

Module #16: Vicarious Trauma

Julia Dobbins| December 18, 2012

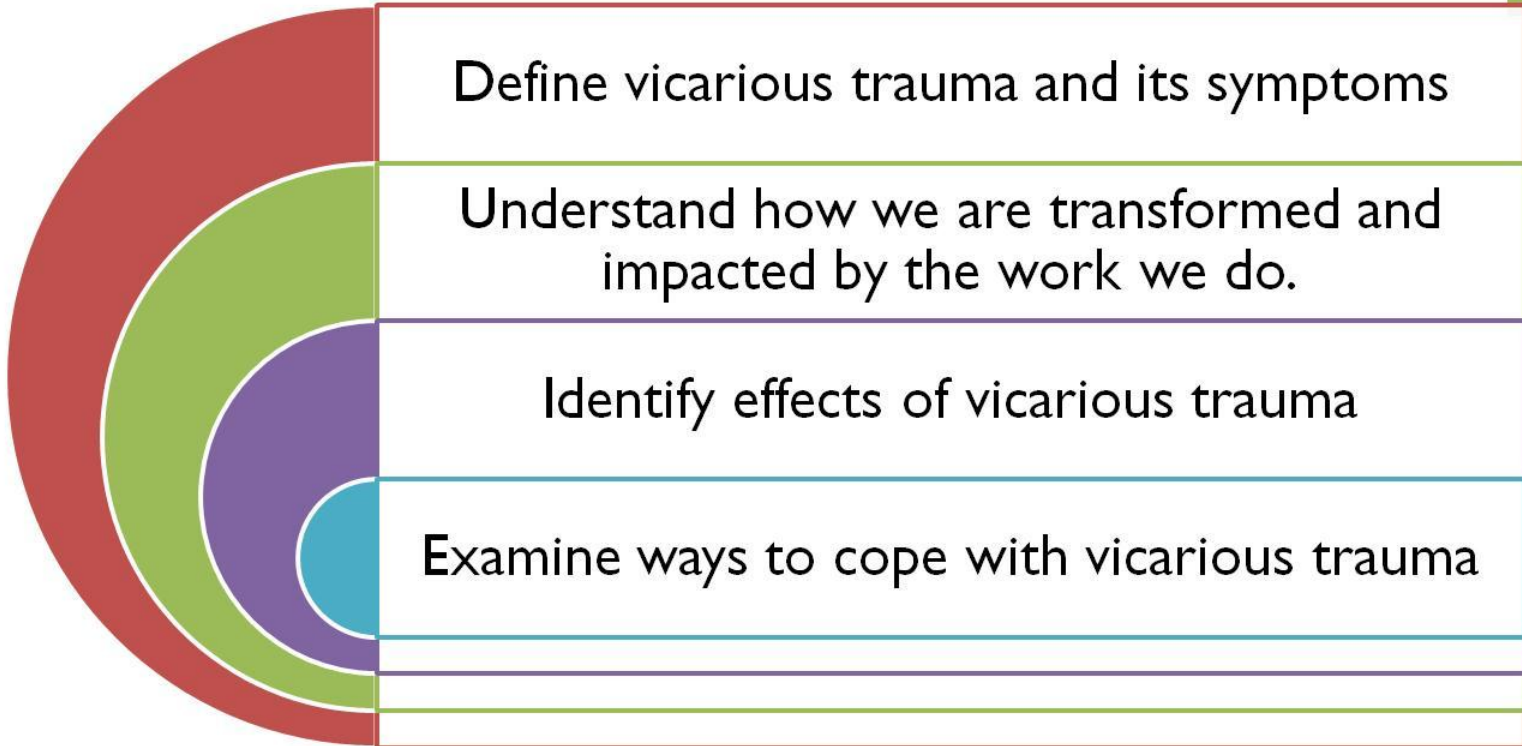
Health Care & Housing Are Human Rights

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for the
HOMELESS
COUNCIL



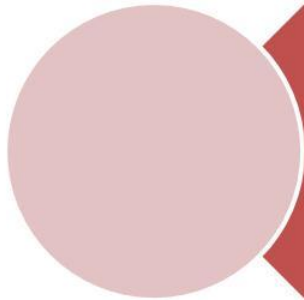


Objectives

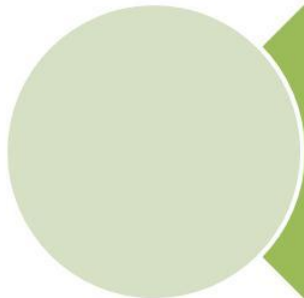




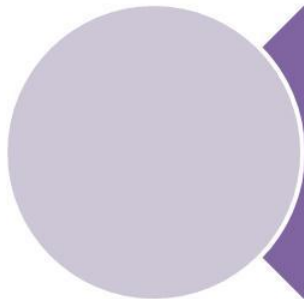
Trauma Work:



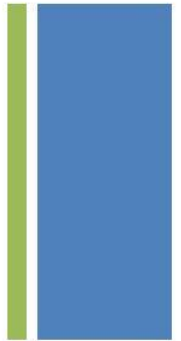
Demanding and requires the use of one's self and a relationship with the client



Necessitates both containment and often re-visiting of painful issues



Requires vulnerability & empathy





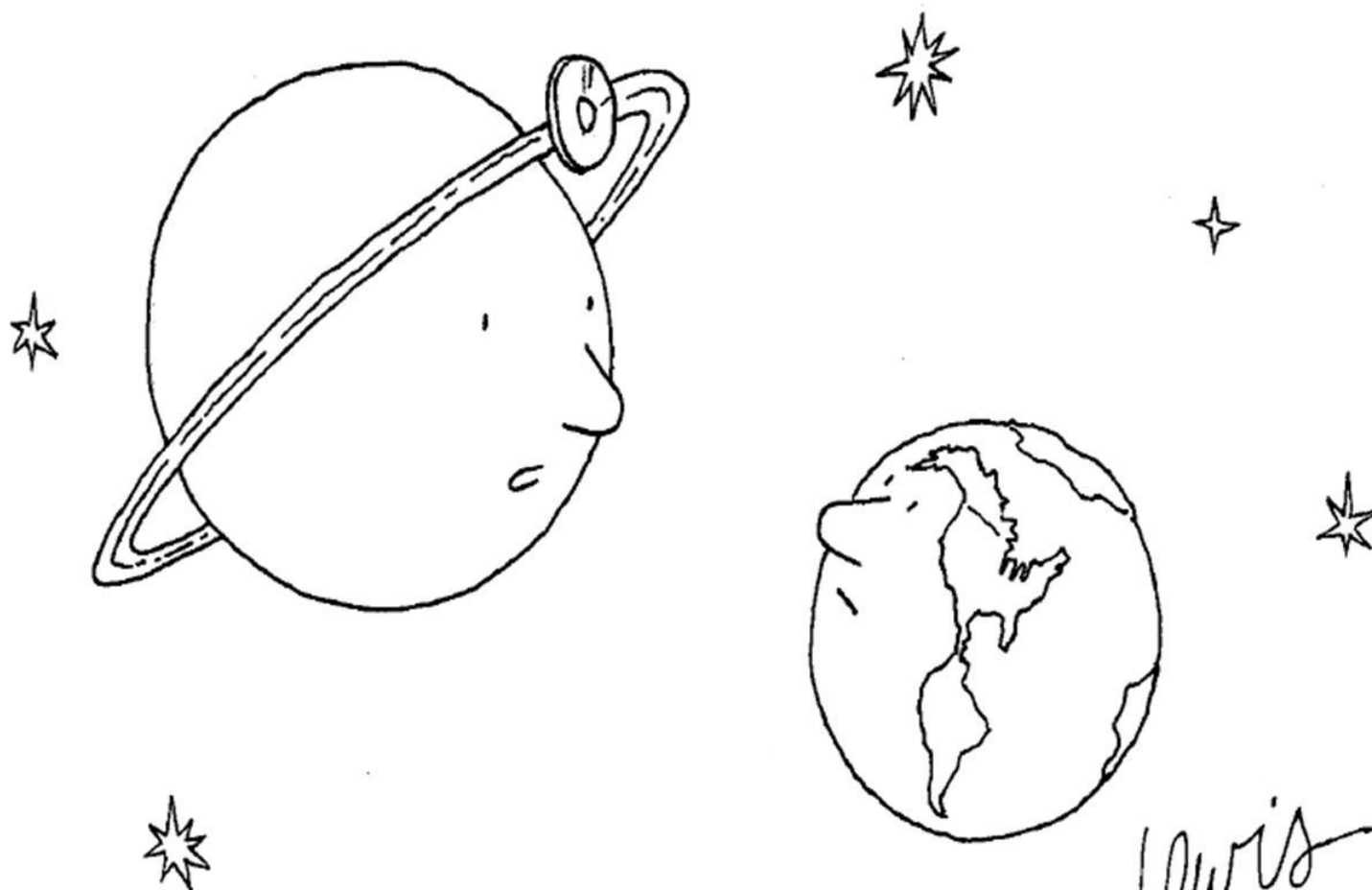
Trauma Exposure Response



- The transformation that takes place within us as a result of exposure to the suffering of other living beings or the planet.
- The ways in which the world looks and feels like a different place as a result of the work we do.



Laura Vandernoot Lipsky, Trauma Stewardship



Uw's

"I'm afraid you have humans."

+ Trauma Exposure Response

- Sense of self/ identity
- Worldview
- Personal Relationships
- Spirituality
- Physical body & function



“Exposure to others’ trauma doubles the risk that social workers will experience post-traumatic stress disorder.”

“...While the rate of secondary trauma among social workers is high, their awareness of trauma’s effects on them is low.”

Brian Bride, University of Georgia



Vicarious Trauma vs. Burnout



Vicarious Trauma:

- I still do care
- Temporary- take a break
- Loss of fuel and energy
- Over-engagement
- Physical damage

Burnout:

- I don't care anymore
- Requires more than a break
- Loss of ideals and hope
- Disengagement
- Emotional/Spiritual damage



“My question is: Are we making an impact?”





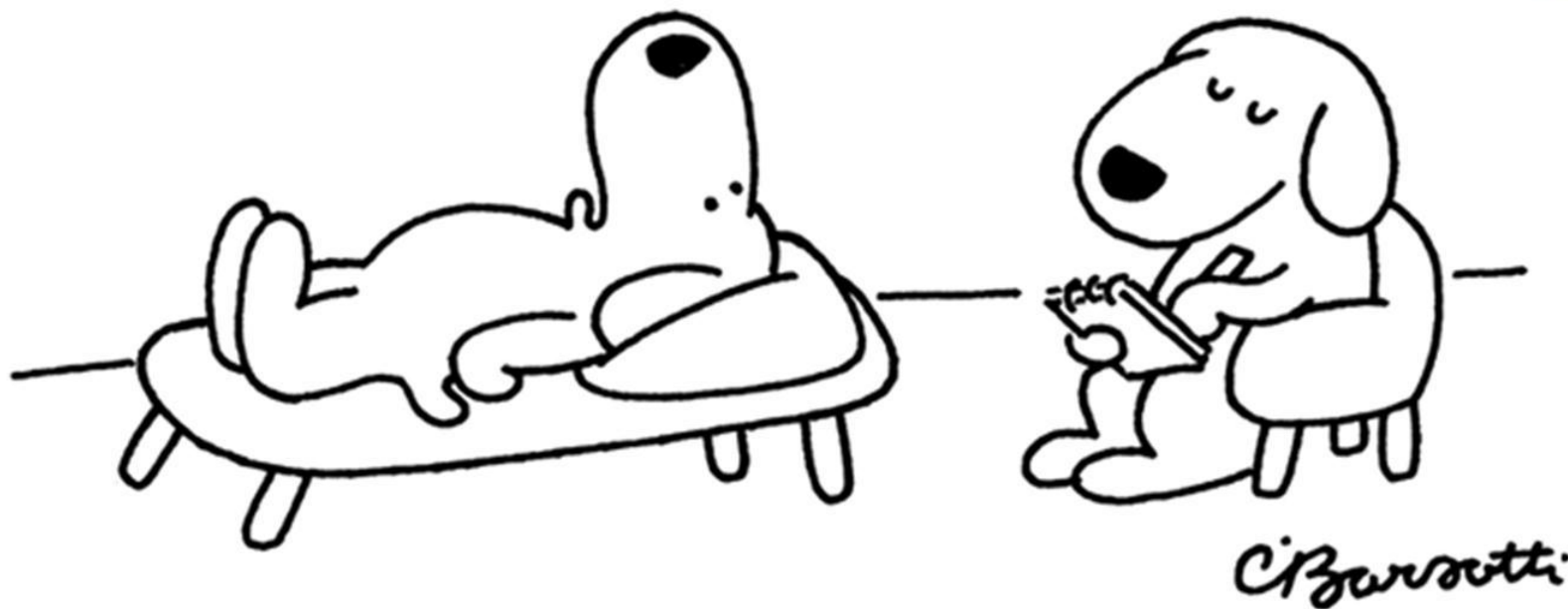
Signs of Vicarious Trauma



- Feeling hopeless and helpless
- A sense that one can never do enough
- Hypervigilance
- Diminished creativity
- Inability to embrace complexity
- Minimizing
- Chronic exhaustion/ physical ailments
- Inability to listen/ deliberate avoidance
- Dissociative moments
- Sense of Persecution
- Guilt
- Fear
- Anger & cynicism
- Inability to empathize/ numbing
- Addictions
- Grandiosity



Hypervigilance



"I bark at everything. Can't go wrong that way."



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Inability to Embrace



"I'll be happy to give you innovative thinking. What are the guidelines?"



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+ Dissociative Moments





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Grandiosity



+ Trauma Stewardship



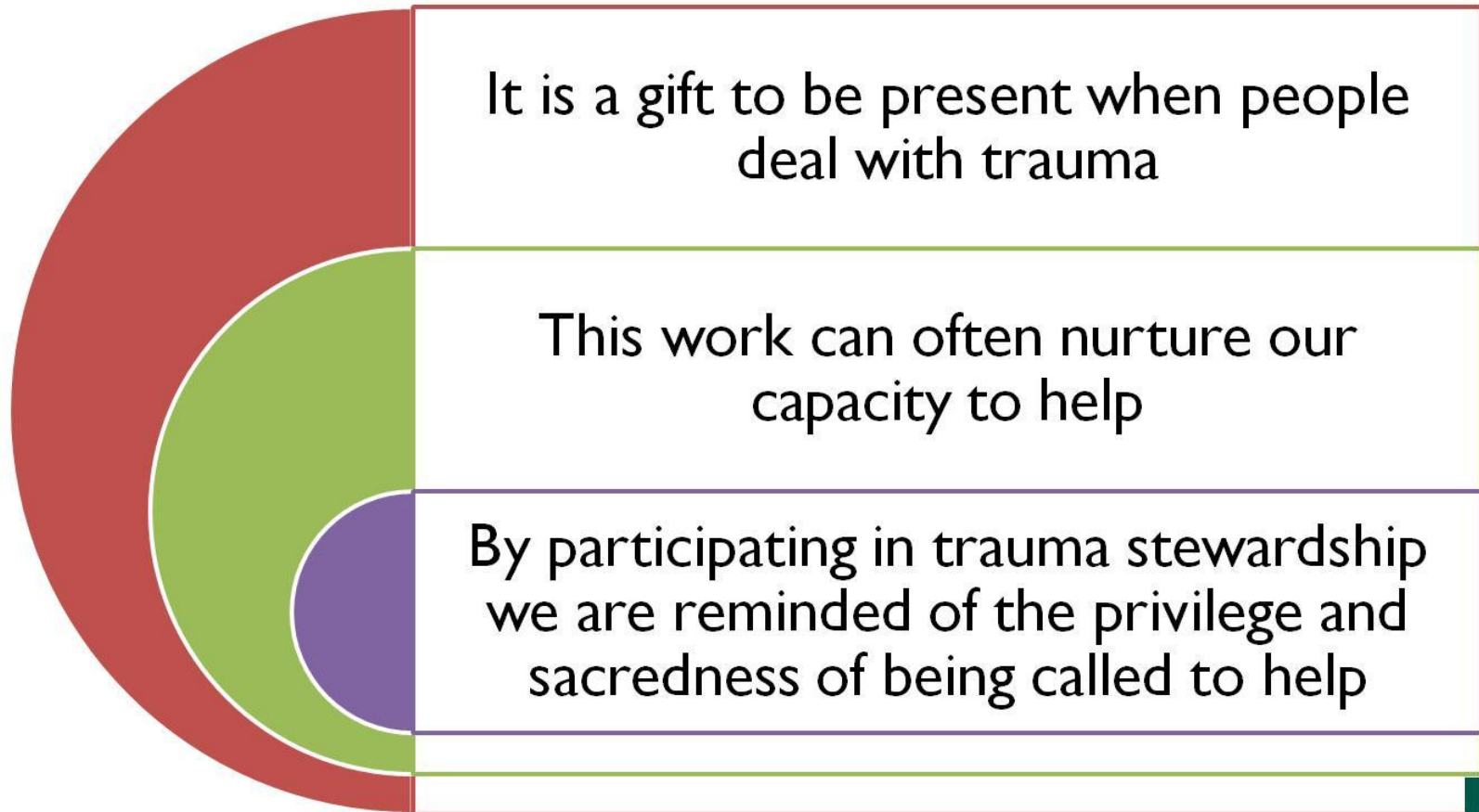
*“Eventually, I’d like to see you able
to put yourself back together.”*



Resiliency

- Open the inquiry: Why I am I doing this work? What intention do I bring to my work?
- “Felt Sense”
- Resourcing
- Plan B: “if I weren’t doing this work, what would I love to do?”
- Practice “fierce compassion”
- Moving Energy Through
- Gratitude

+ Reframing our approach to this work



+ Things to Remember

- An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure
- Even staff who don't come in direct contact with clients can be equally affected by the stories
- There is only one of you and you are important to the work you do



“Can I call you back, Ed? I’m in the moment here.”

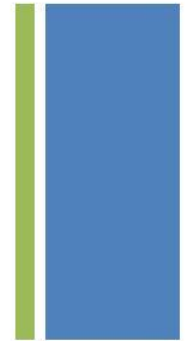


Resources

Trauma Stewardship by Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky

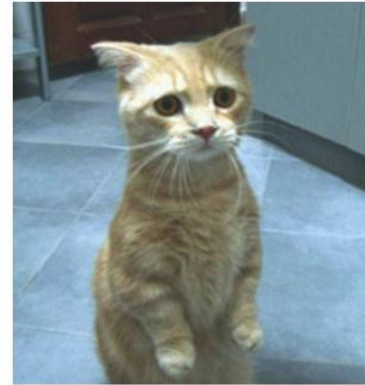
Trauma & Recovery by Judith Herman

Kacy Silverstein, TN Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence





Questions?



Concerns?



Thoughts or Feelings?

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We are here to help!



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HEALTH CARE
for the
HOMELESS
COUNCIL

615.226.2292

Darlene

djenkins@nhchc.org



Julia

jdobbins@nhchc.org



Zak

zsanchez@nhchc.org

