

# Social Work in Long Term Care: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

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## Big Picture Objectives

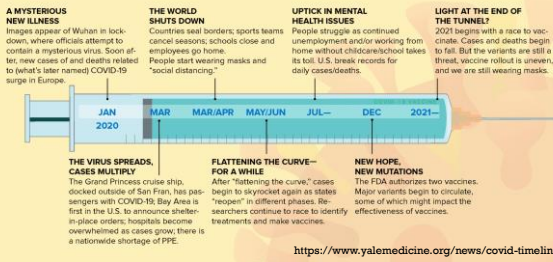
- Discuss recent changes in LTC and their implications on Social Work roles and practice today
- Understand Burn Out, a move toward Trauma Stewardship, and a more resilient future for ourselves and our practice
- "Social Work in LTC 2.0"

1

2

## OUR PANDEMIC YEAR—A COVID-19 TIMELINE

On March 11, the WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Here is a look back at a year in disruption.



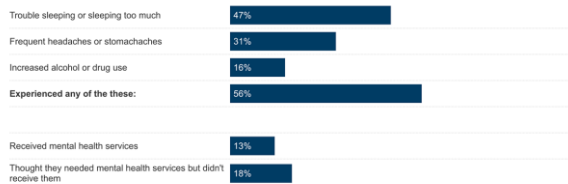
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4

## More Than Half Of Frontline Health Care Workers Say Worry And Stress Related to COVID-19 Has Led To Adverse Health Impacts, Three In Ten Have Needed Mental Health Care

Percent of frontline health care workers who say worry or stress related to COVID-19 has led to each of the following:



NOTE: See legend for full question wording  
SOURCE: KFF/Washington Post Frontline Health Care Workers Survey (Feb. 11-March 7, 2021) **KFF** | The Washington Post

Where were you when the pandemic/shutdown started?

5

6



Impacts of COVID

- How did your role(s) change?
- How did COVID impact your level of burn out?
- What did you learn about yourself throughout this experience?

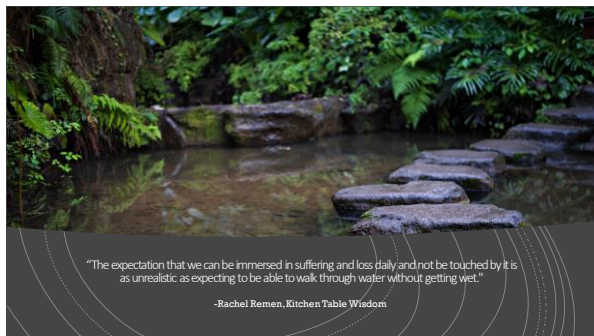
7

What is Trauma Stewardship?

Trauma Stewardship can be defined as a daily practice through which individuals, organizations, and societies tend to the hardship, pain, or trauma experienced by humans, other living beings, or our planet itself.

**The most important technique in trauma stewardship is learning to stay fully present in our experience, no matter how difficult.**

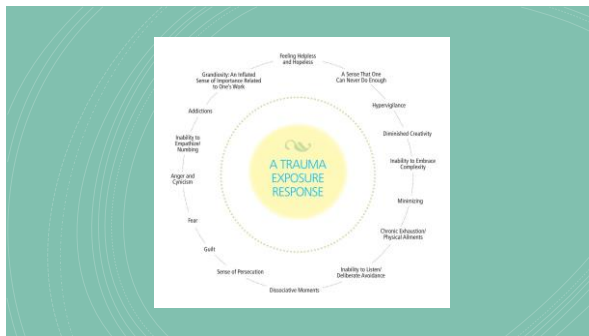
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"The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet."

-Rachel Remen, Kitchen Table Wisdom

9



10



11

5<sup>th</sup> Direction



- A daily practice of centering yourself
  - The reminder of who you are, what you need, & where you are headed.

12

**North: Creating Space for Inquiry**

- "Why am I doing what I am doing?"
- "What gets me out of the door in the morning?"
- "What keeps me showing up to family/community meetings?"
- "What is working for me? What is not?"

13

"He who has a 'why' to live for, can bear with almost any how"  
— Friedrich Nietzsche, German Philosopher

14

What is your why?

15

**TRY THIS**

1. Before starting your workday, take a moment to literally stop in your tracks and ask yourself, "Why am I doing what I am doing?" After you hear your answer, remind yourself, gently, that you are making a choice to do this work. Take a deep breath; breathe in both the responsibility and the freedom in this acknowledgment.
2. Regularly consult with someone about why you are doing what you are doing. Choose a trustworthy, supportive, wise person. Ask this person to listen attentively and provide you with feedback. It is critical to not be isolated in our work.
3. Regularly write down why you are doing what you're doing, what your intention is. Keep it somewhere. When you feel yourself going astray, return from that client consult, staff meeting, or board retreat and find your written intention. Remind yourself what it is about for you, and what it is definitely not about.

16

**TRY THIS**

1. Brainstorm five ways in which you think what you are doing is working for you.
2. Take three deep breaths and review your list. Assess to what degree those ways are or are not in your best interest or the best interest of those you serve.
3. Create a list of five ways in which you would ideally see your work benefiting you and those you serve. Compare the two lists.

17

**East: Choosing Your Focus**

- Where am I putting my focus?
  - Is the glass half-empty or half-full?
  - Reframing difficult situations
- What is my Plan B?
  - Freedom in options


18

⊙ ⊙ ⊙  
**TRY THIS**

1. Think of a challenging work situation. Write down three things that make it challenging. Write down three things that you appreciate about it. Look at your lists and ask yourself, "Where am I more likely to focus and why?"
2. For one day, commit to paying attention to the running commentary in your mind. Is your mind in the habit of seeing the glass as half-empty or half-full? Are you able to reframe things as half-full, or do you feel an investment in seeing things as half-empty?
3. Find a mirror, stand in front of it, and look at yourself. Notice the first three things that come to mind. Would you classify them as positive, loving, kind things? If not, try again.

19

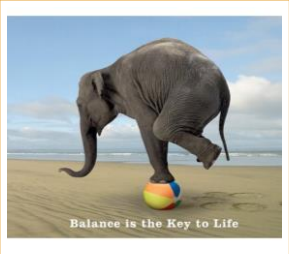
### South: Building Compassion & Community



- **Creating Microculture (Community) is INVALUABLE**
- Ask yourself who is in your community? How do they support you? How do you support them? How could this connection continue to grow?

**PSA: You deserve the same compassion you so willingly offer others**

20



### West: Finding Balance

- Engaging in life outside of work
  - What is your work/life balance?
- "Moving Energy Through"
  - Breathing, Meditation, Running, Laughing, Dancing, Cooking, Gardening, Journaling etc.

21

### 5<sup>th</sup> Direction



- A daily practice of centering yourself
  - The reminder of who you are, what you need, & where you are headed.

22



23

Remember you are good enough

Everyone is different

Stop comparing yourself

Individuality rocks 🌿

Learn something new daily

Involve yourself in what you love doing

Enjoy things that make you happy

Not everyone can be 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup>

Care about yourself and others

Expect that some days won't be great

24

Burnout

Burnout is a long-term stress reaction marked by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lack of sense of personal accomplishment.

25

Assessing Burnout  
The Maslach Burnout Inventory™ (MBI)

26

**MBI-Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS)**

- Addresses three areas:
  - Emotional Exhaustion
  - Depersonalization
  - Personal Accomplishment
- Appropriate for a wide array of health care and human service professionals
- Use with the Areas of Worklife Survey (AWS) as a Toolkit to measure both the extent and likely cause of burnout

27

Developing your own maintenance self-care plan

28

Social Work in LTC 2.0

29

Issues and trends in the LTC Industry

- Workforce Shortages
  - Staffing Levels
  - Staff Training
- High Demand for Services
- Private equity investment
- Meeting the needs of complex populations
- Rising Health Care Costs
- Lack of Integration with the greater healthcare community
- Enhanced Oversight and Scrutiny
- More sophisticated consumers and families

30

Trends impacting the greater healthcare market

- Demographic changes
- Technological changes
- Shifting Healthcare policies and priorities at the state and federal level
- Increased focused on person centered care
- The increased demand for in-home care
- Increased utilization of managed care in Medicaid Programs across the United States
- Increased Department of Justice investigations involving Olmsted and ADA compliance

31

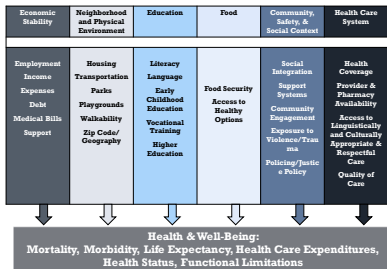
## Health Equity

Health equity means reducing and ultimately eliminating disparities in health and its determinants that adversely affect excluded or marginalized groups.

(Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)

32

### Social Determinants of Health



Kaiser Family Foundation, 2018

33

In essence, the charge to long term care providers is to provide:

- Highly personalized services
- Increase the quality of care; and,
- Enhance and increase efficiencies in service provision

.....With fewer resources (people, time and money).

34

What is the "New" role of long term care social workers

35

Break-out groups

36

What are the 5 most important things that long term care social workers do in their role

What are 5 things that you engage in that are outside the scope your role

What do you need to feel more supported in your role



Break-out  
groups

What tools and resources are currently available to make your role easier?

What tools and resources do you need to make your role easier?

What role do the SDOH play in discharge planning and accessing community resources?

37



References & Recommendations

- Trauma Stewardship by Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky, Connie Burk (2017)
- The Body Keeps the Score by Bessel A Van Der Kolk (2021)
- Stumbling on Happiness (2008)
- The Compassionate Connection (2018)
- See No Stranger by Valarie Kaur (2020)
- Option B by Sheryl Sandberg, Adam Grant (2017)

38