



UNDERSTANDING & MANAGING VICARIOUS TRAUMA

To help reduce vicarious trauma, it is helpful for the person to:

1. Be aware of their own limits and needs, emotions and resources
2. Have balance among life activities
3. Have a connection to themselves, others and something larger

Once vicarious trauma is identified, one must undertake to restore their connections to themselves, family and friends and the wider community.

it is important to include:

self-care

- Connecting with your body through exercise, or massage
- Setting limits, particularly on being helpful
- Practicing healthy habits, especially sleep and nutrition
- Making connection to something beyond oneself a priority
- Living in the NOW, the present moment.

self nurturance, through

- Seeking gentleness
- Focusing on pleasure
- Relaxation and play.

escape, by

- Getting away from work, especially mentally
- Engaging in fantasy and positive imagining or visualisation
- Maximising opportunities for pleasurable positive thoughts
- Looking at beautiful things e.g. the art gallery, flowers, etc
- Listening to music.

it is also important to:

personally

- Challenge your negative beliefs
- Participate in community-building activities
- Infuse current activities with meaning – the power of simplicity
- Follow a passion.



professionally

- Understand the nature and impact of your role
- Give supervision for oneself and others
- Manage your client load and expectations of yourself
- Establish a variety of tasks and clients
- Maintain and manage professional development – positive input
- Seek collegial support/external support e.g., EAP
- Ask for appropriate resources
- Watch boundaries and ensure your personal space is respected.

making a commitment to yourself

Vicarious trauma can affect us in a variety of ways – personally and professionally.

Jot down three things you could do to address various trauma in each category – think both in terms of yourself and what is possible within your team.

personally

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

professionally

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

action steps

- Circle one of the above in each category that you plan to do this week.
- Asterisk the strategies that you could plan to implement this month.