanding the Nexus

- Montreal Ice Storm
- Santa Cruz earthquake
- Hurricane Andrew - Miami
- Hurricane Floyd - NC



Disasters and Domestic Violence: Understanding the Nexus

Disasters precipitate surges in the incidence of family and sexual violence:

- In the three months following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, calls to the National Domestic Violence Hotline from Gulf Coast states increased by 21% from Louisiana, and by 13% overall.
- After the 1993 Missouri floods, the turn-away rate of domestic violence survivors from shelters rose by 111%.

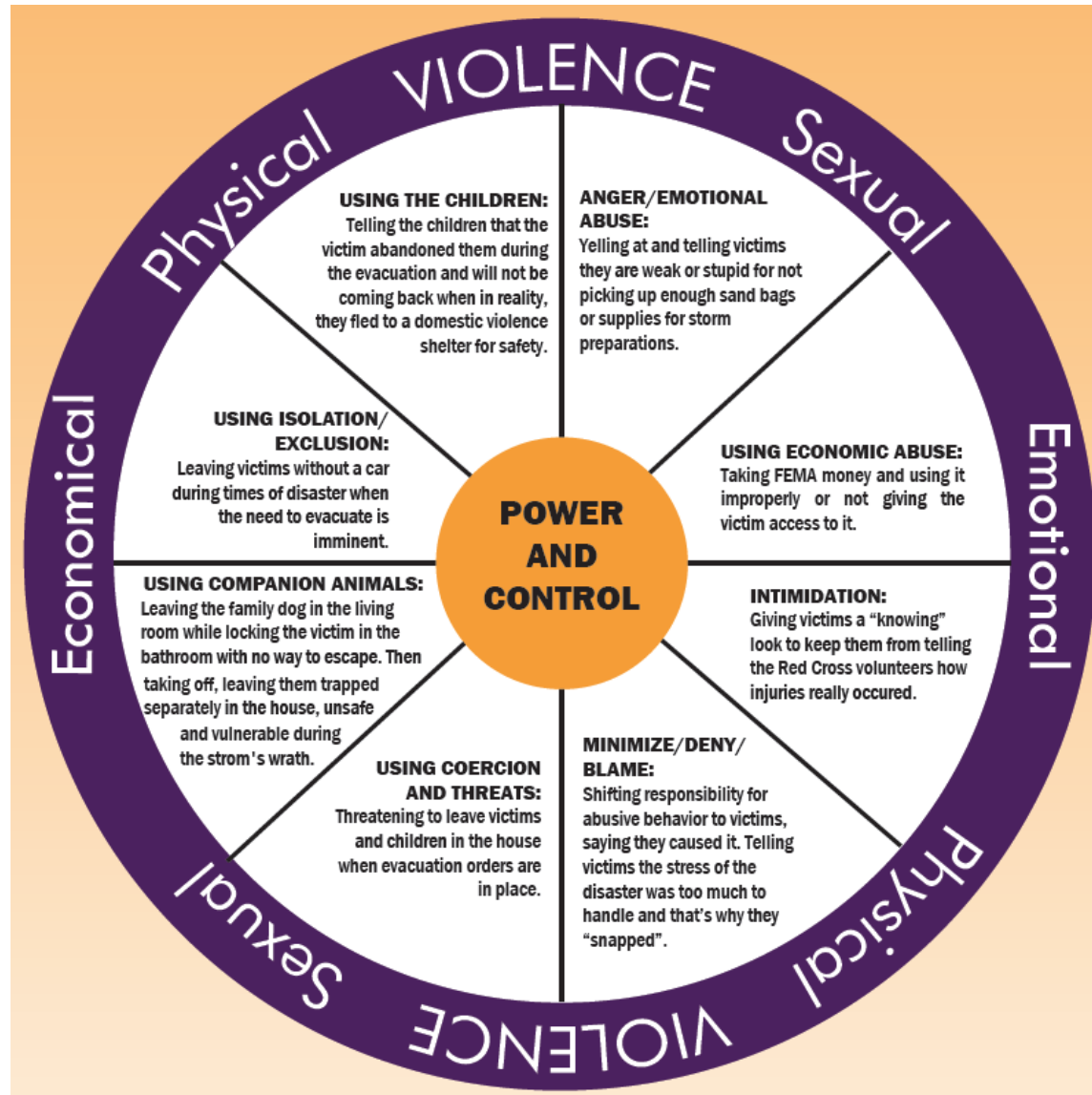
Story #1: I had no roof over my head, no other place to live, so I put up with it for 9 months. I left for a few days in between because of physical and verbal abuse. I would go to friend's house or to my ex-husband's house where my children live. I saw my situation was upsetting the children. I made a choice that I was going to leave for good after too many times going back. Now my closest friends are struggling because of the condition of the city. I was staying with a friend when her roof caved in. I feel like a puppy on the side of the highway. It's rainy and cold out and I don't have a safe, familiar place to go.

Story #2: I evacuated to Houston with my children and received a FEMA voucher for housing. There are two open criminal cases against my husband in New Orleans. We have been living apart and I have not yet completed the divorce process. He initially evacuated to Lafayette, but then he found me in Houston by asking government officials. Without support here of friends and family and the professionals I had been working with I couldn't stop him from moving into my apartment in Houston. Now he won't leave. He says that the voucher is meant for him also since he is the father of our children and we are still legally married. My divorce attorney told me I cannot get the divorce until we are living apart. I now have to move out with nothing and don't know how I will be able to support myself and my children, or stay here hoping the police can come if his verbal abuse escalates into physical violence again. I am scared for myself and the children.

Disaster Impacts

- **Infrastructural Effects Upon Community:**
Reduced Support
- **Behavioral Effects Upon Women:**
Reduced Resilience
- **Cultural Effects Upon Community:**
Increased Risk
- **Behavioral Effects Upon Potential Abusers:**
Increased Risk
- **Socio-economic Effects Upon Women:**
Reduced Protection

Domestic Violence & Disaster: Power & Control Wheel



Supporting Victims in Disaster: The Barriers

- Domestic violence will continue post-disaster and may escalate.
- Isolation is increased.
- Social networks are disrupted or destroyed.
- Disaster response may focus on the needs of the many and those in acute need.
- Local providers will be challenged to respond.

Supporting Victims in Disaster: The Barriers

- Lack of privacy
- Confidentiality
- Communication
- Orders of Protection
- Trauma counselors
- Custody
- Housing
- Childcare
- Translators
- Pets



Section 2: Disaster Response



Disaster Response

**Local
Government-**

Citizen Corps &
Volunteer
Organizations

State
**Emergency
Management**

**Federal
Emergency
Management
Agency**



Four Phases of Emergency Management

1. Preparedness
2. Response
3. Recovery
4. Mitigation



PREPAREDNESS

Each domestic violence program needs:

1. A staff disaster specialist or team
2. An all-hazards plan with protocols for all types of potential emergencies
3. A review committee
4. A yearly budget for start-up and replacement supplies
5. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

PREPAREDNESS: Protocols

- Staff training
- Assessment of inventory
- Procedures to be followed at facility during all stages of the disaster
- Staffing procedures
- Distribution of resources and supplies
- Delivery and management of center services
- Worst case-scenario procedures



PREPAREDNESS: Facility preparation

- Shore-up building: loose parts, windows, doors
- Secure grounds
- Assure internal safety: safe room
- Assure internal comfort: bedding, food, water
- Assure emergency domestic violence services
- Telephone/electricity service support
- Emergency evacuation & secure empty facility
- Attention to survivors with additional needs: elder, mobility needs, dietary needs, medical care, medication, etc.



RESPONSE

- Support the choices of residents during the emergency



- Evacuations
 - Nearest shelters
- Continue program services if possible
- Rolling hotlines

Disaster Plan: Forward Lines to NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline

- Contact Crisis Services (CS) (operator of the NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline) at **(716) 834-3131** or directly via the NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline at **1-800-942-6906** and ask to speak with an Advocate Program Manager
- Provide CS/NYS DV/SV Hotline with details of the forward. They will provide DV/SA support, safety planning and referrals based on your instructions during disaster period
- Follow instructions from your local phone provider on how to forward lines. **Agency should forward to State Hotline number: 1-800-942-6906.**

RESPONSE: Disaster Transfer

The National Domestic Violence

HOTLINE

1.800.799.SAFE (7233) • 1.800.787.3224 (TTY)

- Contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline
- Provide details of the transfer
- Contact your local phone service to transfer your lines
- NDVH will be able to identify transferred calls

Disaster-Specific Safety Planning

- Validate feelings and concerns
- Confirm shelter safety protocols
- Keep children with custodial parent
- Safety plan with pets

RECOVERY

- Help residents access disaster relief
- Increase services and trauma counseling
- Offer shelter to homeless women and children if feasible
- Increase outreach to affected neighborhoods nearby
- Collaborate with other agencies
- Plan for re- occupation



MITIGATION



- Join emergency response networks
- Disaster awareness training
- Identify needs and file plan with local disaster managers
- Assess the needs of vulnerable groups
- Cross train staff
- Recruit from disaster response agencies

What about Staff?

Staff must have time to deal with their emergency too

- Hold an all staff meeting leading up to the disaster when possible. Run through plan and questions.
 - It is advisable to get staff volunteers for coverage and extended duty or have them negotiate shifts with one another.
 - Create “short shifts” and over-lap assignments to allow staff to take care of personal errands.



Case Study #1: Lessons learned from Florida's 2004 Hurricane Season

- Additional items for supply list (bug repellent, battery operated motion lights, more batteries, larger generator, car chargers, gas for vehicles, gas for generators)
- Prepare earlier – inventory count, supply tests and check lists
- Change phone messages/update phone lists/lists of shelters & distribution centers in area
- Remember to include staff in food supply counts
- Medical emergency preparedness
- Processes after disaster has passed – who is calling who? Plan B if designated person is unavailable or unreachable

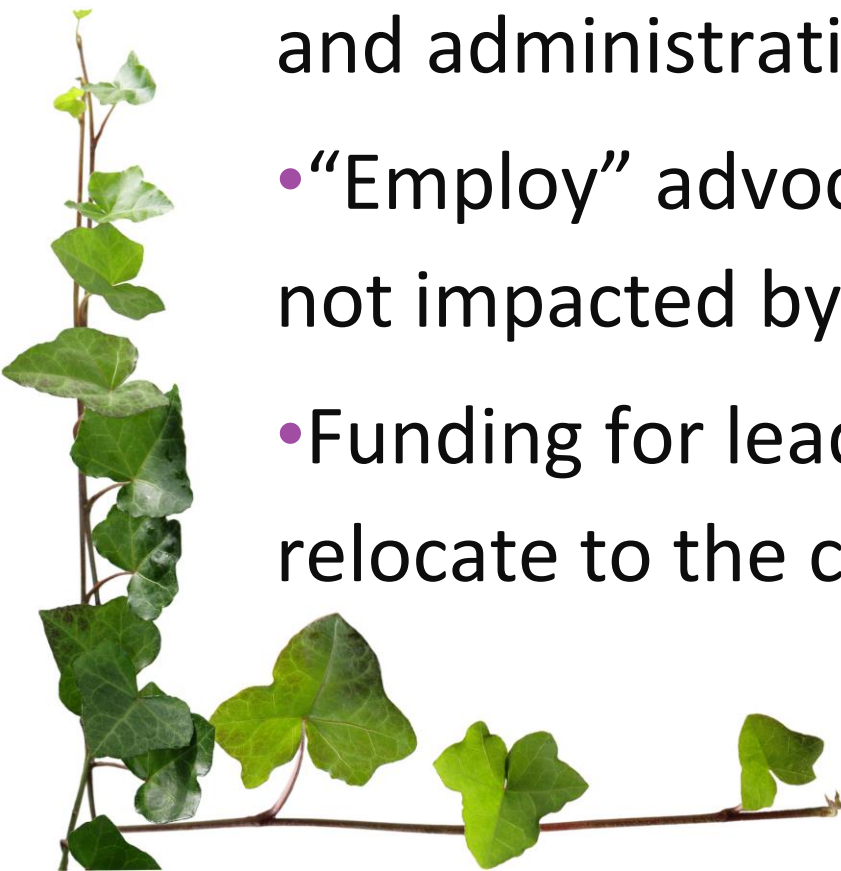
Case Study #2: Lessons learned from Superstorm Sandy

- Generator
 - On site or at evacuation site
 - Extra gas for generator
 - Generator strong enough to run fridge, heaters etc...
- Food
 - Extra resources
 - Reduce spoilage



Sustainable Services

- Funding to retrofit DV emergency shelters and administrative offices
- “Employ” advocates from other DV programs not impacted by the disaster
- Funding for leadership to temporarily relocate to the closest community



Emergency Plans: FEMA Video



Is your program on anyone's priority list?

"We have a few new clients that were displaced from other areas that needed shelter/housing post storm and we were able to accept them without a problem".



"We collaborated with a Red Cross shelter that allowed our women and children to shower and get a warm meal".

"We also assisted some shelters in the county with toiletries, food and clothing".

Section 3: Critical Incidents

- Natural Disasters
- Tragedy
- Death
- Serious Injury
- Threatening Situations



Phases of Reaction to Disaster



Signs of Critical Incident Stress

PHYSICAL	COGNITIVE	EMOTIONAL	BEHAVIORAL
Fatigue	Uncertainty	Grief or guilt	Inability to rest
Chills	Confusion	Fear	Withdrawal
Unusual thirst	Nightmares	Chronic anxiety	Antisocial behavior
Chest pain	Poor attention/ decision making ability	Intense anger	Increased alcohol consumption
Headaches	Poor concentration, memory	Apprehension and depression	Change in communication
Dizziness	Poor problem solving ability	Irritability	Change in appetite

Critical Incident Stress Management

- Critical Incident Stress Management is a system of education, prevention and mitigation of the effects from exposure to highly stressful critical incidents.
- It is handled most effectively by specially trained individuals, such as crisis intervention specialists.

Critical Incident Debriefing

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) is a facilitator-led group process.

When structured, the process usually consists of the following steps:

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Fact Phase
- 3) Thought Phase
- 4) Reaction Phase
- 5) Symptom Phase
- 6) Teaching Phase
- 7) Re-entry Phase



Workplace Tragedies/Emergencies: Benefits of Debriefing

- Minimizes propensity for staff implosion.
 - Helps manage staff judgments of one another
 - Helps staff maintain their ability to work effectively with survivors
 - Helps identify staff needing additional assistance coping.



Workplace Tragedies/Emergencies: What can be done immediately?

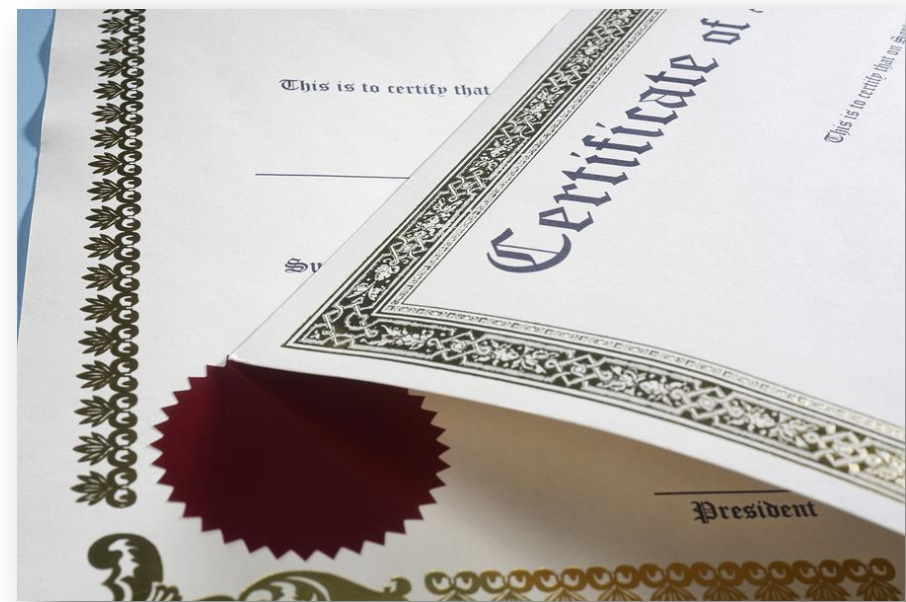
- Limit exposure to noise and odors.
- Dictate an immediate 15 minute rest break.
- Provide non-caffeinated fluids to drink.
- Provide low sugar and low fat food.
- Get the person to talk about his or her feelings.
- Do not rush the person back to work.



Workplace Tragedies/Emergencies: Who do you call?

Critical incident stress experts

- Employee Assistance Program
- On-site/contracted licensed counselor
- Trained colleague from nearby program
- Coalition staff member



Media Response

- Prepare a Media Toolkit to respond to all media inquiries.



- Ask the coalition to assist with developing a response.
- Ask coalition to respond on behalf of the program.

Media Response

- Choose spokesperson
- Consult with attorney
- Acknowledge the impact
- Speak in general terms
- Maintain confidentiality
- Focus on how the community can prevent future tragedies
- Script for staff



- Visit Clearing House Website:
- <http://www.domesticviolenceanddisaster.org/>



General Tips for Communicating with Media in Times of Disaster or Crisis

Presented in partnership with

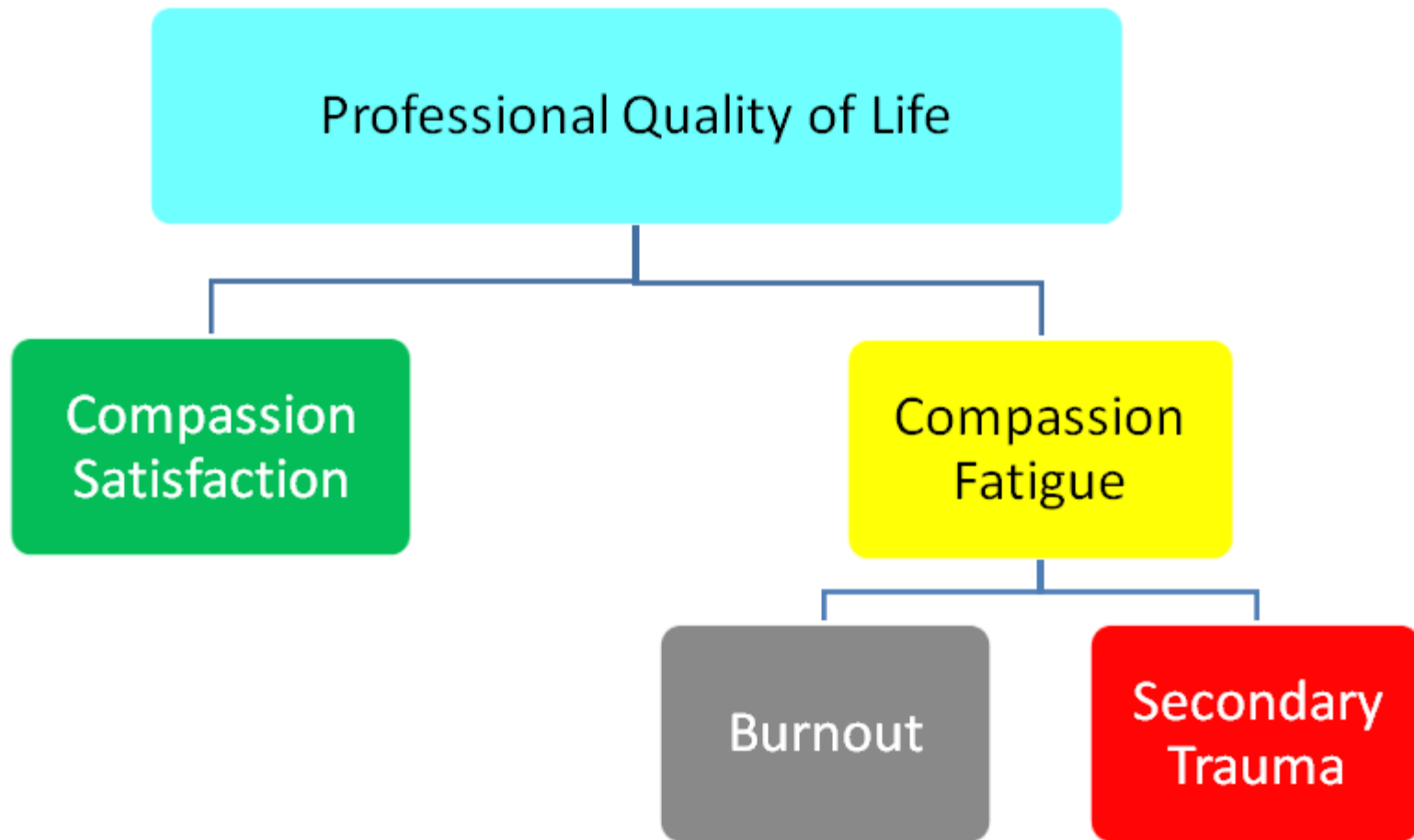


Section 4: Fostering Resilience



*That which is to give light
must endure burning.*

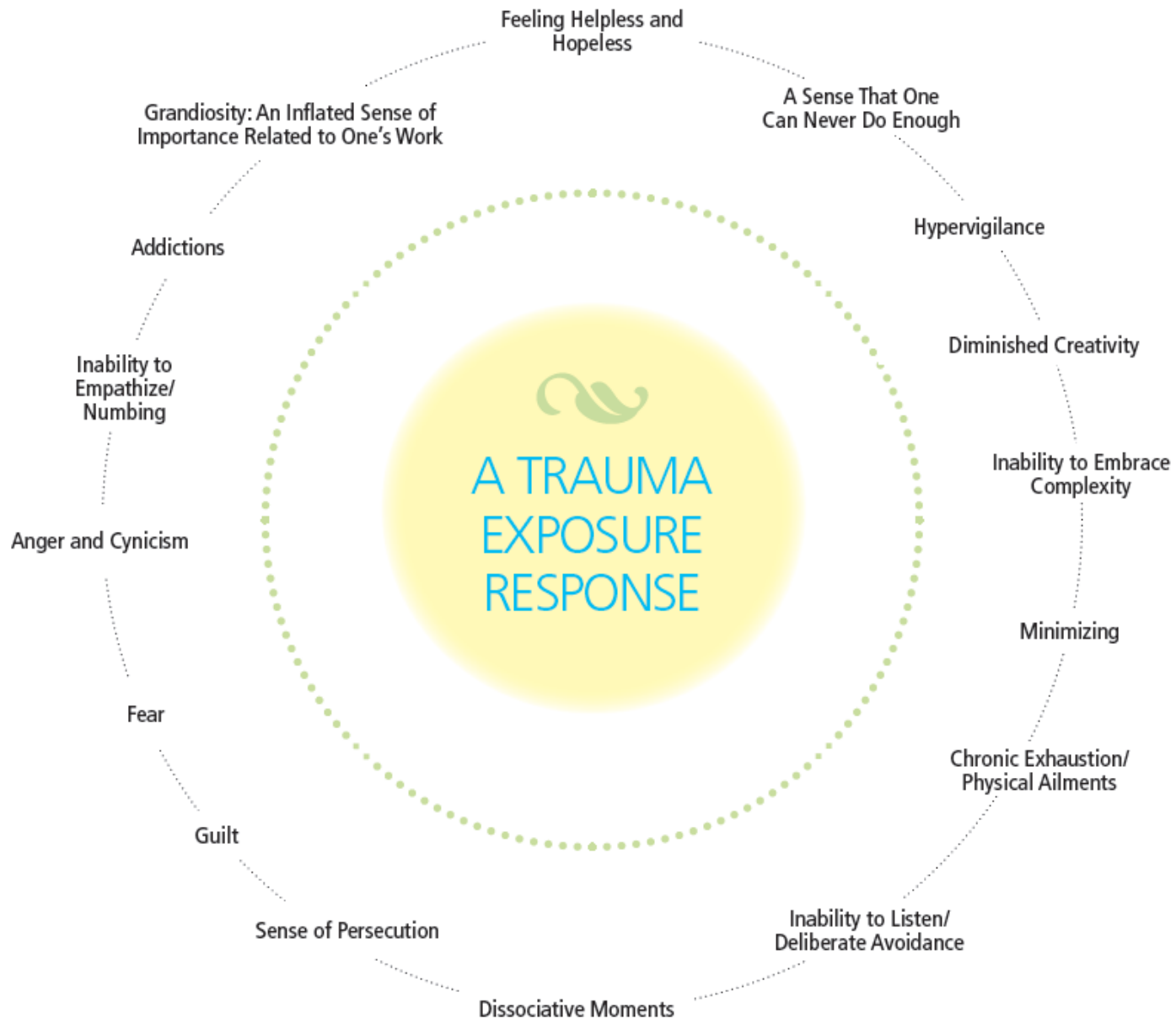
-Victor Frankl



Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue

- Vicarious Trauma
 - Can't let go
 - Avoidance
 - Re-live trauma
- Burnout
 - Unhappy
 - Disconnected
 - Exhausted





Burnout



Who's at Risk

- Lack of support outside of work
- Strong feelings of empathy
- Pre-existing anxiety or mood disorder
- Personal trauma history
- Suppresses emotions
- Distances from people
- Lack of support at work
- Excessive life demands

BE Resilience!

Resilience is a state of being and a process.







Coming together is a beginning.

Keeping together is progress.

Working together is success.

- Henry Ford

Clearinghouse on domestic violence & disaster

www.domesticviolenceanddisaster.org

CLEARINGHOUSE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND DISASTER - Google Chrome

www.domesticviolenceanddisaster.org

DISASTER DISTRESS HELPLINE: Call 1-800-985-5990 or text **TalkWithUs** to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor. The Disaster Distress Helpline is a confidential, multilingual hotline dedicated to providing year-round immediate crisis counseling for people experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster.

CLEARINGHOUSE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND DISASTER


HOME / RESOURCES / ANIMAL SHELTER DATABASE / CONTACT US

PREPAREDNESS. RESPONSE. RECOVERY. MITIGATION.

Domestic violence is an ongoing disaster happening on an intimate level.

Survivors of domestic violence are often already isolated, financially dependent, with limited social networks.

When disaster strikes, local support services become overwhelmed, their environments become even more dangerous and isolation increases.



Resources For
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

Resources For
EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

For Survivors & DV Programs
NEW YORK DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ANIMAL SHELTER DATABASE

New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

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