

# Vicarious Trauma & Resiliency

*Workshop with Prisoner Visitation & Support*

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# Session Overview

- What is trauma & Vicarious Trauma?
- Why does this matter?
- How can we protect ourselves?
- Personal action plan for wellness



Trauma  
is....



Everywhere

# What is Trauma?

Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful, threatening, or shocking and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

## *The 3Es:*

*Event  
Experience  
Effect*



# Physiology of Flight, Fight, or Freeze

Trauma triggers sympathetic nervous system to fight, flight, or freeze

- ◆ Muscular system - rigid with blood engorgement
- ◆ Digestive system - shuts down
- ◆ Circulatory system - increase heart rate and blood flow, surface level veins constrict, blood gets thick/sticky, blood directed away from cortex to limbs
- ◆ Respiratory system - increase lung capacity and rate of breathing
- ◆ Adrenal glands - secrete cortisol & adrenaline
- ◆ Skin gets sweaty



## *The 3Es:*

*Event*  
*Experience*  
*Effect*



# Resiliency

“the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands.”



BURNOUT

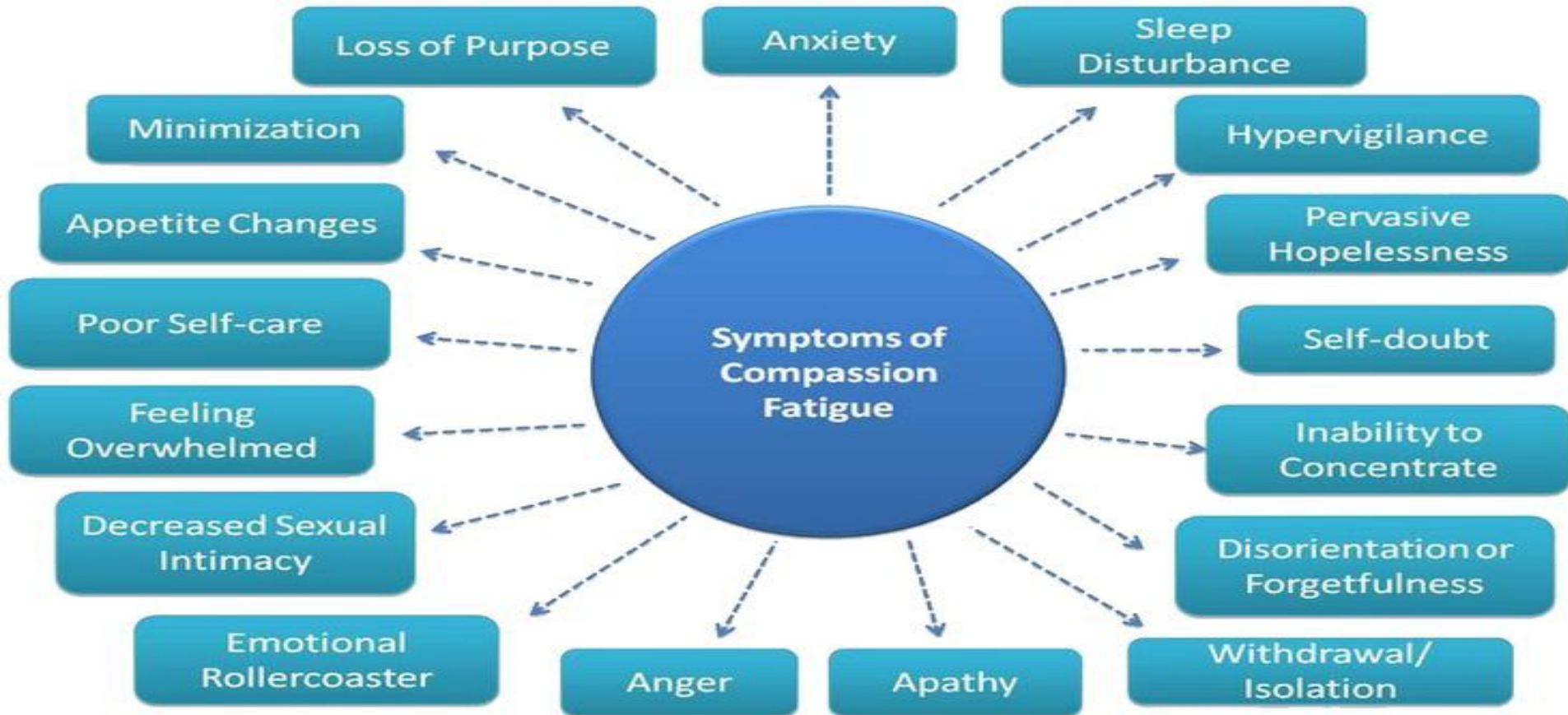
COMPASSION  
FATIGUE

VICARIOUS  
TRAUMA

# Vicarious Trauma

“Vicarious traumatization is a *negative* reaction to trauma exposure and includes a range of psychosocial symptoms.”

# Vicarious Trauma





**Your Mind**

**Others**



**Your PVS Partner**

**Your Body**



**Your PVS Partner**

**Boundaries.**



## Your Mind



- Know your own triggers
- Notice how overwhelm begins
- Do your own healing
- Have a plan if you feel overwhelmed
- Journaling (gratitude/anxiety)

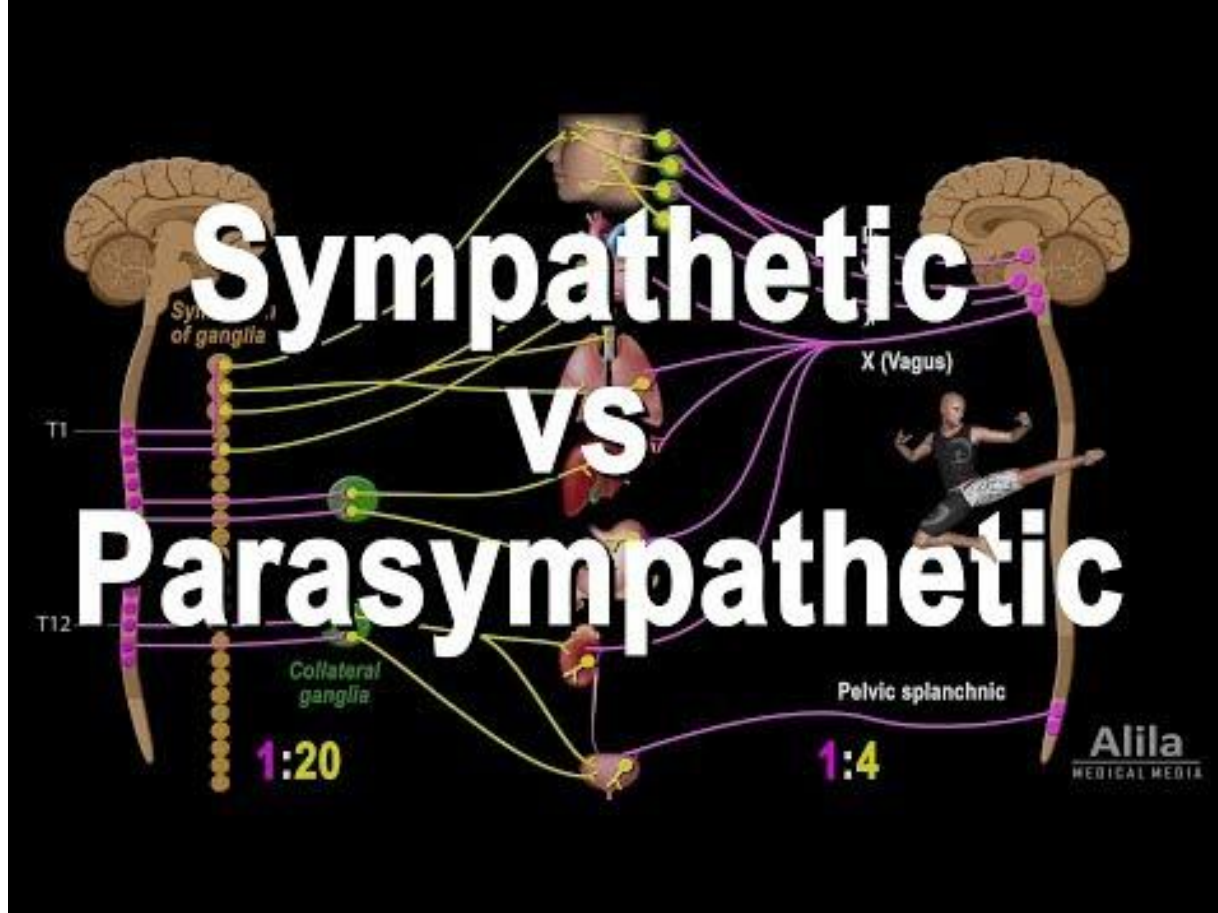
Others

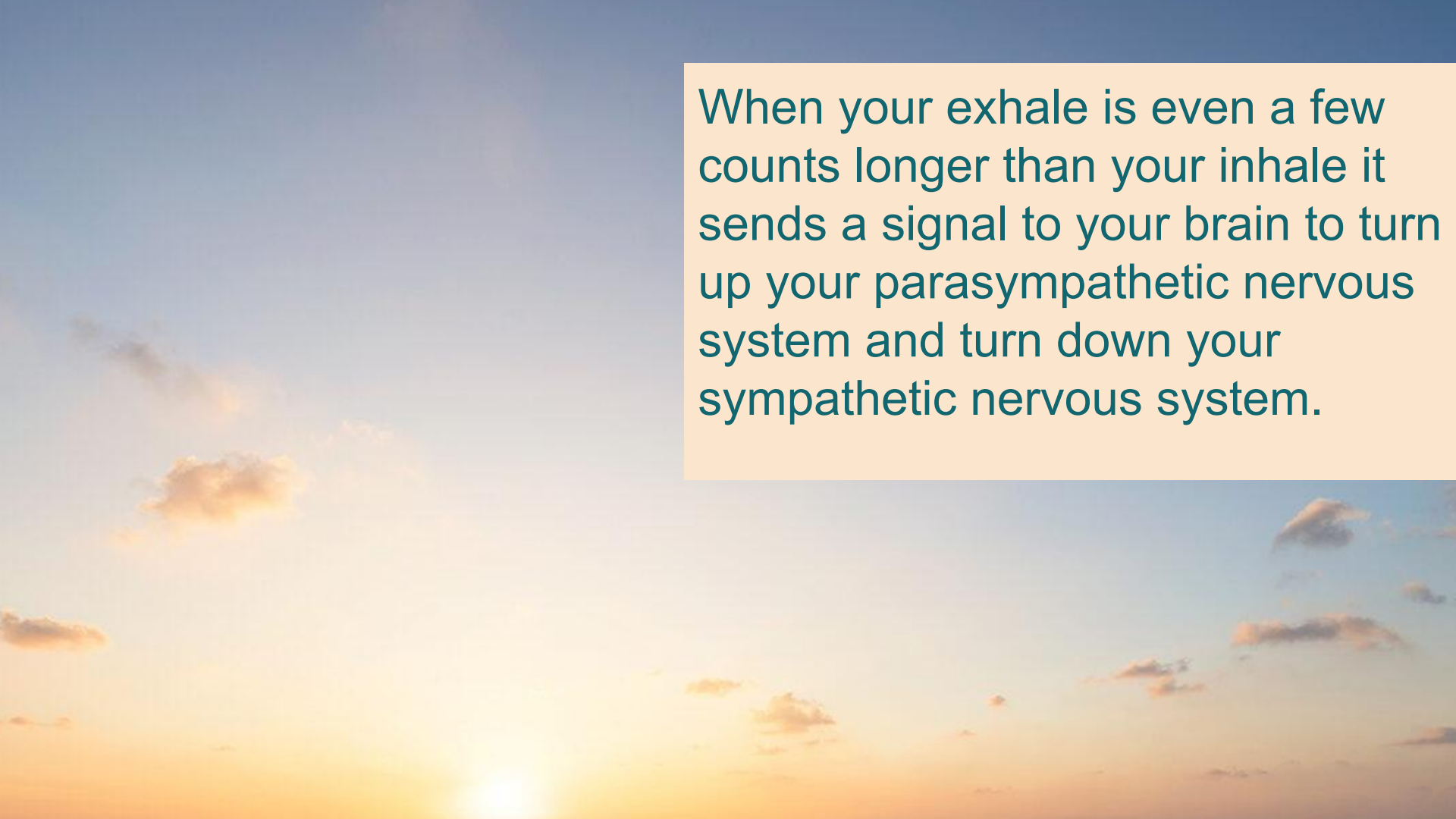


**Find your People.  
Rely on your People.**

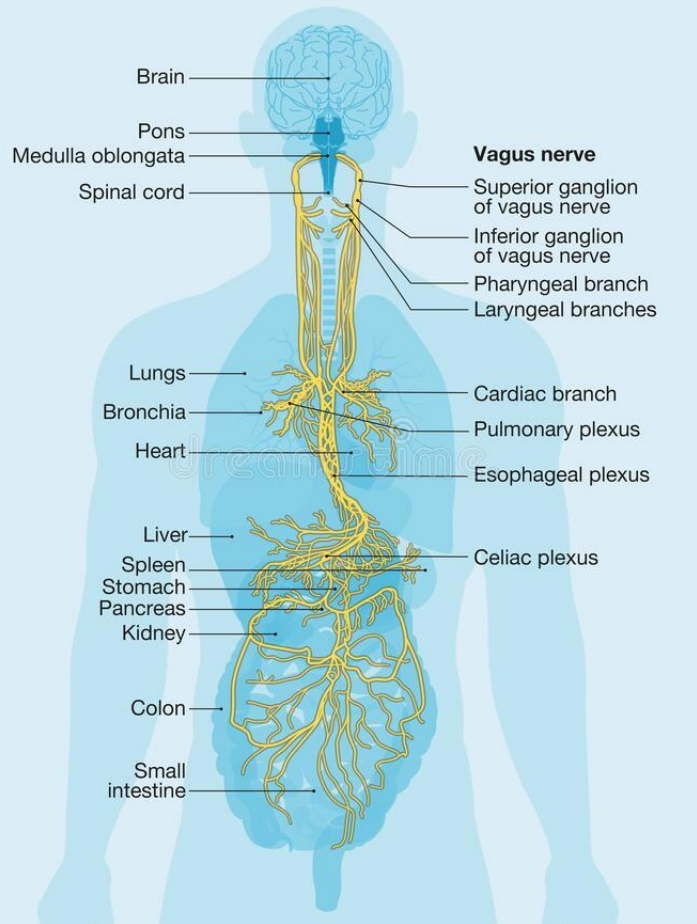


Your Body





When your exhale is even a few counts longer than your inhale it sends a signal to your brain to turn up your parasympathetic nervous system and turn down your sympathetic nervous system.



## Activating your Vagus Nerve

- Loud Singing / Gargling
- Foot massage
- Cold Water!
- Fiber
- Laughing



Your Body

## Other Bodily activities:

- Orientation
- Sensation / Body Scan
- Yoga
- Walking
- Choose your own adventure

## What are the “right” activities?

- Ones that are nourishing to YOU
- Ones you’ll actually DO

## When do we do these things?





*I promise you have time.*



# Make your own Personal Action Plan to Build Resilience:

<https://tinyurl.com/3pkrm25w>

## Building resilience to withstand stress, vicarious trauma, and trauma

### Personal Action Plan

#### Proactive Resiliency building

Every day I will (list activities below):

- *i.e. spend time in nature, meditate, walk, controlled breathing*
- 
- 

Every week I will (list activities below):

- *i.e. call a friend, take an exercise class, write in gratitude journal, ride my bike*
- 
- 

#### Know your stressors & responses

What triggers me? Are there particular topics, behaviors, or events that are likely to cause stress for me? *List them below and aim to take extra care when these triggers emerge.*

# Small group prompts

- Introduce yourself, where you live, how long you've been involved with PVS
- Was there something in this presentation that surprised you or you have questions you want to talk with the group about?
- Looking through the action plan document, is there something you know you for sure want to start doing or noticing?
- Looking through the action plan document, are you struggling to come up with something? Can you ask your group for their support?

# Additional Resources

Office of Victims of Crime - Vicarious Trauma Toolkit

<https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/vtt/introduction>

The Nap Ministry

<https://thenapministry.wordpress.com/>

Overview of vicarious trauma in helping professions:

<https://olgaphoenix.com/blog/painful-truths-about-vicarious-trauma-statistics-from-the-field/>

The Trauma Stewardship

<https://traumastewardship.com/>

# Additional Resources cont.

Laughter Yoga International:  
<https://www.laughteryoga.org/>

BOUNDARIES: Are too few (or too many) why we stay stuck? We Can Do Hard Things with Glennon Doyle:  
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/boundaries-are-too-few-or-too-many-why-we-stay-stuck/id1564530722?i=1000522110392>

Simple Practices for Balance, Resilience, and Collective Healing:  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Lfu5XgwtXpdR7TEmREDfN7jwg5obhvS\\_UHN7J7nt5iA/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Lfu5XgwtXpdR7TEmREDfN7jwg5obhvS_UHN7J7nt5iA/edit)