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Traumatic Brain Injury - Behavioral Health ECHO
UW Medicine | Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences

Burnout & Working with TBI

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Speaker disclosures

No conflicts of interest



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Objectives

1. Review Burnout in Staff Working with TBI clients
2. Examine ways of caring for self with burnout
3. Examine ways of caring for others to prevent burnout
4. Create a caring for self plan



Overview of Burnout & the Costs of Caring



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The Costs of Caring

Sources of Suffering in Health Care:

1. *Intrinsic* to the work itself
(Occupational Hazard)
2. *Extrinsic* (Institutional
Bureaucracy)

Burnout

Compassion fatigue

Secondary & Vicarious traumatization

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

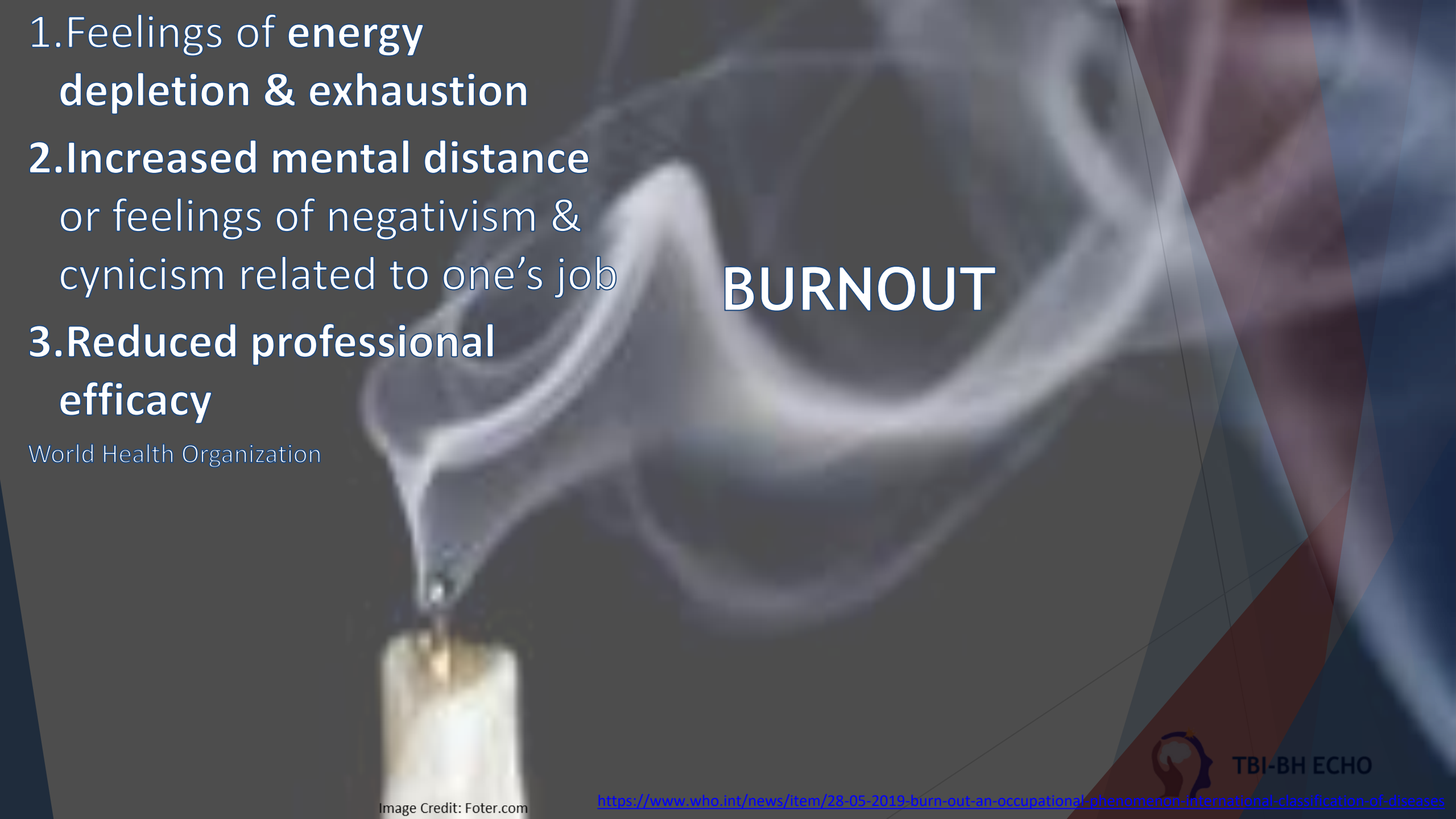
Moral distress & Moral injury

Soul loss

Suicide



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- 
1. Feelings of **energy depletion & exhaustion**
 2. **Increased mental distance** or feelings of negativism & cynicism related to one's job
 3. **Reduced professional efficacy**

BURNOUT

World Health Organization



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Burnout Impacts Patient Care

- ▶ Poor quality of care
- ▶ Poor patient satisfaction
- ▶ Job dissatisfaction
- ▶ Increased employee turnover
- ▶ Medical errors

Poghosyan L, Clarke SP, Finlayson M, Aiken LH. Nurse burnout and quality of care: Cross-national investigation in six countries. *Research in Nursing & Health* 2010;33:288-298.

Leiter MP, Frank E, Matheson TJ. Demands, values, and burnout: Relevance for physicians. *Canadian Family Physician* 1225;55:1224-1225.

Leiter MP, Harvie P, Frizzell C. The correspondence of patient satisfaction and nurse burnout. *Social Science & Medicine* 1998;47:1611-1617.

Leiter MP, Robichaud L. Relationships of occupational hazards with burnout: An assessment of measures and models. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* 1997;2:35-44.

Aiken LH, Clarke SP, Sloane DM, Sochalski J, Silber JH. Hospital nurse staffing and patient mortality, nurse burnout, and job dissatisfaction. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2002;288:1987-1993.

Shanafelt TD, Balch CM, Bechamps G, Russell T, Dyrbye L, Satele D, Collicott P, Novotny PJ, Sloan J, Freischlag J. Burnout and medical errors among American surgeons. *Annals of Surgery* 2010;251:995-1000.



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Burnout & Job Satisfaction Working with TBI Populations



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Saban et al. Burnout & coping strategies of polytrauma team members caring for veterans with traumatic brain injury (2013)

- ▶ TBI “signature injury” of Iraq and Afghanistan wars
- ▶ N=233
- ▶ Findings:
 - ▶ Moderate emotional exhaustion
 - ▶ Low depersonalization
 - ▶ High level of professional accomplishment
 - ▶ Staff who spent >50% time in TBI had significantly higher emotional exhaustion



Murray et al. There's no cure for brain injury: work related stress in brain injury rehabilitation professionals (2019)

- ▶ N=17, Grounded Theory, found Six Themes:
 - 1) **special challenges of brain injury rehabilitation**
 - ▶ Difficult, slow process
 - ▶ “like a death”
 - ▶ “There’s no cure for brain injury”
 - 2) emotional experiences associated with treatment
 - 3) impact of limited funding, resources, lack of continuum of care
 - 4) organizational factors contributing to stress
 - 5) effects of work-related stress and efforts to manage it
 - 6) support provided in environment



Wittig et al. Variables related to job satisfaction among professional care providers working in brain injury rehabilitation (2003)

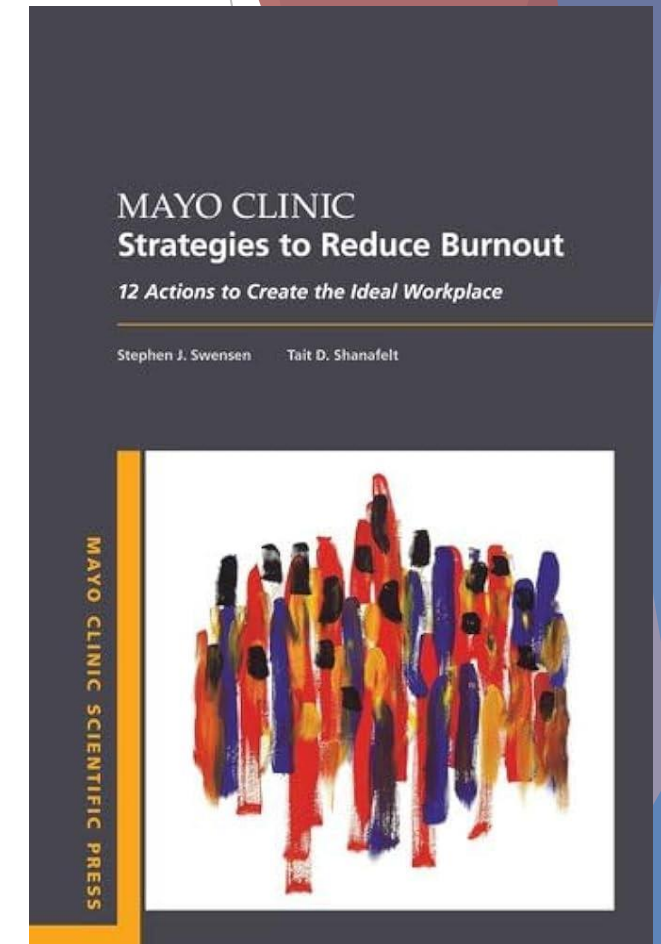
- ▶ N=133, Factor Analysis: Four Factors:
 - 1) Intrinsic Satisfaction
 - 2) Perceived importance to the organization
 - 3) Organizational support
 - 4) Training support
- ▶ **Conclusions:** Satisfaction with work in ABI rehabilitation is derived from multiple sources, but it appears to be largely dependent on feeling important to, and valued by, the organization and on the level of support and training provided in the workplace.



Mayo Clinic Strategies to Reduce Burnout

Swensen & Shanafelt

- ▶ “The current health care delivery system is perfectly designed to create high rates of professional burnout.”
- ▶ “...burnout is mainly created by systems, leaders, and characteristics of the work environment, not be a deficiency in personal well-being or resilience”



S Swensen & T Shanafelt. *Mayo Clinic Strategies to Reduce Burnout: 12 Actions to Create the Ideal Workplace*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.



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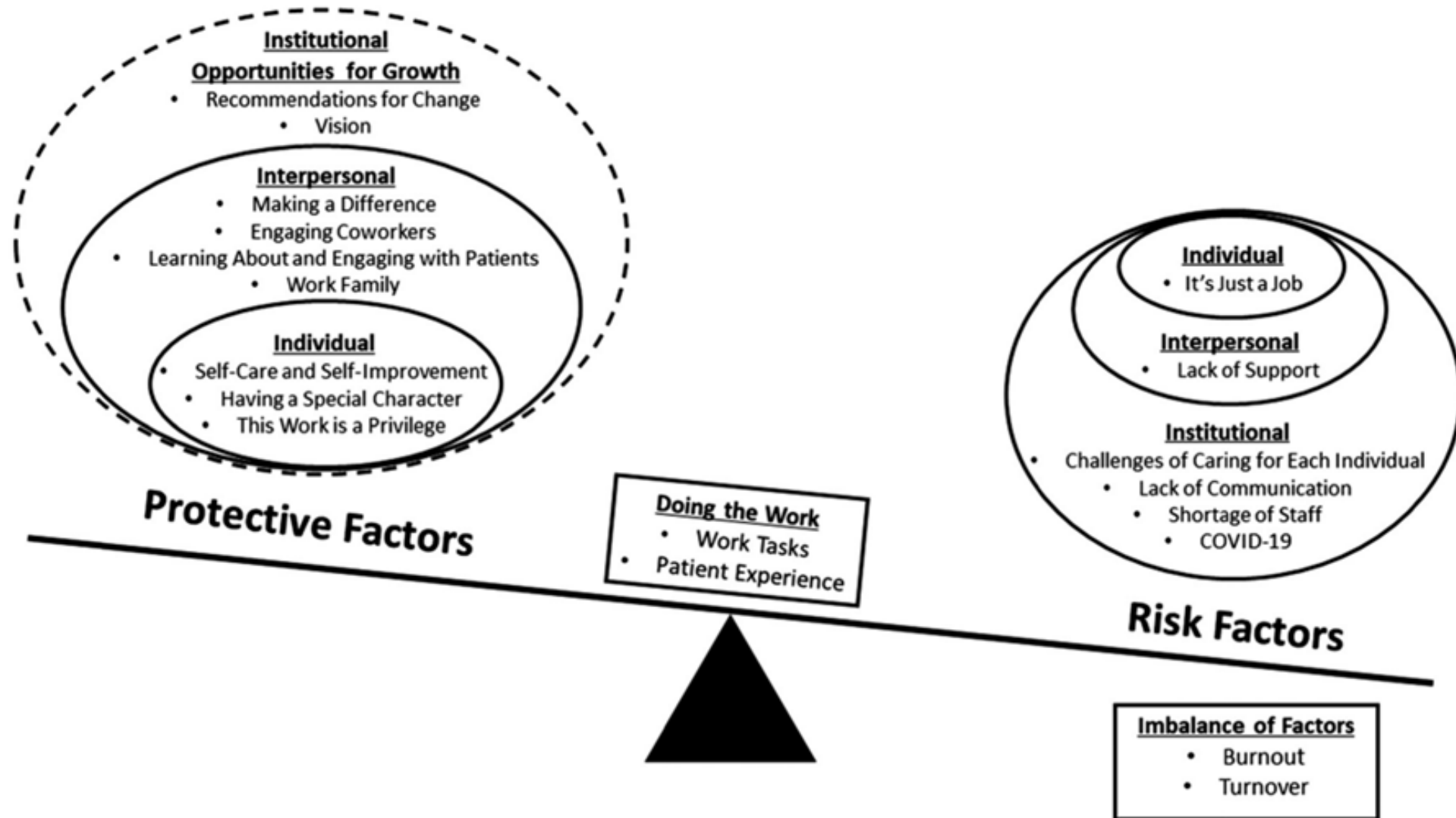
Wittig.2

- ▶ 95% enjoy working with brain-injured population
- ▶ 57% satisfied with work environment
- ▶ 67% unable to “leave work at work”
- ▶ 31% did not enjoy working with reactive or unpredictable clients
- ▶ 40% little to no experience with very aggressive or assaultive clients
- ▶ 53% uncomfortable with client aggression
- ▶ 66% feared they could be hurt at work
- ▶ did not feel adequately trained to manage sexually intrusive behavior (60%), assaultive behavior (55%), or aggressive behavior (53%)



Chambers-Blitz
et al.
The experiences
of support staff
in a traumatic
brain injury
rehabilitation
center (2022)
N=15,
Paraprofessionals
Grounded Theory

Figure 1
The Balance Model of Rehabilitation Support Work: Negative Imbalance



Note. This figure demonstrates that when risk factors outweigh protective factors, support staff are more likely to experience burnout and turnover.



Burnout and Caring for Self & Others



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Compassionomics (Trzeciak & Mazzarelli)

- “**high compassion is *protective* against burnout,**” (299)
- “Higher compassion is associated with lower depression symptoms, a higher sense of personal accomplishment, and enhanced quality of life,” (308)
- “**Compassionate care belongs in the domain of evidence-based medicine,**” (322)



<https://www.clinicalleader.com/doc/incorporating-patient-centric-outcome-metrics-in-rare-disease-trials-0001>



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Post-Burnout Growth

- Seeing an opportunity for growth in burnout
- Expanding beyond our previous level of resilience – not bouncing back to who we were; but expanding as wholehearted healers

May I Explode Into a Thousand Pieces

There once was a being named
Chenrezig who vowed
“As long as there is even one being who
is suffering, I will strive for the benefit
of all. And if I break this promise, may
my head and body split into a thousand
pieces!”



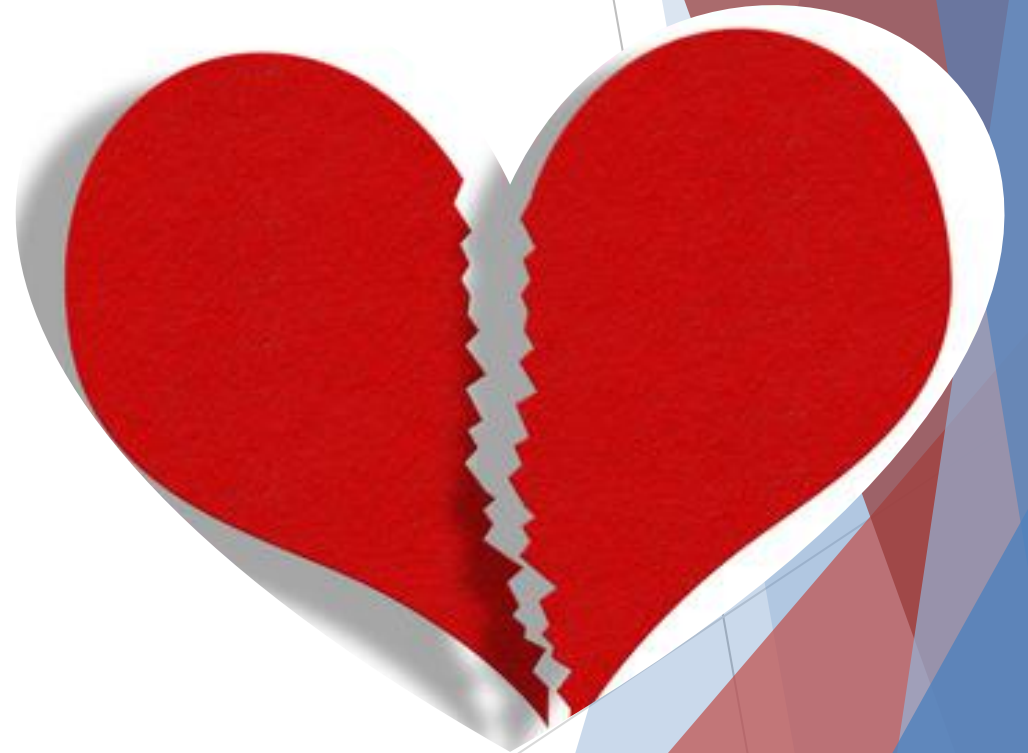
Ways the Heart Can Break:

Breaking Apart

“The heart can break apart into a thousand pieces, the result being anger, depression, disengagement... *This kind of broken heart is an unresolved wound that keeps wounding us and others.*

When the heart is brittle and it shatters, it can scatter seeds of violence and multiply...suffering”

– Parker Palmer
Healing the Heart of Democracy



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Ways the Heart Can Break:

Breaking Open

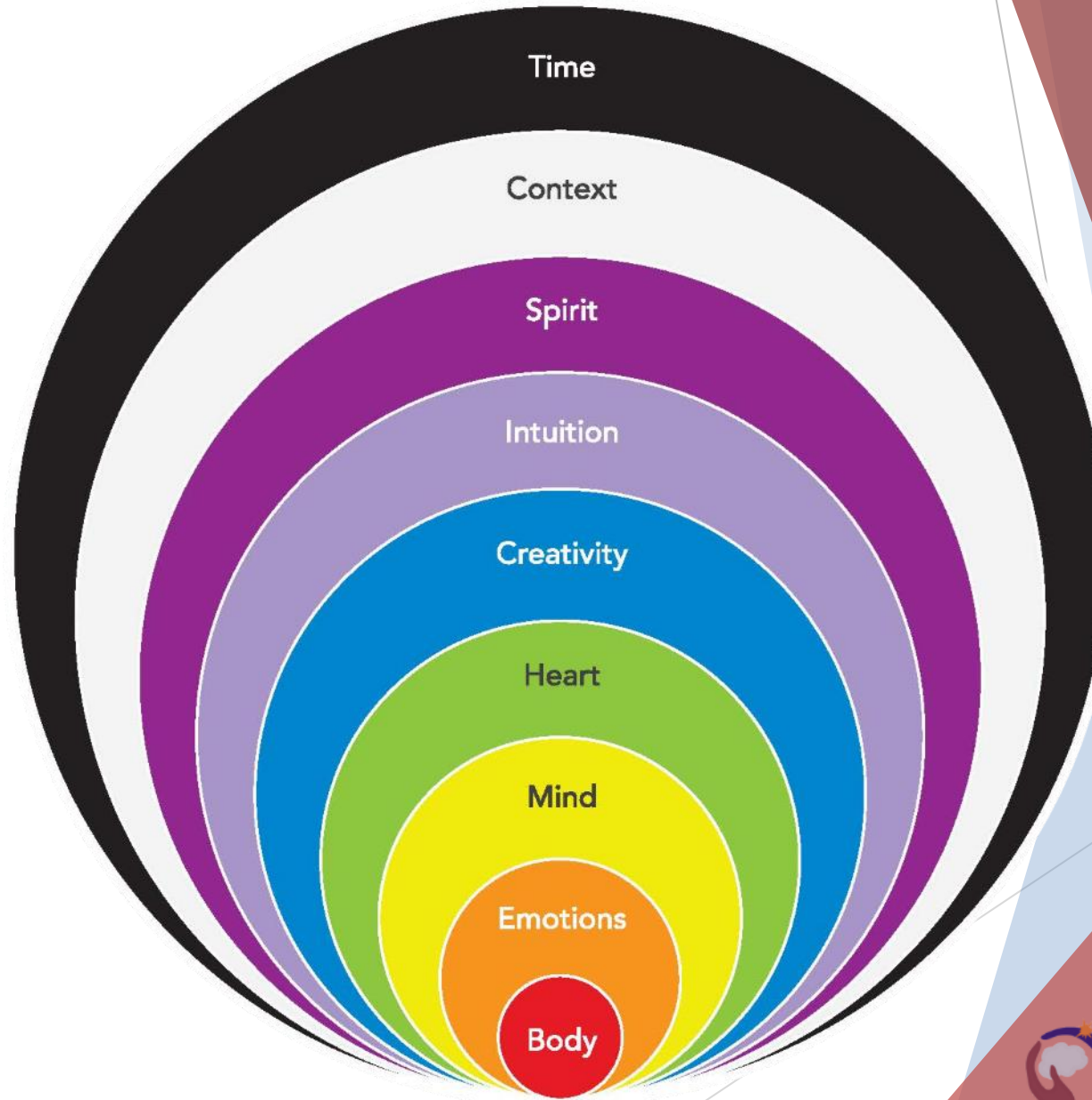
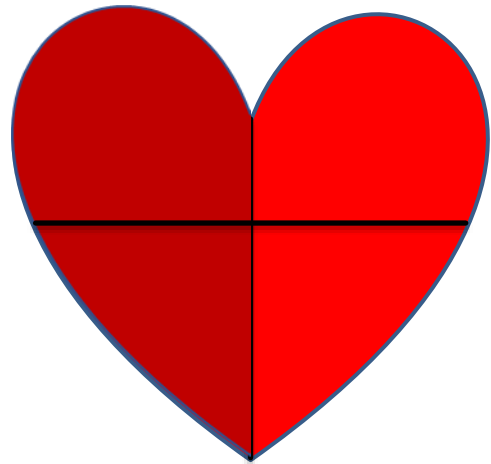
“When the heart is supple, it can be ‘broken open’ into *a greater capacity to hold our own suffering in a way that opens us to greater compassion*, heartbreak becomes a source of healing, deepening our empathy for others who suffer and extending our ability to reach out to them”

– Parker Palmer
Healing the Heart of Democracy



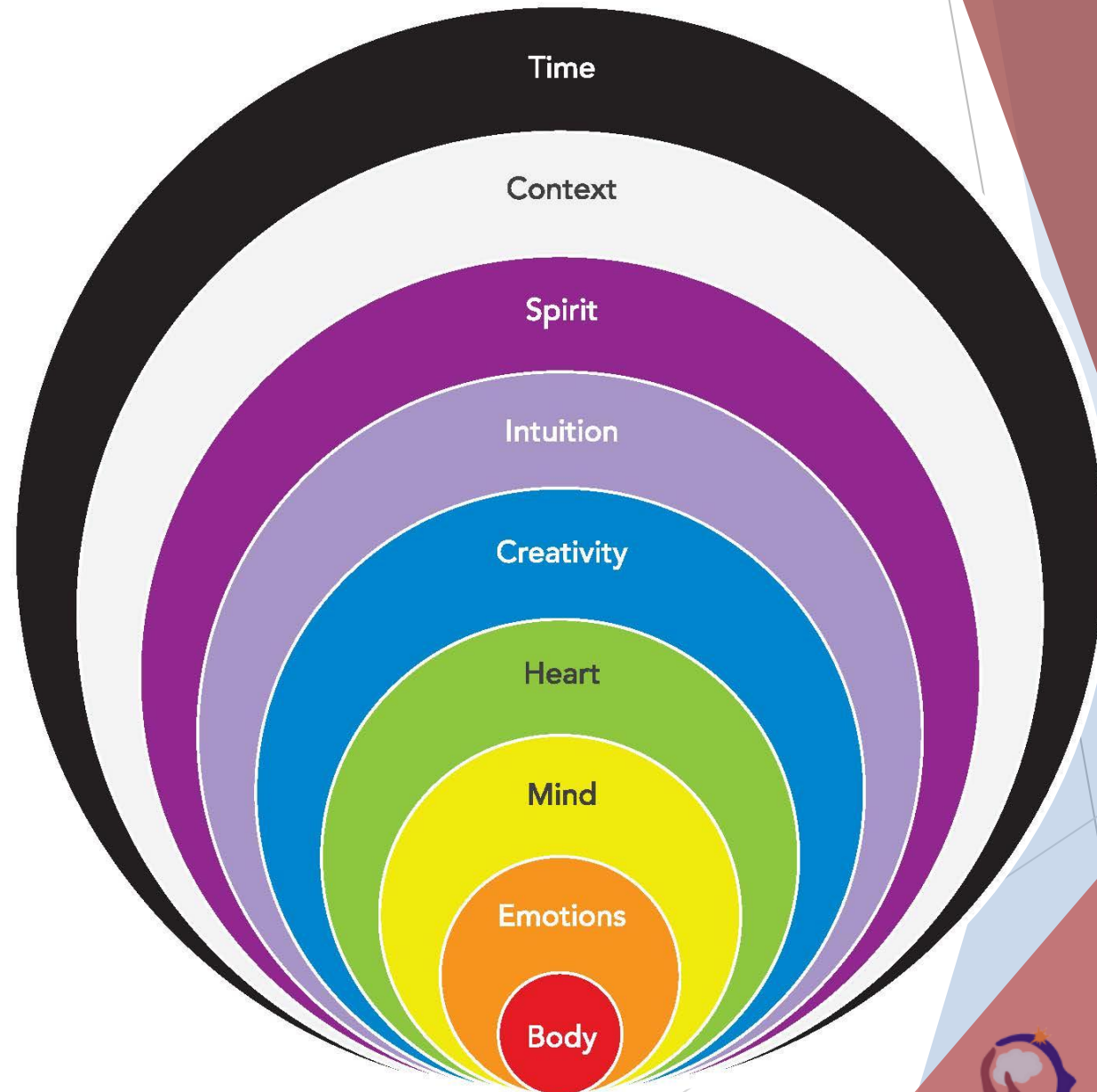
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Heart Meditation



What does it mean to be a Whole Person?

1. Caring for Body
2. Caring for Emotions
3. Caring for Mind
4. Caring for Heart
5. Caring for Creativity
6. Caring for Intuition
7. Caring for Spirit
8. Caring for Context
9. Caring for Time

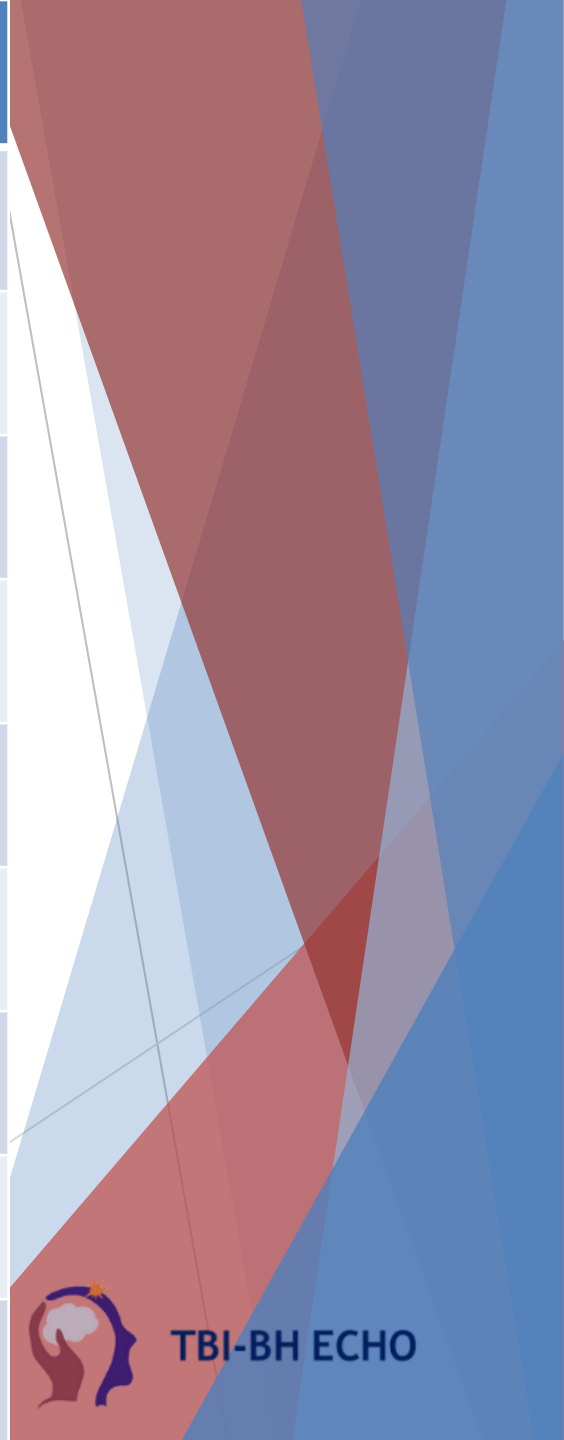


Create a Caring for Self Plan



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<i>Human Dimensions:</i>	<i>What are your current caring practices?</i>	<i>What caring practices would you like to add?</i>
Body		
Emotions		
Mind		
Heart		
Creative Expression		
Intuition		
Spirit & Soul		
Context - Environment, Interpersonal		
Time - life stage and process of growth		



Ways of Caring for Others to Prevent Burnout



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- **Case Management & Family Support**
- **Family Development**
- **Community Day Services**
- **Residential Services**
- **Employment Services**



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Caring for Others

- ▶ Be a Whole Person to Care for a Whole Person
- ▶ Meet the Whole Person of the other
- ▶ If a person has brain damage, what aspects of self are not damaged?
- ▶ Shift from empathy (passive feeling with) to compassion (empathy + action)
 - ▶ “Compassion does not fatigue, it is neurologically rejuvenating!” Dowling

Trisha Dowling, “Compassion does not fatigue!” *Canadian Veterinary Journal* 59, no.7 (July 2018): 749–50, PMID: 30026620.



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