


Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence

Empowered Families Kansas Project Webinar

**Sustaining our Breath:
Self-Care is the Oxygen**

Presented by:
Kristina Scott, EFK Child Welfare Project Coordinator



This publication was made possible by Grant Number 90EV0446 from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Audio/Sound



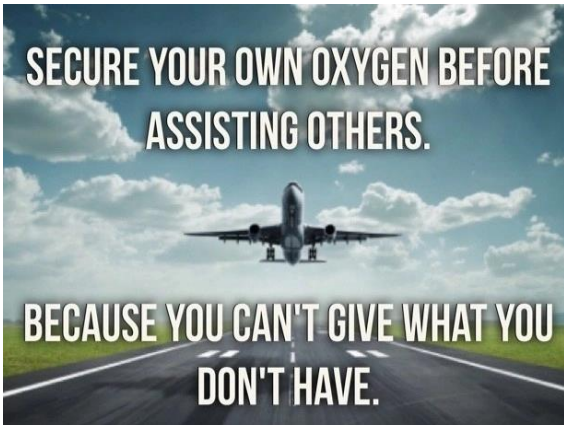
- **Audio is only available through a phone line.**
— You cannot access sound for this webinar through your computer.
- **For Audio:**
— Dial 1-866-595-6426 Code: 1990359149
- **Please Mute Your Phones:**
— To Mute Your Phone: Press *6
— To Unmute Your Phone: Press #6



Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to explain the impacts of vicarious trauma.
2. Participants will be able to identify at least 1 self-care strategy they can apply to their professional life.
3. Participants will be able to identify at least 1 self-care strategy they can apply to their personal life.
4. Participants will be able to describe the components of a self-care plan.
5. Participants will practice at least 1 self-care activity.







[Phoenix, 2014], ["Confronting vicarious", 2017]

What makes us vulnerable?

- Being present with people as they experience trauma
- Repeated exposure to traumatic material
- Working with traumatized individuals
- Working with clients who are underserved and disadvantaged
- A personal history of trauma

(Phoenix, 2014)



Other Risk Factors

- Being overworked and overwhelmed
- Working with too many clients
- Working for poor pay, under stressful conditions, with limited resources
- Having limited professional experience
- Having limited training about vicarious trauma and its prevention

(Phoenix, 2014)



Impact of Vicarious Trauma (VT)

- **Changes in one's system of belief about themselves and others.**
 - Including changes to our sense of:
 - Safety
 - Trust
 - Esteem
 - Intimacy
 - Control
- **Can have effects on:**
 - Relationships
 - Personal Life
 - Feelings
- **Can result in:**
 - Flashbacks
 - Dreams
 - Painful Emotions
 - Intrusive Thoughts
 - Depression
 - Chronic Pain
 - Substance Abuse
 - Suicidal thoughts or attempts

(Phoenix, 2014)



Ask the Audience:

In what ways have you recognized Vicarious Trauma:

- in yourself?
- in hindsight?
- in your coworkers?





(Phoenix, 2014)

Organizational Risk Factors

- Limited supervision
- High case loads
- Lack of acknowledgement of VT by agency
- Limited training on VT
- Poor pay
- Stressful conditions
- Limited resources



(Phoenix, 2014)






Professional Self-Care

- Take time for lunch
- Set boundaries
- Get regular supervision
- Actually use vacation and sick time
- Take mental health days
- Do not work during your time off
- Take a class
- Get support of colleagues

(Phoenix, 2014)



Professional Self-Care: Leaving Work at Work

- Watering plants at work before going home
- Singing to your favorite band on the way home from work
- Taking a shower right after work and imagining the water washing away the stress of that work day down the drain
- Changing out of your work clothes as a symbol of taking off your stress
- Burning sage at home after work to purify your spirit

Challenge for you:
For the next week, experiment with a specific ritual, reflecting on how it affects you.

(Phoenix, 2014)



Professional VT Prevention Exercise

- Why did you choose trauma-related work?
- How do you sustain and nurture yourself daily/weekly/monthly/yearly?
- What are your self-care/escape activities?
- What activities help you creating meaning in your life?

(Phoenix, 2014)

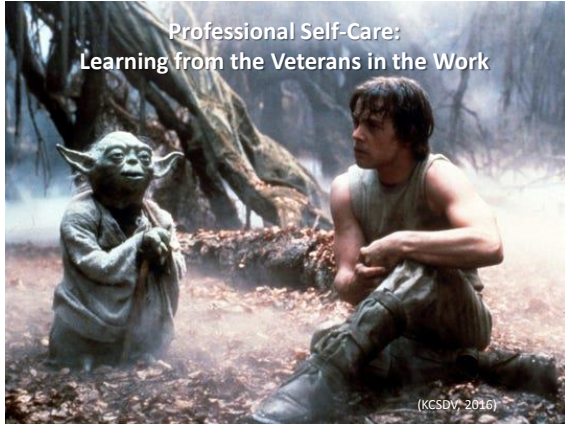


Professional Self-Care: Reconnect with the Rewards of the Work

- What made you choose this line of work?
- What keeps you going and sustains you?
- What strategies have allowed you to remain healthy and well in this career?
- If you were to do it all over again, is there anything you would do differently?
- How have you made a difference to others?

(KCSOV, 2016)











**Personal Self-Care:
Practicing Self-Compassion**

- Self-kindness
- Common humanity
- Mindfulness

(Phoenix, 2014)

Saying "No"

- Is there an important area in my life where I am not saying "no" (work, relationships, addictions...)?
- What is the impact of not saying "no" (physical, emotional, relational)?
- What is the "hidden story" behind my inability to say "no"?
- What am I not saying "yes" to and what is the impact?

(KCSOV, 2015)



Personal Self-Care
5 Steps to Mental Wellbeing

1. Connect
2. Be Active
3. Keep Learning
4. Give to Others
5. Take Notice

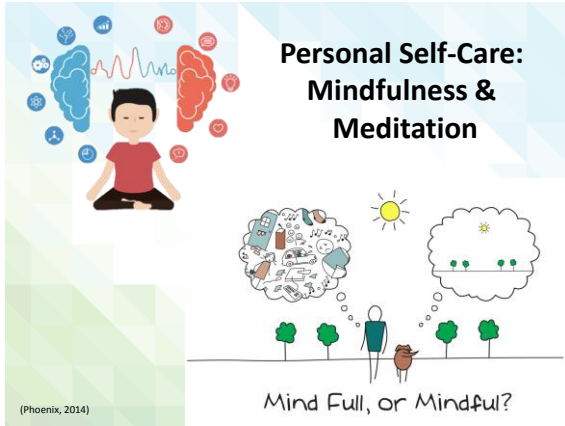
(“5 steps to mental”, 2019)

Kansas Coalition
 mental health

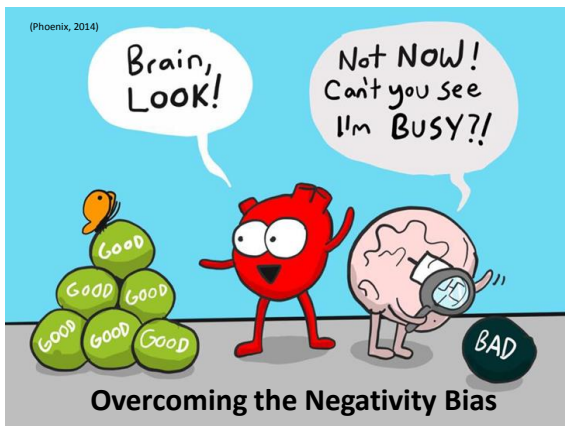
*i am attracting the perfect partner
 my heart is open to all the passion
 and romance flowing into my life
 Love fills my life
 in abundance every day*

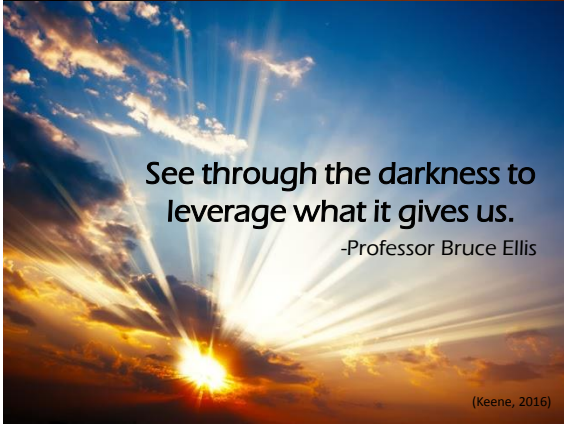
Personal Self-Care:
Affirmations & Vision Boards

(Phoenix, 2014)





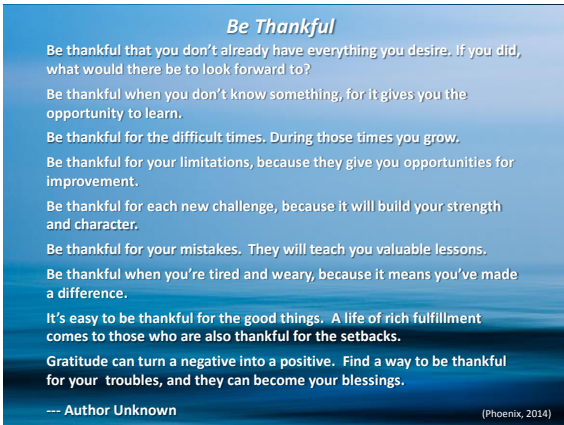




See through the darkness to leverage what it gives us.

-Professor Bruce Ellis

(Keene, 2016)



Be Thankful

Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire. If you did, what would there be to look forward to?

Be thankful when you don't know something, for it gives you the opportunity to learn.

Be thankful for the difficult times. During those times you grow.

Be thankful for your limitations, because they give you opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful for each new challenge, because it will build your strength and character.

Be thankful for your mistakes. They will teach you valuable lessons.

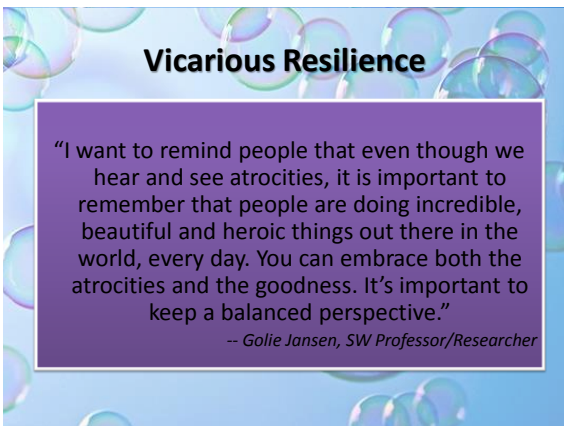
Be thankful when you're tired and weary, because it means you've made a difference.

It's easy to be thankful for the good things. A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are also thankful for the setbacks.

Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive. Find a way to be thankful for your troubles, and they can become your blessings.

--- Author Unknown

(Phoenix, 2014)

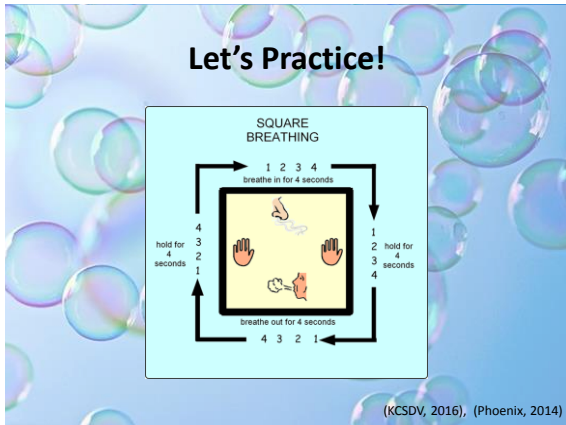


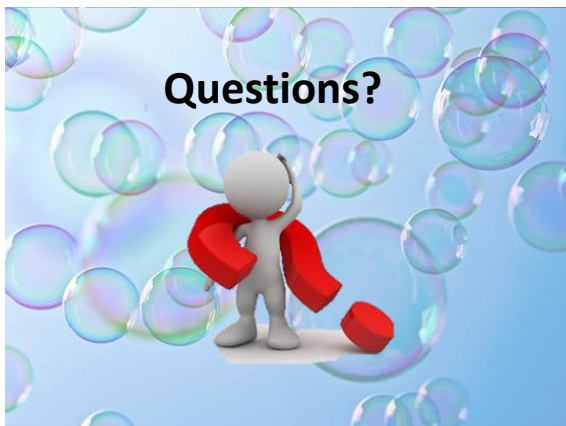
Vicarious Resilience

"I want to remind people that even though we hear and see atrocities, it is important to remember that people are doing incredible, beautiful and heroic things out there in the world, every day. You can embrace both the atrocities and the goodness. It's important to keep a balanced perspective."

-- Golie Jansen, SW Professor/Researcher







Resources

- **Victim Advocates Guide to Wellness: Six Dimensions of Vicarious Trauma-Free Life**
 - by Olga Phoenix
 - Website: <https://www.olgaphoenix.com/>
- **The A-to-Z Self-Care Handbook for Social Workers and Other Helping Professionals**
 - by Dr. Erlene Grise-Owens, Justin "Jay" Miller, and Mindy Eaves
- **Mental Health Foundation**
 - <https://www.mentalhealthfoundation.net/>
- **Vicarious Trauma Toolkit**
 - Office for Victims of Crime
 - <https://vt.ovc.ojp.gov/>
- **National Child Traumatic Stress Network**
 - <https://www.nctsn.org/trauma-informed-care/secondary-traumatic-stress>
- **National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma and Mental Health**
 - <http://www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org/>

How to Contact KCSDV

Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence
www.kcsdv.org
 785-232-9784
coalition@kcsdv.org



Kristina Scott
 KCSDV Child Welfare Project Coordinator
 785-232-9784 ext. 336
kscott@kcsdv.org

KCSDV Connectedness: Awareness and Educational Opportunities

- <https://www.facebook.com/KCSDV>
- <https://twitter.com/kcsdv>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/kcsdv>
- www.instagram.com/kcsdv
- www.youtube.com/kcsdv
- coalition@kcsdv.org

