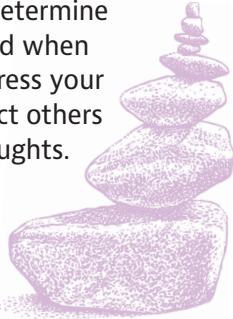




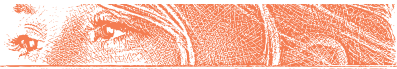
What to do about it

Identify what you are feeling and the cause. This may involve talking to a trusted family member colleague or friend. It may also signal a need to talk to a counselor

- Set personal boundaries. Determine how much you can give and when you need to pull back. Express your needs verbally. Don't expect others to read your mind and thoughts.
- Practice self-compassion and self-care. Know your limits.
- Take an action to make a change however large or small.



Some individuals are more vulnerable to these trauma stresses than others based on where you work, your own personal history of trauma or mental health issues, physical health, and environmental factors you can't control. That doesn't mean that you can't reach out for help and get the support you need.



Representing more than 600,000 professionals in education, human services and health care

NYSUT.ORG

email: socialservices@nysut.org

web: nysut.org/socialservices

One resource you have available through your union is the Peer Support Line. This partnership between NYSUT Member Benefits and Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care is staffed by trained in-service and retired individuals who understand the unique professional challenges of NYSUT members. This confidential helpline provides answers, resources and empathetic support when you need it.



PEER SUPPORT LINE

The Peer Support Line is a new service available through NYSUT Member Benefits that's offered at no cost to all NYSUT members and their families.
844-444-0152

The Peer Support Line can help with:

- Finding mental health services or support groups
- Answering questions about Medicare and Medicaid
- Managing work-related stress
- Providing support to new members
- Sourcing elder care or caregiving services
- Assisting with marital, relationship or child rearing concerns
- Reducing feelings of isolation and loneliness

MEMBER BENEFITS
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The Faces of Fatigue



What they are and what you can do about it



The Faces of Fatigue

What they are and what you can do about it

Are you feeling completely exhausted, helpless and disillusioned? These symptoms could explain a multitude of conditions which impact our ability to gather up the energy to take pride in our work, enjoy the company of family and friends, and feel respected and valued.

We all experience stress; it's a part of everyday life and it can even be a source of growth and needed change. However, stress that persists and is not dealt with can be a source of persistent fatigue, negativity, and mental and physical illness.

Research shows that there is a growing phenomenon of exhaustion among many professions that is being referred to as trauma. These include: vicarious trauma (also referred to as secondary trauma stress or compassion fatigue), post-traumatic stress disorder and burnout. Although they are all related, there are differences in how they present themselves in our lives. Awareness of what we are experiencing is critical in addressing ways to overcome the stress.

Vicarious Trauma

Also referred to as Secondary Trauma Stress (STS) and Compassion Fatigue, this is the cumulative detrimental effect of working with survivors of traumatic life events. Compassion fatigue is usually associated with the depletion of physical and emotional energy due to caring for someone in significant emotional and physical stress. With vicarious trauma/STS, the helper is transforming the experience of someone who is struggling with trauma into their own inner experience. School professionals are reporting an increase in stress and fatigue brought on by working with students who are experiencing violence at home and at school.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

PTSD is a disorder in which a person has difficulty recovering after experiencing or witnessing a shocking, scary or dangerous event. It can lead to flashbacks and crippling anxiety.



Burnout

This is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by long-term involvement in emotionally demanding situations.

As a school professional, it has become increasingly difficult to completely avoid stress traumas. Whether it is dealing with a student whose family life is difficult, a parent who is threatening, an administrator who is bullying and unsupportive or, finally, the increasing threat of violence in schools.

Symptoms

Not everyone suffers from stress trauma, but for those who do, it is important to recognize it and address it as best you can before you reach the stage of burnout, or physical and mental illness. While the symptoms for vicarious trauma are similar to the symptoms of depression, experts agree that burnout and compassion fatigue can lead to and coexist with depression.

Vicarious Trauma/STS/CF:

Difficulty talking about your feelings

Free-floating anger or irritation

Startle effect/being jumpy

Changes in appetite

Sleep disturbances

- Worry that you are not doing enough for the victims
- Dreaming about the victim's trauma experiences
- Feeling trapped by your work
- Diminished feelings of satisfaction and personal accomplishment
- Feelings of hopelessness associated with work
- Blaming others

Burnout:

- Depleted physical energy
- Emotional exhaustion · Lowered immunity to illness sometimes leading to increased absenteeism and inefficiency at work
- Increased pessimistic outlook
- Decreased investment in interpersonal relationships

Effects on job performance:

- Low motivation
- Increased errors
- Decreased quality
- Avoidance of job responsibilities
- Over-involvement in details/perfectionism
- Lack of flexibility