



# Boundaries & Ethics

Dr. Martha Thompson



# Boundaries, Ethical Dilemmas and Sticky Situations. Oh My!

- ▶ Preventative ways to set clear boundaries.
- ▶ Helpful tips on how to handle addressing boundaries when a situation has become blurry.
- ▶ Self-care and modeling healthy boundaries for the youth we work with are two important ways we can help ourselves and help them.

# No legal advice – just educational information

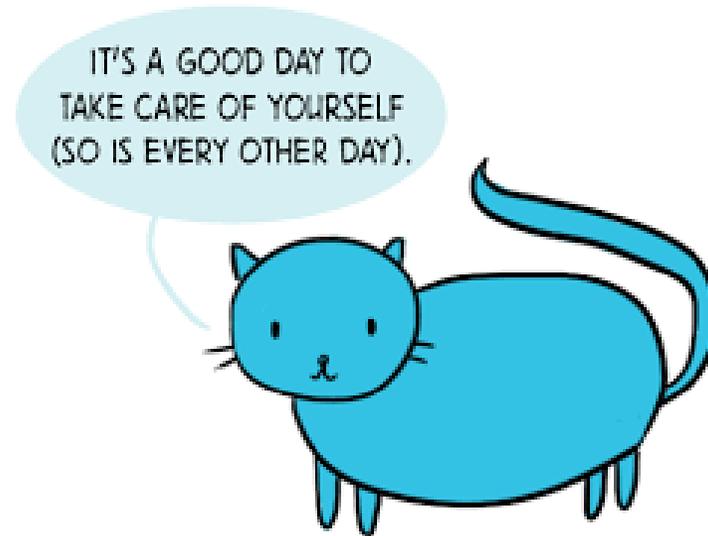
- ▶ There is always something more to know about ethics
- ▶ There are always more questions about ethics
- ▶ Sometimes your questions are not answered the way you want or to the fullest extent you want or need

# Ethics

- ▶ The hard and fast non-negotiable rules
- ▶ Set of principals of “right conduct”
- ▶ Standards of behavior that tell us how human beings act in situations they find themselves in
- ▶ The discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation
- ▶ The principles of conduct governing an individual or a group

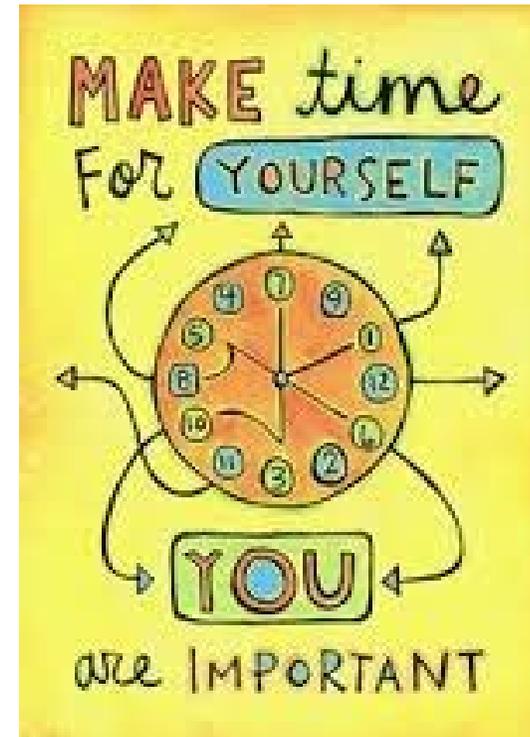
# Ethics defined

- ▶ Rules, standards, codes or principals that provide guidelines for appropriate behavior and truthfulness in providing peer-based recovery support services
- ▶ It is not....
  - ▶ The same as feeling
  - ▶ Religion
  - ▶ Following the law
  - ▶ Following culturally accepted norms
  - ▶ Science



# Ethical arenas

- ▶ Ethical issues and pitfalls can crop up in many ways and many forms
  - ▶ Service context
  - ▶ Personal conduct of the treating professional
  - ▶ Conduct in service relationships
  - ▶ Conduct in relationship with other services providers
  - ▶ Conduct in relationships with local recovery community
- ▶ Others .....



# Exploring ethics

- ▶ Boundary management - encompasses the decision that increases or decreases the intimacy within the relationship.
- ▶ ???Can you think of some reasons why???
- ▶ For example our services rely on reciprocity and minimizing social distance between the helper and those being helped

# Exploring ethics

- ▶ Multi party vulnerability - phase that conveys how multiple parties can be injured by what a provider does or fails to do. These parties include the recovering person, their family, the organization, the larger community etc.
- ▶ What does this really mean???????



# Boundaries - trauma and self care

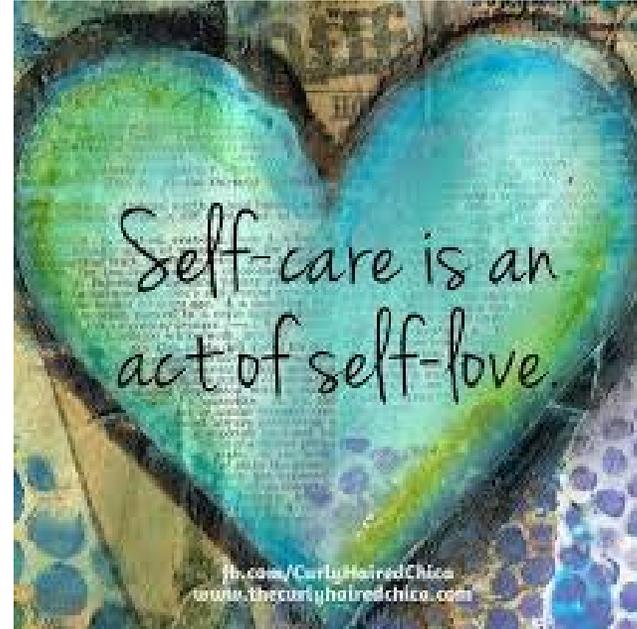
- ▶ Vicarious trauma is the emotional residue of exposure that counselors have from working with people as they are hearing their trauma stories and become witnesses to the pain, fear, and terror that trauma survivors have endured. - ACA
- ▶ The term vicarious trauma (Perlman & Saakvitne, 1995), sometimes also called compassion fatigue, is the latest term that describes the phenomenon generally associated with the “cost of caring” for others (Figley, 1982).
  - ▶ secondary traumatic stress (Stemm, 1995, 1997)
  - ▶ secondary victimization (Figley, 1982)

# Burnout vs Vicarious Trauma

- ▶ It is important not to confuse vicarious trauma with “burnout”. Burnout is generally something that happens over time, and as it builds up a change, such as time off or a new and sometimes different job, can take care of burnout or improve it.
- ▶ Vicarious trauma, however, is a state of tension and preoccupation of the stories/trauma experiences described by clients. This tension and preoccupation might be experienced by counselors in several ways.

# Ethics and Self Care

- ▶ What is HEALTH?
  - ▶ Condition of being sound in mind, body and spirit
  - ▶ Overall condition of someone's body or mind
- ▶ What is SELF CARE?
  - ▶ Care of the self without medical or other professional consultants



# Barriers to self care

- ▶ List some potential barriers to self care....
- ▶ Stress
- ▶ Workplace challenges
- ▶ Family challenges
- ▶ Others????



# Work place challenges

- ▶ Relationships with manager or other coworkers
- ▶ Bureaucracy
- ▶ Work load, paperwork demands
- ▶ Balancing professional and personal life

# Additional challenges

- ▶ Clients
- ▶ Lack of resources
- ▶ Managing ones own recovery
- ▶ Health issues
- ▶ Mental health concerns
- ▶ High burnout and turnover rates
- ▶ Maintaining boundaries



# Stress

- ▶ Is any uncomfortable emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical physiological and behavioral changes
- ▶ Stress can affect people of all ages genders and circumstances can be lead to both physical and psychological health issues
- ▶ Some stress can be beneficial at times and can provide the boost needed to get through certain situations

# Stress

- ▶ Eustress = positive stress
- ▶ Distress = negative stress
  
- ▶ Symptoms of Stress
- ▶ Tension, irritability, inability to concentrate, feeling excessively tired, trouble sleeping
- ▶ Dry mouth, pounding heart, difficulty catching breath, stomach upset, headaches, frequent urination, sweating and tight muscles



# Stress Coping Styles

- ▶ Problem Focused Coping
- ▶ Emotion Focused Coping
  
- ▶ Stress Coping Styles Test
  - ▶ <http://www.attcnetwork.org/regcenters/productDocs/2/SelfCareGuide%20test%20resources.pdf>

# Heading towards burnout

- ▶ When we do not take care of ourselves ....
- ▶ Anxiety and panic attacks
- ▶ Insomnia
- ▶ High blood pressure
- ▶ Heart burn and ulcers
- ▶ Skin problems
- ▶ Muscle pain
- ▶ Reproductive issues

How you treat  
yourself is how you  
are inviting the  
world to treat you.

# Burnout...Is a state of emotional, mental and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress

- ▶ Irritable or impatient
- ▶ Being cynical or critical
- ▶ Dragging yourself to work, difficulty starting once there
- ▶ Lack of energy to be productive
- ▶ Lack of satisfaction
- ▶ Feeling disillusioned about work
- ▶ Sleep and appetite changes
- ▶ Unexplained headaches, backaches or other physical concerns

# Causes of Burnout

- ▶ Lack of control
- ▶ Unclear job expectations
- ▶ Dysfunctional workplace dynamics
- ▶ Mismatch in values ... people are valuable!
- ▶ Poor job fit
- ▶ Extremes of activity
- ▶ Lack of social support
- ▶ Work life imbalance



# Keys to Kill Burnout & Reduce Risk

- ▶ Time management
  - ▶ Avoid procrastinating
  - ▶ Set priorities
  - ▶ Utilize helpful tools
  - ▶ Develop realistic expectations
- ▶ Integrity
- ▶ Respect
- ▶ Responsibility

"The opportunity to  
change and grow  
continues to be  
available throughout  
our lives"

- Dan Siegel

# Ethics and responsibility

- ▶ Why is self care an ethical issue?
- ▶ Why is taking care of ourselves an ethical responsibility?



# Ethics and Responsibility

- ▶ It is the utmost importance that you take care of yourself!!!!
- ▶ Self care is your personal, professional and ethical responsibility
- ▶ We as professionals can use the same tools we encourage our clients to use
  - ▶ Assessment of recovery capital
  - ▶ Recovery / Treatment plan
  - ▶ Anything else you have learned thus far

# Thank you 😊

- ▶ Have a Great Week!
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