



ELNEC-Oncology APRN Webinar: Self-Care
September 25 & 26, 2018
Additional Resources

- Compassion fatigue and burnout can occur frequently to those in helping professions. While they are sometimes used interchangeably, they are different (Kravits, 2019).
 - **Compassion Fatigue:** A state of chronic and continuous self-sacrifice and/or prolonged exposure to difficult situations can affect physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. This can lead a person being unable to love, nurture, care for, or empathize with someone’s suffering. It can also impact personal relationships (i.e. spouses, children, friends, other family members, etc)
 - **Burnout:** Can be manifested physically and psychologically, with a decrease in loss of motivation, emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficiency. This can be triggered by more workplace demands, lack of resources to do work professionally/safely, interpersonal stressors (i.e. issues at home with family, caring for elderly parents, “sandwich generation,” returning to school, personal health issues, etc) and policies put forth by the organization that can lead to diminished caring, cynicism, and ineffectiveness at work.

- Research on burnout and occupational stress suggests the importance of a “match” between the nurse and the six domains of the job environment listed in the slide above. Occupational stress can occur when there are mismatches between nurses and their workplace (Vachon, 2011).
 - **Workload:** Excessive workload can lead to exhaustion—physically, psychologically, socially, and spiritually. Recovery may not be possible.
 - **Control:** Does one have control over the resources they need to do their work well? Having good interpersonal and communication skills help to prevent occupational stress
 - **Reward:** Financial and/or social rewards are important. Is one’s work openly appreciated by colleagues, patients, and families? Or is his/her good work ignored? Does one’s work give a sense of worth of contributing to society?
 - **Community:** It is critical that nurses feel a personal connection with their colleagues at work. Teamwork that promotes performance, coordination of workflow, and mutual trust are effective.
 - **Fairness:** Fairness shows respect and confirms the nurse’s self-worth. Mutual respect among all team members is important. Of all of these domains, fairness may be the one that determines whether people adapt or burnout.
 - **Values:** Teamwork means that all members must subscribe to a shared set of values. It is important to reconcile personal moral values. This can cause great stress if the nurse is unable to subscribe to these shared sets of values.

- Throughout life, there are opportunities to stop and pay attention to warning signs of compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and burnout. Here are some questions to consider:
 - How does my behavior change?
 - How do I communicate differently?
 - What destructive habits tempt me?
 - How do I project my inner pain onto others?
- By becoming self-aware, we can be more successful in implementing self-care strategies. These 4 “A’s” are your compass to help navigate your life and assist in building resilience, connection, and compassion.
 - **Attention:** Become aware of your physical, psychological, social, and spiritual self. What is your life story? Your blessings? Your failings? This protects you from living in denial, being superficial, and drifting through life on “autopilot.”
 - **Acknowledgment:** Honestly looking at all you have witnessed. What insight have you experienced? By acknowledging what you are aware of protects you from ignoring what you see, invalidating the experience(s), failing to recognize what is actually happening, and fooling yourself.
 - **Affection:** Choosing to be wholehearted and looking upon yourself/experiences with kindness and warmth. Affection protects from embitterment and being “too hard” on yourself.
 - **Acceptance:** Choosing to be at peace and welcoming all aspects of yourself and your life just as you are. By accepting both your gifts and your imperfections, you can protect yourself from pretense, envy, judgmentalism, impatience, victim mentality, and blame. (Fox et al., 2014)

NOTE: This information is taken from *Oxygen for caregivers: guarding against burnout, build resilience, and sustain compassion*. This program is a part of Adventures in Caring. For further information on materials and/or order information, visit <https://www.adventuresincaring.org/the-trilogy/for-health-care-professionals/oxygen-for-caregivers/>

References:

- Fox, S., Fox, K., & Morris, J. (2014). *Oxygen for caregivers: guarding against burnout, sustaining compassion*. Accessed November 29, 2017 from: www.adventuresincaring.org/
- Kravits, K.G. (2019, in press). Self-care. In B. R. Ferrell & J.A. Paice (Eds.), *Oxford textbook of palliative nursing*, 5th edition (Chapter 69). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Vachon, M.L.S. (2011). Prevention and management: Burnout in health-care providers. In S. Yennurajalingam and E. Bruera (Eds.), *Oxford American handbook of hospice and palliative medicine* (pp. 449-463). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

*This information is from the End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) curriculum. ELNEC is a partnership between the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, Washington, DC and the City of Hope, Duarte CA. www.aacnnursing.org/ELNEC