

Self-Care is Not Self-Indulgence: Navigating Vicarious Trauma and Potential Burnout

Program Description

COVID-19 and racial injustice prompted widespread protests and mobilization to care for the sick and organize against injustice. Clinicians and practitioners are on the front lines of these crises. Adjusting to the “new normal” of managing working from home while balancing family and increased work responsibilities or working in person and handling these constant stressors often results in feeling like you are barely keeping your head above water. COVID-19, and its new variants, and racial trauma can place some in a constant state of fear. For others, simply trying to reorient to life post-pandemic shutdown is stressful. When all the “extras” of navigating our world layer on top of life responsibilities, practitioners can find the multiple concerns they must balance to serve others overwhelming. These stressors, if unchecked, can lead to vicarious trauma and potential burnout.

This workshop will help practitioners re-envision a culture of care that balances the needs of the caretaker with the demands of the services they provide. It offers practical advice for balancing personal and professional responsibilities in challenging times. During this parallel learning process, practitioners will leave with strategies and techniques to share with clients and to adapt for themselves.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this workshop, participants should be able to:

1. Explain the psychological and physical role of stress.
2. Describe the signs and symptoms of compassion fatigue, trauma, vicarious trauma, and burnout.
3. Identify strategies to re-envision caring for themselves and discuss strategies for wellness to share with clients.
4. Identify culturally relevant ways of coping with stressors.

Target Audience

This program is intended for practitioners, service providers, and clinicians.

Contact Hours

3.0 credit hours

Program Agenda

9 AM to 10:30 AM	Disrupting the myth of caring for myself and defining terms for yourself and your clients
10:30 AM to 10:45 PM	Break
10:45 AM to 12:15 PM	Examining beliefs about wellness and adopting strategies for teaching and implementing wellness
	Wrap-Up

Andrea Murray-Lichtman, MSW, LCSW, is a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Social Work. She is also a PhD Candidate. She has a combined 20 years of physical health, mental health, and substance misuse treatment experience within integrated healthcare and criminal-legal settings serving people living with comorbid mental health, substance misuse, and chronic physical health diagnoses. Andrea received the Dean's Excellence in MSW Advising Award in 2021 and 2018 and the Dean's Recognition of Teaching Excellence Award in 2015. Andrea's research interests include racial equity in access and outcomes across social systems, racial consciousness, and the differential occurrence and impact of traumatic experiences. She is currently a project manager and supervisor for a substance use prevention, education, and research project working within schools, agencies, and communities to prevent youth substance use. Andrea is also a co-investigator with the Specialty Mental Health Probation research team and partners with the criminal-legal system to provide mental health and substance use clinical consultations. Andrea served on the Council on Social Work Education Task Force for Anti-racism. She has presented and consulted nationally and internationally on co-morbid mental health and substance use disorders and interventions within the criminal legal system, culturally relevant mentoring, trauma-informed care, equity-informed wellness practices, and spirituality and mental health.

Tauchiana Williams, DSW, is a clinical associate professor and director of the Advanced Standing MSW Program of UNC Chapel Hill. She is the coordinator of the North Carolina School Social Work License program. Her research areas include Black parent engagement and involvement with a focus on barriers and facilitators that impact student success. Dr. Williams serves as the Lead Interventionist for the Substance Use Prevention and Education Research (SUPER) program funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). She is a licensed clinical social worker whose practice areas include child and adolescent mental health, school social work, substance use, and trauma. She was appointed by Governor Roy Cooper to serve on the North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Board where she holds the office of secretary/treasurer. Tauchiana has received the Dean's Recognition of Teaching Excellence Award over several years and served on the Council on Social Work Education's Anti-Racism Task Force in 2020.