

Regarding Burnout, Compassion Fatigue and Wellness

A Therapist Facilitated Support Group for Activists,
Social Service Folks, Educators, etc. in Olympia, WA



Run by Gabi Clayton, M.A., L.M.H.C.
2nd and 4th Monday or Tuesday evenings.
Call 360.888.5291 for information.
\$35/session, sliding scale possible.
info@cradledheart.com

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

~ Viktor Frankl

"Burnout is a psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment"
(Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; 2003)

"The chronic condition of perceived demands outweighing perceived resources." (Gentry & Baranowsky, 1998)

"Compassion Fatigue = Secondary Traumatization + Burnout" (Figley, 1995)

Working in the helping vocations to make people's lives and communities healthier, more educated, better places to be, leaves us vulnerable to compassion fatigue, burnout, secondary traumatic stress, caregiver stress, countertransference, and vicarious traumatization.

"We have found, in our clinical work and in our teaching, that compassion fatigue is both a blessing and a curse. A blessing in that the symptoms force us to take seriously and honor the ways in which we provide care and the ways in which we care for ourselves. A curse insofar that as we avoid making these necessary shifts in our perceptions and behaviors we can suffer immensely with the symptoms of this insidious condition. The exciting thing is that compassion fatigue is amenable to treatment and as the care giver addresses with intention the symptoms and causes of compassion fatigue, not only do these symptoms ameliorate but their life is often transformed from pain and demoralization into a comfortable sanctuary from which they are empowered to become true givers of light—ever burning bright and never burning out."

Eric Gentry, Ph.D., LMHC http://www.compassionunlimited.com/Professional_Introduction.html

Why Groupwork?

"One of the ways trauma seems to affect us all, caregivers included, is to leave us with a sense of disconnected isolation.

A common thread we have found with sufferers of compassion fatigue symptoms has been the progressive loss in their sense of connection and community. ...

The development and maintenance of healthy relationships, which the caregiver uses for both support and to share/dilute the images and stories associated with secondary traumatic stress, may become a powerful mitigating factor in resolving and preventing compassion fatigue symptoms."

J. Eric Gentry, Ph.D. (cand), MT, CAC, *Compassion Fatigue: A Crucible of Transformation*
<http://www.compassionunlimited.com/pdf/CrucibleofTransformation.pdf>

"One of the basic ideas that attracts me to E/P therapy is that the person and the world co-constitute each other, each emerging from the relationship between the two. They cannot be separated from each other without the loss of something vital.

Having studied art, the relationship between 'figure' and 'ground' helps me to understand the way this person/world relationship works. An artwork in which figure (subject) and ground (background) are treated as separate parts is disjointed and incomplete. When there is unity, the figure/ground (or person/world) are locked together in a mutually dependent balanced tension."

Gabi Clayton, *Theory of Choice / Philosophy of Human Nature*
<http://www.gabiclayton-lmhc.com/MyTheoryOfChoice.html>