



Advancing a Culture of Compassion and Resilience: A Toolkit for Schools

Sue McKenzie
Monica Wightman

Toolkit Outline

Preface

Introduction

Rationale for the Compassion Resilience Focus and Approach – Leadership and Staff

Implementation Guidance for School Leaders and Toolkit Facilitators

Content Sections

1. Compassion in Action
2. Wellness, Compassion Fatigue, Self-Compassion, Compassion Resilience
3. Compassion Fatigue Awareness, Connection to Trauma, and Assessment
4. Systemic Drivers of Compassion Fatigue
5. Expectations from Self and Others
6. Compassionate Boundary Setting – Personal and Professional
7. Contract for Positive Staff Culture
8. Strategies – Mind
9. Strategies – Spirit
10. Strategies – Strength
11. Strategies - Heart
12. Compassionate Connections with Parents

Appendix

Foundational Beliefs about Behavior

Dealing with Significant Staff Disclosure or Crisis

Supporting Change Efforts of Others and Ourselves

Stress throughout the Career Cycle

How we got to this topic...

Observing the two mindsets:

Kids/adults/colleagues do well if they *want to* ...

1. Manipulative
2. Just wants attention
3. Not motivated
4. Doesn't care



Kids/adults/colleagues do well if they *can* ...

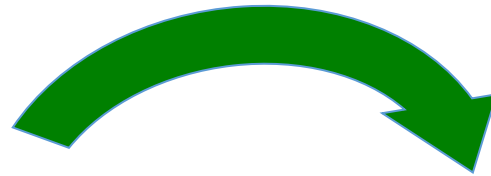
1. Coping in the way they know how
2. Lack skills required
3. Something in their way
4. Together we can figure



Troubling ideas such as stigma and external behavior motivation (If you wanted to, you would)



□ self esteem
I am not good.



□ sense of efficacy
I am not able.



Avoidance, anger and apathy
So, why try!



Feelings of Shame

Complications of Trauma

Prefrontal Lobes

Rational thoughts

What can I learn from this?

Limbic

Emotions

Am I loved?

Brain Stem

Survival instinct

Am I safe?



Section 1: Compassion in Action

- Notice – Be present in the moment and able to recognize signs of distress.
- Self-check - Be aware of your emotional resonance and initial cognitive appraisals.
- Seek to understand – Suspend appraisals. Listen to understand from the other's perspective. Move towards generous interpretations of another's behavior.
- Cultivate empathy – Understanding > genuine concern > growing desire and intention to help.
- Discern best action – Co-plan to figure out what would actually be helpful.
- Take action – Be aware that intention alone is not compassionate action.

(Combined from the works of Monica Worline and Jon Katzenbach, Carolin Oelschlegel, and James Thomas)

Section 2: Key Concepts

Wellness, Compassion Fatigue, Self-Compassion, Compassion Resilience



The power to return to a position of empathy, strength, and hope after the daily witnessing of the challenges families face in our community and the realities of the workplace.



Section 3: Compassion Fatigue

- A deeper look at the experience of compassion fatigue
- Explore ways to assess ourselves (ProQOL)

Compassion Fatigue's Path

Leave Profession

Compassion
Resilience

Renewal vs Pathology

Zealot

We are committed, involved, and available, Ready to problem solve and to make a difference, We are willing to go the extra mile.

Anger and cynicism, Diminished creativity, Sadness, Feeling helpless or hopeless

With

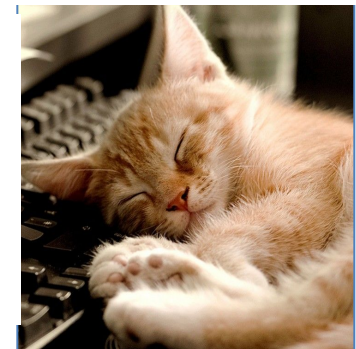
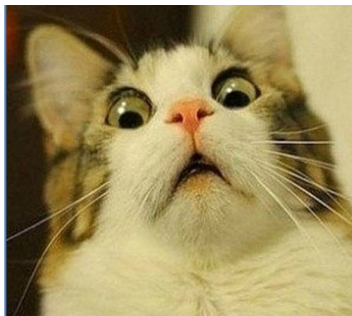
Overwhelmed by complexity, Chronic exhaustion, Physical illness, Difficulty empathizing, Feeling numb to other's pain, Absenteeism

ity, PhD

2012)



Leaving the profession, Physical and Mental illness, Chronic symptoms or Hardiness, Resiliency, Transformation





Important Reminder

Compassion fatigue is a NORMAL response to ABNORMAL circumstances.

And, we can prevent and intervene early to lesson the impact.

Section 4:

System Drivers of Compassion Fatigue



3 Stages of Action to Reduce Compassion Fatigue

- Stage 1: Knowledge
- Stage 2: Recognition
- Stage 3: Responding

A Break for our SPIRIT

Re-creative Activities for our Bodies and our Spirits

When do you feel most alive? Most like yourself? What are you doing? What or who are you surrounded with?



Strategies to Build Compassion Resilience:

Section 5 Expectations - Realistic ones of yourself and others –
What is enough and what can I hope for? Exposure to recovery

Section 6 Compassionate boundary setting

Section 7 Staff culture - connect with colleagues and others in
community

Section 8-11 Self-care strategies – Mind, Spirit, Strength and Heart

Section 12 Connect with parents



Section 5: Expectations

- What positive role do expectations play?
- What impact has your unrealistic self-expectations had on your well-being?
- What has the impact been of others' unrealistic expectations of your capacity?
- How do you assess if expectations are being set at a helpful aspirational level?

Expectations: Remind ourselves of the resilience in our families and colleagues



A Break for our MIND

From Unrealistic Expectations to Helpful Affirmations

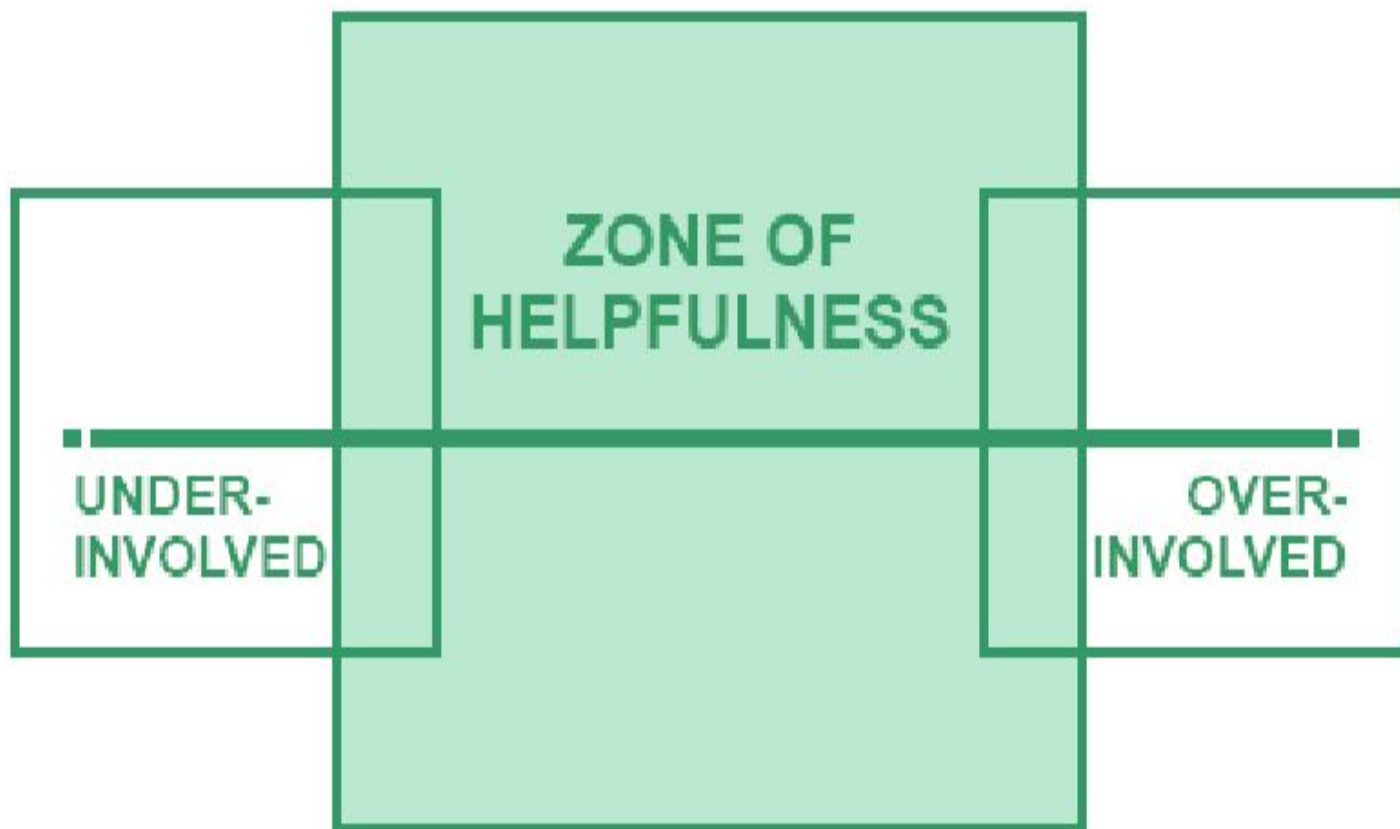
Think of one unrealistic expectation that you have of yourself.

Think of one unrealistic expectation that someone has of you.

Take a moment and consider an affirmation for each of these that you can use when you feel the expectation coming into play.



Section 6: Compassionate Boundaries



Tips for Setting Compassionate Boundaries

1. Know what you want to say “Yes” to in your life (values and priorities).
2. Be proactive. Have “meetings” to discuss boundaries. Structure offers safety for both sides.
3. Just say it! Don’t make them guess. Use simple and direct language.
4. Reinforce by pointing out the violations or near violations *IN THE MOMENT*.
5. Give explanations that are specific, relevant to the other person, and offer shared solutions.
6. Back up your boundary with action. If you give in, you invite people to ignore your needs.

Section 7: Staff Culture - Connect with colleagues and others in the community

- From zone of helpfulness to contract for staff culture
- What are my role, skills, and current capacity limitations?
- What colleagues or organizations can offer services that I cannot?
- What can I do to increase my knowledge of and belief in the capacity of colleagues?



A Break for our HEART

Commonalities

Step 1: “Just like me, this person is seeking happiness in his/her life.”

Step 2: “Just like me, this person is trying to avoid suffering in his/her life.”

Step 3: “Just like me, this person has known sadness, loneliness and despair.”

Step 4: “Just like me, this person is seeking to fill his/her needs.”

Step 5: “Just like me, this person is learning about life.”

Sections 8-11: Care for Self



MIND

Growth Mindset vs.

Growth Mindset is having "the passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even when it's not going well"



Fixed Mindset

"The Fixed Mindset does not allow people the luxury of becoming. They have to already be."

Dweck, Carol (2016). *Mindset*. Ballantine Books, New York, NY.

What examples can you add below to help us understand Dweck's Growth Mindset?

TOPIC OF MINDSET	FIXED	GROWTH
View of students' challenging behavior	Once challenging, always challenging	Behavior represents opportunity to learn a skill or solve a problem
Use of strategies in teaching	If I have tried it before and it didn't work, I am not happy about being asked to try it again	I can learn more about the strategy and apply it in a new setting

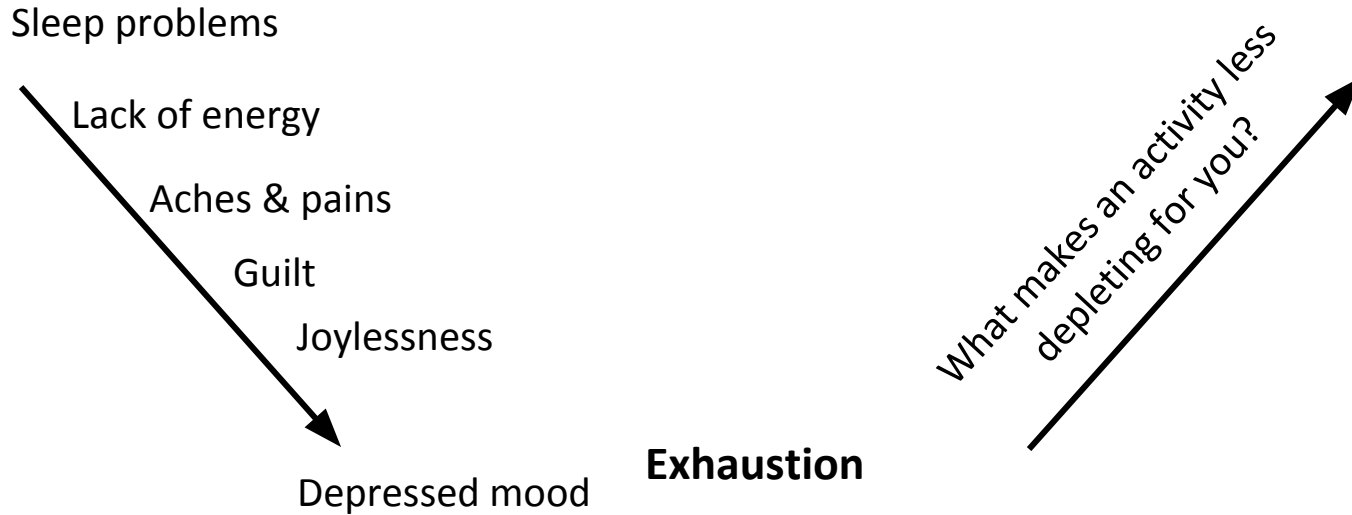
SPIRIT

Rest and Play Reflection

- Experiencing resilience in the spirit area of rest and play means engaging in activities that are truly re-creative of our bodies and our spirits.
- When do you feel most alive? What are you doing? What or who are you surrounded with?



STRENGTH



- What are different ways your colleagues approach an activity that is typically depleting for you but not for them?



HEART



Colleague Conversations

One way to foster work relationships is to have intentional conversations. These questions relate to the content in the Compassion Resilience Toolkit.

- What got you into this line of work?
- What keeps you going and able to bring compassion to yourself, colleagues and students?
- What wisdom do you have about how to balance care for yourself while being compassionate to others?

Compassionate Connections With Parents



Next Steps to Build My School's Capacity for Compassion Resilience

1. Administrator training
2. Facilitator training
3. Ongoing coaching on toolkit facilitation

Thank-you for the relationships you build and the strategies you implement that improve the present and future lives of students, families and each other.