The Use of Mindfulness Techniques to Prevent Occupational Burnout and Compassion Fatigue in Individuals Working with an Alzheimer’s Population

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The procedures in this workshop are meant to be used by the Hildegarde Centre staff.
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my grandma, Joanne McKeown, the strongest individual I know. Thank you – for through your example you inspire me to be resilient, to accept myself and to not allow for the possibilities to be limited by self-doubt. You have taught me that the clouds should never overshadow the journey.
Abstract
Support staff providing care for individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease are at risk for developing occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. Mindfulness techniques promote overall well-being and contribute to work-life balance. The goal of this thesis was to develop an 8-week workshop to teach mindfulness techniques to individuals providing care to clients diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease attending a recreational day program in a long-term care facility. In order to garner feedback from the staff, to get a better idea about what they would find useful in a workshop, an hour-long presentation was provided. The feedback and information from research articles was used to develop an 8-week workshop. The workshop outline, accompanied by a facilitator manual and a participant’s workbook were made available to the staff at the facility. The workshop outline provides a timeline of the topics to be delivered. All information needed for the workshop is provided in the facilitator's manual, and all participant materials needed (worksheets, activity instructions) are in the participant's workbook. The 8-week workshop was not delivered due to time constraints. Next steps include implementation of the workshop by an employee at the facility with pre- and post-intervention data related to occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, and overall wellness.
Key words: Alzheimer’s Disease, Occupational Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, Mindfulness
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# Table of Contents

1. Dedication .................................................................................................................. ii
2. Abstract ......................................................................................................................... iii
3. Acknowledgements ....................................................................................................... iv
4. Introduction .................................................................................................................... 1
5. Literature Review .......................................................................................................... 3
6. Method ............................................................................................................................ 9
7. Results ........................................................................................................................... 13
8. Discussion ...................................................................................................................... 15
9. References ..................................................................................................................... 17
10. Appendices ................................................................................................................... 
    A. Presentation .............................................................................................................. 19
    B. Workshop Outline .................................................................................................. 31
    C. Facilitators Manual ............................................................................................... 33
    D. Participants Workbook .......................................................................................... 70
    E. Permission of Request ............................................................................................ 107
    F. Consent to use Agency Name .................................................................................. 108
Chapter I: Introduction

Alzheimer’s disease (AD), a form of dementia, is a progressive, irreversible disorder of the brain (Martini, Ober, Bartholomew, & Nath, 2013). AD alters a person’s behaviours, cognitions, and emotions. According to the Alzheimer’s Society of Canada (2017), this disease is becoming more prevalent, currently effecting 564,000 Canadians. As the disease progresses, it becomes increasingly more difficult for the individual to care for themselves and they become reliant on a caregiver. Being a caregiver under these circumstances can be consuming, stressful, and complicated (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). Staff members providing care to a geriatric population, especially an AD population, are susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. Staffing levels for the geriatric population in long-term care facilities are already insufficient (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014) with the rates of AD steadily on the rise.

This is a suitable thesis topic because it will benefit the agency, Providence Manor Hildegarde Centre, the clients that attend the recreational day program, and the student. The agency has identified a need for the staff to be educated on occupational stress and self-care. By increasing the physical and emotional wellness of staff members, the level of care that the clients receive will increase (Baker et al., Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). Finally, the student will increase her own knowledge on occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, and mindfulness techniques. The student can then use the knowledge and apply the skills acquired throughout her life in her chosen occupation.

Occupational Burnout

Occupational burnout is caused by excessive stress in the workplace. Burnout can be a result of many risk factors including, but not limited to, staff shortages, extensive work-related demands, difficult work environment, poorly paid, lack of benefits, lack of support from co-workers or management, and poor social relationships (Hall, Johnson, Watt, Tsipa, & O’Connor, 2016; Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014; Baker et al., Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). This is detrimental to employees’ well-being, leading to both physical illness, mental health issues, and absences from work (Hall, Johnson, Watt, Tsipa, & O’Connor, 2016). Occupational burnout also affects the quality of patient care and safety.

Compassion Fatigue

Compassion fatigue is caused from continuous empathetic strain from working in a psychologically distressing environment resulting in emotional exhaustion (Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). Turgoose and Maddox (2017) explain that compassion fatigue prevents staff from achieving satisfaction in their occupations. Individuals with compassion fatigue may experience hopelessness, loss of joy in helping others, and a negative attitude overall (Turgoose & Maddox, 2017).

Psychoeducation

Psychoeducation is important in the learning process and promotes the development of self-efficacy (Wright, Basco, & Thase, 2006). The use of psychoeducation increases an individual’s ability to modify their cognitions and effectively change their behaviours.
Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the ability to be attentive to internal and external stimuli in the present moment, there is limited interference with this awareness and it is done without judgement and is done without judgement (Eby, Conley, Williamson, Henderson, & Mancini, 2017; Jamieson, & Tuckey, 2017). Mindfulness training results in the ability to react to mentally and physically straining situations (Parsons, Crane, Parsons, Fjorback, & Kuyken, 2017).

Conclusion

Using psychoeducation to explain occupational burnout and compassion fatigue will help staff members gain a better understanding of the importance of self-care. Teaching mindfulness techniques will assist employees in preventing and addressing occupational burnout and compassion fatigue, while promoting emotional and physical wellness.

There are five main chapters covered in this thesis, introduction (Chapter I), literature review (Chapter II), method (Chapter III), results (Chapter IV), and discussion (Chapter V). The introduction provides an overview of the Alzheimer’s population, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, psychoeducation, and mindfulness techniques. The literature review, will include summarized information from research studies, books, and systematic literature reviews about the presented topic. It will include the efficacy of educating caregivers in mindfulness techniques, including meditation, breathing, yoga, and progressive muscle relaxation. The method section provides details about the comprehensive workshop that is accompanied by a facilitator and participants manual. This section will include information on the participants, design, setting and apparatus, measures, and procedure. The results section will include a description of the strengths of the workshop and areas for improvement after facilitating the workshop. Finally, the discussion will consist of the strengths and limitations of the project, contributions to the field of behavioural psychology, and recommendations for further research on the topic.
Chapter II: Literature Review

Alzheimer’s Disease

Alzheimer’s Disease (AD) was first identified in 1906. This neurodegenerative disorder (Statistics Canada, 2017) alters a person’s behaviours, cognitions, and emotions and is becoming more prevalent, currently affecting 564,000 Canadians (Alzheimer’s Society of Canada, 2017). The rate of those diagnosed with AD is steadily on the rise (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014). In the next 15 years the number of individuals living with AD is anticipated to increase by over 66% (Alzheimer’s Society Canada, 2017). In Canada it is estimated that approximately 118,000 of elderly individuals in long term care facilities have a dementia diagnosis (Statistics Canada, 2017). Statistics Canada (2017) also noted that of the 45% of Canadians that have a diagnosis of dementia, 85% of these individuals depend on the help of a caregiver. Providing care to individuals with Alzheimer’s is demanding and emotionally straining because of the reduction in cognitions and psychological changes associated with dementia (Hall, Johnson, Watt, Tsipa, & O’Connor, 2016). As the disease progresses the challenging behaviours become more severe, resulting in increased demands and stress for the caregiver (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). When an individual becomes overwhelmed they express stress in their cognitions, behaviours, and emotions (Kagan, Kagan Klein, & Watson, 1995). Staff members providing care to a geriatric population, especially an AD population, are susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue.

Occupational Burnout

Burnout is a term used to describe chronic stress in an occupational setting (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014). Environmental and work-related stressors are the distinctive factors of burnout rather than psychological and emotional processes (Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). There are many risk factors that contribute to burnout within the work place including staff shortages, difficult work environment, lack of benefits, low pay, extensive work-related demands, poor social relationships, insufficient resources, lack of support from co-workers or management, and physical stress (Hall, Johnson, Watt, Tsipa, & O’Connor, 2016; Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014; Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). Common effects of burnout include indifferent and pessimistic attitudes, lack of perceived personal accomplishment, decrease in work satisfaction, and decrease in physical and psychological health (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014).

Occupational burnout is detrimental to staff emotional and physical well-being. Everyone is susceptible to occupational burnout; being emotionally or physically unwell does not only affect the individual, but also the other employees and the clients. The agency is negatively affected due to employee’s lack of productivity, inefficiencies resulting from time spent covering shifts or positions, additional time dedicated to correcting staff mistakes, ultimately increasing the costs of operation (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). Both burnout and poor psychological and physical well-being are positively correlated with decreased patient safety and a higher risk of making occupational errors, primarily medical errors (Hall, Johnson, Watt, Tsipa, & O’Connor, 2016). It is therefore, crucial to consider the emotional and physical well-being of employees when assessing perceived quality of life of the clients (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). Stress management training combined with relaxation exercises
and training measures help to reduce burnout (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014). It is important to incorporate mindfulness techniques while dealing with stressful situations (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015).

**Compassion Fatigue**

Burnout and compassion fatigue have a positive correlation; this means that they commonly co-exist and can be a causation factor of the other (Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). The distinctive difference is that compassion fatigue is more strongly correlated with psychological factors (Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). Compassion fatigue is common in helping professionals, as helping professionals have the potential to be negatively affected by their clients. Compassion fatigue is caused from continuous empathetic strain from working in a psychologically distressing environment resulting in emotional exhaustion (Figley, 1995; as cited in Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). Compassion fatigue is the inability to empathize with others and associated side effects including feelings of hopelessness, decreased ability to cope at work, and negative perception of one’s work (Thompson et al., 2014; as cited in Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). The inability to have compassion and empathize with others is concerning, as it can lead to mistakes being made at the patient’s expense (Francis, 2013; as cited in Turgoose & Maddox, 2017).

Risk factors in the development of compassion fatigue include poor coping methods, high levels of empathy, lack of mindfulness, perception of fairness in the workplace, perceived social support, and perceived support from employers and co-workers (Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). Maladaptive coping skills are correlated with an increased likelihood of compassion fatigue (Jacobson, 2012; Thompson et al., 2014; as cited in Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). Emotional self-awareness is an individual’s ability to recognize how they are feeling and how it is affecting them (Turgoose and Maddox, 2017). Emotional self-awareness has been identified by Turgoose and Maddox as a protective factor against compassion fatigue. As empathy increases, the occurrence of compassion fatigue becomes more likely. Elevated levels of mindfulness are correlated with lower levels of compassion fatigue (Thieleman & Cacciatore, 2014; Thomas & Otis, 2010; Thompson et al., 2014; as cited in Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). Turgoose and Maddox (2017) also reported that demographic factors can play a role in the development of compassion fatigue (i.e. age, sex). Compassion satisfaction is a term used to explain the positive feelings helping professionals feel towards their colleagues and from the ability to help their clients (Figley & Stamm, 1996; as cited in Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). Compassion satisfaction is important in reducing levels of compassion fatigue in the workplace. Protective factors against compassion fatigue include cognitive and behavioural coping methods such as mindfulness.

**Mindfulness**

The practice of mindfulness techniques has becoming more popular in recent years (Good et al., 2015; as cited in Eby, Conley, Williamson, Henderson, & Mancini, 2017). Mindfulness has stemmed from the Buddhist meditation teachings of the Buddha (Thera, 1962; as cited in Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Buddhism is not a religion, a philosophy, or a belief, it is a way of life, a practice adapted by individuals that involves training the mind to be mindful (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Kabat-Zinn (2003) identifies Buddhism as the connection between the mind and the body that has a significant impact on the psychological fields including clinical psychology and behavioural medicine. Research into the use of mindfulness continues to be of interest because of its regarded benefits.
THE USE OF MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES

(Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017). Although this research is still new it seems promising (Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017) as mindfulness can be used among a variety of helping professionals (Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). The techniques associated with mindfulness practices promote many healthy aspects of an individual’s life (Lee, 2017). Mindfulness refers to the ability to be attentive to internal and external stimuli in the present moment (Eby, Conley, Williamson, Henderson, & Mancini, 2017). Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) elaborate on the present awareness and attention by adding that there is a limited amount of interference while practicing mindfulness techniques. The use of mindfulness techniques is effective in reversing and preventing many health conditions, both mental and physical (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). The implementation of mindfulness practices can aid in self-regulation, effective coping methods, and relaxation (Cho, Ryu, Noh, & Lee, 2016). Jamieson and Tuckey identify that in contemporary workplace environments the conditions are typically high stress and intensive, increasing the importance of having readily available techniques in place to benefit the employees to lessen the negative impacts of stress.

Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) is a program created in the 1970s by Kabat Zinn that incorporated meditation, yoga, and body awareness (Pascoe, Thompson, & Ski, 2017). The emotional and physical well-being of staff members is important and using mindfulness techniques is helpful in achieving this (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). Improving the well-being of staff creates an environment where the employers benefit due to increased productivity rates (Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017). The result of Mindfulness training is the ability to react to mentally and physically straining situations (Parsons, Crane, Parsons, Fjorback, & Kuyken, 2017). It is important for participants learning mindfulness to practice mindfulness techniques in order to benefit fully from the skills they have learned. A review of the literature studied 32 articles showed that elevated levels of mindfulness are correlated with lower levels of compassion fatigue (Thieleman & Cacciatore, 2014; Thomas & Otis, 2010; Thompson et al., 2014; as cited in Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). Mindfulness is a protective factor against compassion fatigue because of the resilience that is built against it. Common mindfulness techniques practiced include diaphragmatic breathing, yoga, and meditation (Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017). It is important to consider both the needs and goals of the staff members and the organization before implementing a mindfulness technique intervention. Jamieson and Tuckey found that if the intervention was not properly designed or properly executed the mindfulness training is at risk for not being effective and there is even a possibility that it could be detrimental to the well-being of the participants. If the participants in the mindfulness intervention are not following the instructions and not meeting expectation with the exercise, the intervention will not be successful (Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017). A systematic review by Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) examined 40 articles, this study shows that mindfulness has been proven beneficial in a variety of occupations with diverse participants (Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017). Many studies show that mindfulness interventions are effective in improving the well-being of individuals in an occupational environment (Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017); however, a limited amount of research has been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of mindfulness in healthy individuals that are physically and emotionally well (Eby, Allen, Conley, Williamson, Henderson, & Mancini, 2017). Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) identify that the use of mindfulness is thought to improve the attentional constancy,
control, and proficiency, which in turn impact many secondary functions. These secondary functions can be categorized into four domains consisting of physiology, emotion, cognition, and behaviour. Overall, mindfulness is a useful technique in improving the physical and emotional health of employees who are or are at risk of being affected by occupational burnout or compassion fatigue.

**Meditation**

Meditation is beneficial in promoting positive physical and emotional outcomes in a variety of populations (Rausch, Gramling, & Auerbach, 2006). Rausch, Gramling, and Auerbach (2006) state that the implementation of meditation techniques has been shown to influence stress levels.

**Mindful Breathing**

Mindful breathing is a technique that is commonly cited as effective in the MBSR (Zhu, Feng, & Osika, 2017). The idea stems from an instinctive human trait of taking a deep breath to feel better. Although it is known that breathing deeply is beneficial, this is often forgotten when an individual is experiencing anxiety or stress (Zhu, Feng, & Osika, 2017). Zhu, Feng, and Osika (2017) explain that when the body is experiencing an anxiety or stress response an individual is likely to breathe quick and shallow breaths that will continue to enhance the negative response. Instead of allowing this unconscious reaction to occur, it is important to be mindful of breath and focus on deep, abdominal breathing (Zhu, Feng, & Osika, 2017). This conscious breathing style will have a calming effect on the body, both preventing and reducing the negative results of increased sympathetic nervous system reaction and promoting engagement of the parasympathetic nervous system instead (Zhu, Feng, & Osika, 2017).

**Yoga**

Yoga is a practice that is directed towards a mind, body, and spiritual connection (Pascoe, Thompson, & Ski, 2017). Recently, the use of yoga as a form of intervention for stress related illness has become increasingly popular in Western culture (Penman et al., 2012; as cited in Pascoe, Thompson, & Ski, 2017). Pascoe, Thompson, and Ski (2017) note that yoga as a form of intervention for stress management has demonstrated its effectiveness with a variety of populations. The practice of yoga as a mindfulness-based intervention is regarded as a safe method (Praissman, 2008; as cited in Pascoe, Thompson, & Ski, 2017). Yoga has been correlated with decreasing heart rate (HR), blood pressure (BP), and cortisol levels, ultimately playing a role in regulating the sympathetic nervous system (Pascoe, Thompson, & Ski, 2017). Pascoe, Thompson and Ski state that by regulating the sympathetic nervous system, and decreasing the HR, BP, and cortisol levels the body is protecting itself from the development of stress related mental illness. Practicing yoga will also increase an individual’s ability to use controlled breathing, improve physical posture, and enhance meditative techniques (Farmer, 2012; Pflueger, 2011; Travis & Pearson, 2000; as cited in Pascoe, Thompson, & Ski, 2017). The mind and body are so interconnected you cannot consider one without the other. Yoga can result in regulating both mental and bodily processes, ultimately promoting overall well-being (Pascoe, Thompson, & Ski, 2017).

**Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)**

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) has effectively been utilized to produce a variety of positive outcomes in individuals (Rausch, Gramling, & Auerbach, 2006). A study done by Rausch, Gramling, & Auerbach (2006) consisted of 387 undergraduate
students who partook in either the practice of meditation of PMR or were in a control group; 71.3% of participants were female and the mean age was 19. This study identified the use of PMR as effective in regulating physiological processes, managing anxiety, and decreasing stress levels. The PMR process consists of the tensing and relaxing of various muscle groups in a systematic order; both breath and mindfulness are important factors in PMR (Rausch, Gramling, & Auerbach, 2006). Overall, PMR is an effective method of increasing well-being (Rausch, Gramling, & Auerbach, 2006).

**Psychoeducation**

Psychoeducation is important in the learning process and promotes the development of self-efficacy (Wright, Basco, & Thase, 2006). Using Psychoeducation will increase the individual’s ability to modify their cognitions and effectively change behaviours. Psychoeducation on occupational burnout and compassion fatigue, in combination with stress management and relaxation techniques help prevent these occurring in the workplace (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014).

Psychoeducation is not only effective in the prevention of health issues in an occupation environment, but it is also inexpensive (Kagan, Kagan (Klein), & Watson, 1995). Kagan, Kagan (Klein) and Watson (1995) state that individuals are commonly not aware of the stressors in their life; therefore, when faced with a stressful situation they will react based on the knowledge they have (i.e. past experiences they had in similar situations). Creating awareness of the potential stressors is important for individuals so they can understand where the stress is coming from. Once the stressors have been identified the individual will have a better understanding of their physiological responses; therefore, creating self-awareness that will help them gain a better understand of their reactions. Psychoeducation on techniques to both prevent and cope with occupational burnout or compassion fatigue is also important. This knowledge will be utilized when they are in a stressful situation and they need to react based on the knowledge that they have previously acquired; the more these skills are practiced the more effective they will be (Kagan, Kagan (Klein), & Watson, 1995). Kagan, Kagan (Klein), and Watson identified progressive muscle relaxation, stress-management training, and meditation as effective techniques to be taught through psychoeducation.

**Conclusion**

Alzheimer’s disease, a progressive disorder of the brain (Martini, Ober, Bartholomew, & Nath, 2013) alters a person’s behaviours, cognitions, and emotions (Alzheimer’s Society of Canada, 2017). Being a care provider to individuals with AD is challenging and complex because of the reduction in cognitions and psychological changes associated with the disease (Hall, Johnson, Watt, Tsipa, & O’Connor, 2016). Staff members providing care to an AD population are susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. Occupational burnout is chronic stress that develops resulting from work-related settings (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014). There are many risk factors that contribute to burnout within the work place (Hall, Johnson, Watt, Tsipa, & O’Connor, 2016; Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014) which attribute to indifferent and pessimistic attitudes in employees, lack of perceived personal accomplishment, decreased work satisfaction, and a decrease in physical and psychological health (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014). Occupational burnout is detrimental to the emotional and physical well-being of employees; being emotionally or physically unwell negatively affects the individual, the
agency, and the clients. When an individual’s overall health is declined, the organization and other employees are also affected by staff shortages and turnover rates. The clients are affected through decreased patient safety and a higher risk for occupational errors (Hall, Johnson, Watt, Tsipa, & O’Connor, 2016).

Compassion fatigue is caused from continuous empathetic strain from working in a psychologically distressing environment resulting in emotional exhaustion (Figley, 1995; as cited in Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). The inability to have compassion and empathize with others is concerning, as it can lead to mistakes being made at the patient’s expense (Francis, 2013; as cited in Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). An individual’s level of mindfulness is correlated with compassion fatigue (Thieleman & Cacciatore, 2014; Thomas & Otis, 2010; Thompson et al., 2014; as cited in Turgoose & Maddox, 2017).

The practice of mindfulness techniques has continuously become more popular in recent years (Good et al., 2015; as cited in Eby, Conley, Williamson, Henderson, & Mancini, 2017). Mindfulness is the ability to be concentrating on current internal and external stimuli (Eby, Conley, Williamson, Henderson, & Mancini, 2017). This practice is effective in preventing and reversing both physical and psychological health conditions (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). Elevating the emotional and physical well-being of staff members will decrease stress, burnout, and turnover rates in employees; while improving job satisfaction, and patient level of care (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). Mindfulness has been proven beneficial in a variety of occupations in diverse participants (Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017); therefore, using mindfulness techniques such as meditation, mindful breathing, yoga, and progressive muscle relaxation can create resilience against occupational burnout and compassion fatigue in caregivers working with the AD population.
Chapter III: Method

Participants (selection procedures)

This workshop is intended to be delivered and used with recreational staff, nursing staff, management staff, students, and volunteers that are employed in the Hildegarde Centre at Providence Manor. Providence Manor is a long-term care facility for individuals that require 24-hour nursing care with stable medical conditions. The Hildegarde Centre is a recreational day program in Providence Manor for individuals with Alzheimer’s. Participants are not excluded from this workshop because of their gender, ethnicity, age, education, experience, or job title. It is likely that all participants will have diverse backgrounds. As this workshop is designed to promote awareness about occupational burnout and compassion fatigue, as well as develop protective strategies against them, everyone in the identified target groups is eligible and encouraged to participate.

Facilitators

This workshop should be delivered by a Hildegarde Centre employee in a management position. This individual should be comfortable and well-versed with the material well-versed with the material and familiar with the facilitator’s manual. This individual should also have good interpersonal and communication skills to engage and encourage their participants. It would be helpful if the facilitator was already in good standing and respected by the participants.

The student delivered a presentation of her research during a Thursday morning staff meeting. The purpose of this presentation was to provide an overview of the following topics: Alzheimer’s, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, self-care, and the benefits of mindfulness. This presentation also provided an opportunity to gather feedback from the staff to aid in the creation of the workshop. All staff members of the Hildegarde Centre were invited to take part in the presentation; however, the staff members were not required to attend; therefore, attendance was on a volunteer basis.

An outline of the workshop, accompanied by a facilitator manual and a participant’s workbook were made available to the Hildegarde Centre. The student did not have enough time to complete the workshop section of the project while on the 14-week placement due to factors outside of her control. These tools are intended for the Hildegarde Centre to educate all current and future staff on the use of mindfulness techniques to prevent occupational burnout and compassion fatigue.

Setting Apparatus

The presentation took place in the Hildegarde Centre at Providence Manor, which is a recreational day program for individuals with Dementia. This presentation was completed to gather feedback from staff about the workshop. It took place 8 o’clock to 9 o’clock on a Thursday morning during the facilities weekly meeting. The presentation was given on the Day Away side of the facility, which is the area used on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays for the clients experiencing the later stages of the disease. The Day Away area consists of approximately 15 chairs arranged in a semi-circle formation facing a flat screen television. This area also consists of 3 large windows that allows for considerable natural light. It is important to note that the clients in the day away program on Thursdays were not in this area until 10 o’clock and were not present for the presentation. This was an ideal setting for the workshop to be provided.
Measures

All written feedback from the staff members was summarized. This feedback focused on the student’s ability to present her research and answer related questions, the quality of the information that was provided, and the perceived usefulness of mindfulness techniques. This was done anonymously in order for staff to feel comfortable providing honest, candid feedback.

Materials

Materials needed for the presentation project include the Google Slides presentation. During the presentation portion of the thesis the student provided the Hildegarde Centre employees with a form of writing utensil (i.e. pen), a clip board for writing, a lined piece of paper for taking notes, a blank piece of paper for a self-care exercise, and a feedback form. The self-care exercise involved the creation and comparison of two pie charts, the first based on how they are currently living their life (i.e. identifying the different aspects in the individual’s life and how much time is dedicated to each aspect), the second pie chart is what the individual would like their life to look like. The Day Away room in the Hildegarde Centre was used to conduct the presentation, this room is complete with approximately 15 chairs. The day Away room is very spacious, quiet, and has plenty of natural light to facilitate a calm and comfortable environment. The student presented the Google Slides presentation on the flat screen television in the room from her personal laptop (Dell Inspiron 13 7000 series 2-in-1), which was connected using an HDMI cord. The slides consisted of information that the student included in her thesis. This information was condensed, and the student then included what she believed was most relevant. This presentation allowed the staff members an opportunity to see what kind of research the student had been doing while working at the agency and provided the staff members an example of what the workshop would entail. This presentation encouraged the staff members to consider their own self-care and highlighted the importance of their personal wellbeing.

Other materials included in this thesis are an outline of the workshop, as well as a facilitator’s manual and participant’s workbook. The outline of the workshop gave the facilitator a detailed breakdown of how to conduct the workshop. The facilitator’s manual includes all of the information and instructions needed, master copies of all worksheets, and outlines of all activities. The participant’s workbook includes all of the materials that the participants will need to participate in the workshop, including blank worksheets and instructions. It is recommended that the participant’s workbook is distributed with a form of writing utensil.

Procedures

Presentation. The topics covered in the presentation are organized as follows: Alzheimer’s, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, mindfulness, mindfulness practice through meditation, mindfulness practice through diaphragmatic breathing, mindfulness through yoga, and mindfulness through progressive muscle relaxation. The presentation was an opportunity for the student to share her research with the staff members of the Hildegarde Centre and answer any questions the staff may have about any of the presented topics. The presentation was also an opportunity for the student to gather written feedback for the creation of the workshop.
Workshop outline. The workshop outline provides specific instructions on the workshop, including a timeline. The workshop outline provides both the facilitator and participants with a framework of how much time can be designated to each topic and/or activity, intended to allow the group to stay on track. The workshop is intended to take place over an 8-week period. Each week one hour is to be designated for a pre-determined topic (following the guidelines set out in the facilitator’s manual). Week one will be designated as an introduction to Alzheimer’s Disease, occupational burnout, and compassion fatigue. During week two the group will move into the topic of self-care and the importance of overall wellness. The topic covered in week three will be an introduction to the use of mindfulness. Following week three, mindfulness techniques will be broken down into more specific sections, week four being meditation, week five diaphragmatic breathing, week six yoga, and week seven progressive muscle relaxation. The workshop will finish on the eighth week with a conclusion session. It is important to note that prior to the session beginning the previous weeks subject matter will be summarized. For all eight sessions time will be set aside for group discussions, activities, and questions.

Facilitator’s manual. The facilitator’s manual is equipped with all of information needed for the workshop. It has informative overviews of the topics that will be covered (Alzheimer’s, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, mindfulness, mindfulness practice through meditation, mindfulness practice through diaphragmatic breathing, mindfulness through yoga, and mindfulness through progressive muscle relaxation), detailed instructions, and samples of the activities and worksheets.

Participants’ workbook. The participants’ workbook is a blank outline of the workshop. It will have brief, reader friendly overviews of topics (Alzheimer’s, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, mindfulness, mindfulness practice through meditation, mindfulness practice through diaphragmatic breathing, mindfulness through yoga, and mindfulness through progressive muscle relaxation), and blank worksheets with easy to follow instructions. This workbook helps the participants to follow along with the workshop. It also provides them with the materials that are needed for the workshop and serves as a great resource for them to refer back to.

Informed Consent

No informed consent procedures needed to be implemented for the 60-minute presentation. This is because the employees attended on a volunteer basis and were only provided with information regarding the workshop. When the workshop is conducted the participants will be required to sign a consent form. This consent form will be provided in the participant workbooks, and there will be a master copy in the facilitator’s manual as well. Prior to the workshop it is essential for all participants to have completed and signed a consent form. It is also important to ensure that the consent form was fully understood by the participant.
Rationale

A presentation, a workshop outline, a facilitator’s manual, and a participant’s workbook collectively represented the chosen format for this project for many reasons. The Hildegarde Centre is a recreational day program for individuals with Alzheimer’s and the clients of the program do not attend regularly. Clients of the program are also being accepted into the program as well as being discharged from the program regularly; therefore, a behavioural intervention program was not feasible. A presentation, a workshop outline, a facilitator’s manual, and a participant’s workbook were also chosen because the staff of the Hildegarde Centre expressed a need for a resource that they can refer to on an as needed basis that will help prevent and treat occupational burnout and compassion fatigue.
Chapter IV: Results

Presentation (Appendix A)

The topics covered in the presentation are organized as follows: Alzheimer’s, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, mindfulness, mindfulness practice through meditation, mindfulness practice through diaphragmatic breathing, mindfulness through yoga, and mindfulness through progressive muscle relaxation. The presentation was an opportunity for the student to share her research with the staff members of the Hildegarde Centre and gather written feedback for the creation of the mindfulness workshop.

Workshop Outline (Appendix B)

The workshop outline provides a timeline for the workshop. The workshop outline provides both the facilitator and participants with a framework of how the workshop should be executed (i.e. how much time can be designated to each topic and/or activity). This is intended to allow the group to stay on track. The workshop is to take place over an 8-week period. Each week one hour is to be designated to the following topics. Week one will be designated as an introduction to Alzheimer’s Disease, occupational burnout, and compassion fatigue. During week two the group will move into the topic of self-care and the importance of overall wellness. The topic covered in week three will be an introduction to the use of mindfulness. Following week three, mindfulness techniques will be broken down into more specific sections, week four being meditation, week five diaphragmatic breathing, week six yoga, and week seven progressive muscle relaxation. The workshop will finish on the eighth week with a conclusion session. For all eight sessions time will be designated for group discussions, activities, and questions.

Facilitator’s Manual (Appendix C)

The facilitator’s manual is equipped with all of information needed for the workshop. It has informative overviews of the topics that will be covered (Alzheimer’s, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, mindfulness, mindfulness practice through meditation, mindfulness practice through diaphragmatic breathing, mindfulness through yoga, and mindfulness through progressive muscle relaxation), instructions, and master copies of the activities and worksheets.

Participants’ Workbook (Appendix D)

The participants’ workbook is an outline of the workshop with all worksheets and activities needed to participate. It will have brief, reader friendly overviews of topics (Alzheimer’s, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, mindfulness, mindfulness practice through meditation, mindfulness practice through diaphragmatic breathing, mindfulness through yoga, and mindfulness through progressive muscle relaxation). This workbook helps the participants to follow along with the workshop, provides them with the materials that are needed for the workshop, and serves as a great resource for them to refer back to.
Staff Feedback

The staff of the Hildegarde Centre at Providence Manor provided the student with written feedback following the 60-minute presentation. Staff members were not required to provide the student with written feedback but the feedback that was collected was given anonymously. The collected data is as follows:

"I definitely see myself using these techniques at work – I cannot wait to try some of these things with my clients as well! – Great job"

"Amazing job Ainslie, I really enjoyed your presentation!"

"Thank you, very useful information, great job!"

"Amazing, very informative! Will be using these in my daily life"

"Very informative presentation. Clear to follow and understand. Very interactive"

"Great presentation"

"Was a great presentation!"

"Awesome, your thesis topic rocks"

"Very informative. Well done. Very prepared, organized, and knowledgeable"

"Very good presentation, great having an opportunity to discuss stress"
Chapter V: Discussion

Results
A 60-minute presentation was delivered by the student to garner written feedback from the Hildegarde Centre employees to assist in the creation of the workshop. A workshop outline, accompanied by a facilitator’s manual and a participant’s workbook were then developed.

Purpose of the Project
The purpose of this project was to provide the Hildegarde Centre with a resource to educate staff on the importance of self-care and provide them with mindfulness strategies to prevent occupational burnout and compassion fatigue.

Importance of the Project
Employees who provide care to a geriatric population, in particular with clients diagnosed with Alzheimer’s, are vulnerable to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. These jobs can be physically demanding and emotionally taxing because of the reduction in cognitions and physical and psychological changes associated with clients diagnosed with AD. As the disease progresses, these difficult behaviours become more severe, resulting in increased demands and stress for the individual providing care. When an individual becomes overwhelmed, they experience stress in their cognitions, behaviours, and emotions.

Limitations
A major limitation of this project was that the workshop was not implemented; therefore, no data was collected on the effectiveness of the workshop. Another limitation of this project is that, although the workshop provides staff with psychoeducation and mindfulness techniques, there is no guarantee that the employees will use this information and practice these techniques. Finally, the topic of mindfulness is still in its infancy and more research needs to be completed to determine its effectiveness.

Multilevel Challenge Perspective
Overview of challenge. Employees working with an Alzheimer’s population are susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. The identified solution is teaching mindfulness techniques to the employees to prevent the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. Having employees understand and accept that incorporating these mindfulness techniques into their lives includes behaviour change. Behaviour change requires a lot of time and effort and this may be difficult. Although employees attend the workshop and have the participants’ workbook for future reference, they may not take the steps required to incorporate mindfulness techniques in their lives. If employees choose to not make the changes required this could cause difficulties across levels including the client level, program level, organizational level, and societal level.

Client level. The clients in this multilevel challenge perspective are the employees at the Hildegarde Centre. Getting the employees to use the mindfulness strategies taught in the workshop is uncontrollable. Although psychoeducation can be provided to the employees, there is no guarantee that the employees will make the changes needed. The employees will continue to be susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue which will ultimately negatively impact their overall health, emotional wellbeing, and interpersonal relationships.
Program level. If employees do not focus on their self-care they will be susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. The participants in the Hildegarde Centre recreational program will be affected. If the employees are not of good overall health, and emotional wellbeing there will be a decrease in the level of care provided to the participants, as well as, the resources and programming that will be available. With a decrease in care the overall wellness and health of the participants will also be negatively affected.

Organization level. If the employees do not incorporate the mindfulness techniques, they will be more susceptible to the negative effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. Occupational burnout and compassion fatigue will ultimately result in higher turnover rates, lack of work satisfaction, and increased absences from the workplace. This will affect other employees of the organization who will have to take on more tasks and responsibilities. This will also be financially prohibitive on the agency.

Societal level. The overall well-being of individuals, both staff and participants, will be negatively affected. It can be hypothesised that these effects will have an impact on their interpersonal relationships with family and friends.

Recommendations

A recommendation for the future includes implementing the workshop with the Hildegarde Centre employees. Another recommendation for research is the collection and analysis of pre- and post-workshop data on the effectiveness of the mindfulness techniques, as well as pre- and post-workshop data on the level of knowledge employees have of the main topics of this project (occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, mindfulness), as well as data collected 6-months post-workshop.

The use of mindfulness techniques used to prevent occupational burnout and compassion fatigue is important to the field of behavioural psychology because of the harmful effects associated. Occupational burnout and compassion fatigue can affect multiple populations across multiple settings. Research into mindfulness is still in its infancy but thus far seems like an effective treatment option.
References


Appendix A: Presentation

Mindfulness techniques used as a preventative measure against occupational burnout & compassion fatigue in employees working with an Alzheimer’s population

Ainslie Plouffe

What is Alzheimer's disease

Alzheimer's Disease (AD) is a form of dementia, first identified in 1906. It is a progressive disorder of the brain that alters a person's behaviours, cognitions, and emotions.
The Statistics

- AD currently affects 564,000 Canadians.
- Of the 45% of Canadians that have a diagnosis of dementia, 85% of these individuals depend on the help of a caregiver.
- The rate of AD is expected to rise by 66% in the next 15 years.

Why is this important

- Providing care to individuals with Alzheimer's is demanding due to the reduction in cognitions and psychological changes associated with Dementia.
- As the disease progresses the challenging behaviours become more severe, ultimately increasing the complexity and stress that is consuming the caregiver.
CONTINUED...

- Staff providing care to a geriatric population, especially AD, are susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue.
**Occupational Burnout**

- Burnout is a term used to describe chronic stress in an occupational setting.

**Risk factors - Occupational Burnout**

- There are many risk factors that contribute to burnout within the workplace including:
  - Staff shortages
  - Difficult work environment
  - Extensive work-related demands
  - Poor social relationships
  - Lack of support from coworkers or management
  - Insufficient resources
Side effects - occupational burnout

- Burnout can lead to:
  - Indifferent and pessimistic attitudes
  - Lack of perceived personal accomplishment
  - Decrease in work satisfaction
  - Decrease in physical and psychological health
  - Overall, detrimental to emotional and physical well-being

Compassion fatigue

Compassion Fatigue is an inability to empathize with others, it is a result of continuous empathetic strain from working in a psychologically distressing environment resulting in emotional exhaustion.
**Risk factors - Compassion fatigue**

- Risk factors in the development of compassion fatigue include:
  - Poor coping methods
  - High levels of empathy
  - Lack of mindfulness
  - Perception of fairness in the workplace
  - Lack of perceived social support
  - Perceived support from employers and co-workers

**Side effects - Compassion fatigue**

- Side effects of compassion fatigue include:
  - Feelings of hopelessness
  - Decreased ability to cope at work
  - Negative perception of one's work
MINDFULNESS

- Mindfulness refers to the ability to be attentive to internal and external stimuli in the present moment, there is a limited amount of interference while implementing the mindfulness.

MINDFULNESS

- The implementation of mindfulness techniques is effective in reversing and preventing many health conditions, both psychological and physical.
- Mindfulness practices can also aid in self-regulation, effective coping methods, relaxation, and the ability to react to mentally and physically straining situations.
MINDFULNESS

- Common mindfulness techniques practiced include meditation, diaphragmatic breathing, yoga, and progressive muscle relaxation.
MEDITATION

- Meditation is beneficial in promoting positive physical and emotional outcomes in a variety of populations.

DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

- The idea stems from an instinctive human trait of taking a deep breath to feel better.
- Although it is known that breathing deeply is beneficial, this self-healing concept is forgotten when an individual is experiencing anxiety or stress. The individual is more likely to breathe quick and shallow breaths.
YOGA

- Yoga is a practice that is directed towards a mind, body, and spiritual connection.
- Yoga has been correlated with decreasing heart rate (HR), blood pressure (BP), and cortisol levels, ultimately playing a role in regulating the sympathetic nervous system.
YOGA

- Practicing yoga will also increase an individual’s ability to use controlled breathing, and enhance meditative techniques.
- The mind and body connection are so interconnected you cannot ethically consider one without the other. Yoga can result in regulating both mental and bodily processes, ultimately promoting overall well-being.

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

- The use of PMR has been proven effective in regulating physiological processes, managing anxiety, and decreasing stress levels.
- The PMR process consists of the tensing and relaxing of various muscle groups in a systematic order; both breath and mindfulness are important factors in PMR.
PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

IN SUMMARY

To conclude, mindfulness is a useful technique in improving the physical and emotional health of employees who are at risk of being affected by occupational burnout or compassion fatigue.
Appendix B: Workshop Outline

This workshop consists of 8 sessions; each session is approximately one hour in length. The weekly topics are as follows: week one Alzheimer’s Disease, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue; week two self-care, importance of overall wellness; week three mindfulness; week four meditation; week five diaphragmatic breathing; week six yoga; week seven progressive muscle relaxation; week eight conclusion. On the following pages you will find a detailed breakdown of each of the weeks. It is important to note that this outline is intended to provide you with an idea of what the workshop should look like. As the facilitator you can decide what you would like to include for your participants.

Week One: Alzheimer’s disease, Occupational Burnout, Compassion Fatigue
8:00: Welcome everyone to the workshop (allow for introductions; a great way to do this is by having state their name and give their job title). Run an icebreaker with the group.
8:15: Cover the topic Alzheimer’s disease.
8:30: Cover the topic of occupational burnout.
8:45: Cover the topic of compassion fatigue.
9:00: Finish the session with a group discussion and have time set aside for questions.

Week Two: Self-Care, Importance of Overall Wellness
8:00: Welcome everyone back to the group. Ask how the week went and recap the topics from the last session.
8:15: Cover the topic of self-care and the importance of wellness.
8:30: Provide time for participants to work through the activities provided. Ensure to explain worksheets prior to participants beginning. Following the activity provide time for reflection and short discussion. Important to note that not all worksheets provided in this section need to be completed today, you can decide which ones will benefit your participants the most.
8:45: Continue as above.
9:00: Thank the participants for coming to the session and invite them to come back the following week.

Week Three: Mindfulness
8:00: Welcome everyone back to the group. Ask how the week went and recap the topics from the last session.
8:15: Cover the topic mindfulness.
8:30: Ask participants to participate in the mindfulness activity “making coffee.”
8:45: Reflect on and discuss the activity and mindfulness in everyday life.
9:00: Thank the participants for coming to the session and invite them to come back the following week.

Week Four: Meditation
8:00: Welcome everyone back to the group. Ask how the week went and recap the topics from the last session.
8:15: Cover the topic meditation.
8:30: Have the group participate in meditation. Keep in mind that many people find this challenging.
8:45: Provide time for discussion.
9:00: Thank the participants for coming to the session and invite them to come back the following week.

Week Five: Diaphragmatic Breathing
8:00: Welcome everyone back to the group. Ask how the week went and recap the topics from the last session.
8:15: Cover the topic diaphragmatic breathing.
8:30: Do diaphragmatic breathing exercise.
8:45: Provide time for discussion.
9:00: Thank the participants for coming to the session and invite them to come back the following week.

Week Six: Yoga
8:00: Welcome everyone back to the group. Ask how the week went and recap the topics from the last session.
8:15: Cover the topic yoga; invite yoga instructor as guest speaker.
8:30: Have the participants practice yoga under the guidance of the yoga instructor.
8:45: Provide time for discussion.
9:00: Thank the participants for coming to the session and invite them to come back the following week.

Week Seven: Progressive Muscle Relaxation
8:00: Welcome everyone back to the group. Ask how the week went and recap the topics from the last session.
8:15: Cover the topic progressive muscle relaxation.
8:30: Lead your participants through a progressive muscle relaxation sequence.
8:45: Provide time for discussion.
9:00: Thank the participants for coming to the session and invite them to come back the following week.

Week Eight: Conclusion
8:00: Welcome everyone back to the group. Ask how the week went and recap the topics from the last session.
8:15: Provide the participants with a brief summary of what has been covered in the previous 7 weeks.
8:30: Have the participants reflect on any progress they have made since the beginning of the workshop and invite them to share. Time for discussion.
8:45: Collect anonymous feedback from the participants on the strengths of the workshop and future recommendations for improvement.
9:00: Thank the participants for participating in the workshop.

Appendix C: Facilitator Manual
The Use of Mindfulness Techniques to Prevent Occupational Burnout and Compassion Fatigue in Individuals Working with an Alzheimer’s Population

A Facilitator Manual
Created by Ainslie Plouffe
The Use of Mindfulness Techniques to Prevent Occupational Burnout and Compassion Fatigue in Individuals Working with an Alzheimer’s Population

This manual is intended to aid in the facilitation of the mindfulness workshop. It is equipped with all of the information needed for the workshop and has informative overviews of the topics that will be covered (Alzheimer's, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, mindfulness, mindfulness practice through meditation, mindfulness practice through diaphragmatic breathing, mindfulness through yoga, and mindfulness through progressive muscle relaxation), detailed instructions, and samples of the activities and worksheets.

The facilitator should be a Hildegarde Centre employee in a management position; this individual should be comfortable with the material and familiar with this manual. This individual should also have good interpersonal and communication skills to engage and encourage their participants. It would be helpful if the facilitator was already in good standing and respected by the participants.

The workshop is intended to take place over an 8-week period. Each week, one hour is to be designated for a pre-determined topic (following the guidelines set out in the facilitator’s manual). Week one will be designated as an introduction to Alzheimer's disease, occupational burnout, and compassion fatigue. Week two the group will move into the topic of self-care and the importance of overall wellness. The topic covered in week three will be an introduction to the use of mindfulness. Following week three, mindfulness techniques will be broken down into more specific sections: week four being meditation; week five, diaphragmatic breathing; week six yoga; and week seven progressive muscle relaxation. The workshop will finish on the eighth week with a conclusion session. It is important to note that prior to each session beginning, the previous week’s subject matter will be summarized. For all eight sessions, time will be set aside for group discussions, activities, and questions.
Workshop Week One: Alzheimer’s Disease, Occupational Burnout, Compassion Fatigue

Alzheimer’s Disease

Alzheimer’s Disease (AD) was first identified in 1906; this neurodegenerative disorder alters a person’s behaviours, cognitions, and emotions and is becoming more prevalent, currently affecting 564,000 Canadians. The rate of those diagnosed with AD is steadily on the rise. In the next 15 years, the number of individuals living with AD is anticipated to increase by over 66%. In Canada, it is estimated that approximately 118,000 of elderly individuals in long-term care facilities have a dementia diagnosis (Statistics Canada, 2017). Statistics Canada (2017) also noted that of the 45% of Canadians that have a diagnosis of dementia, 85% of these individuals depend on the help of a caregiver. Providing care to individuals with Alzheimer’s is demanding and emotionally straining because of the reduction in cognitions and psychological changes associated with dementia. As the disease progresses, the challenging behaviours become more severe, resulting in increased demands and stress for the caregiver. When an individual becomes overwhelmed they express stress in their cognitions, behaviours, and emotions. Staff members providing care to a geriatric population, especially an AD population, are susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue.

Occupational Burnout

Burnout is a term used to describe chronic stress in an occupational setting. Environmental and work-related stressors are the distinctive indications of burnout rather than psychological and emotional processes. There are many risk factors that contribute to burnout within the workplace including staff shortages, difficult work environment, lack of benefits, low pay, extensive work-related demands, poor social relationships, insufficient resources, lack of support from co-workers or management, and physical stress. Common effects of burnout include indifferent and pessimistic attitudes, lack of perceived personal accomplishment, decrease in work satisfaction, and decrease in physical and psychological health. Occupational burnout is detrimental to staff emotional and physical well-being. Everyone is susceptible to occupational burnout; being emotionally or physically unwell does not only affect the individual but also the other employees and the clients. The agency is negatively affected due to employees lack of productivity, inefficiencies resulting from time spent covering shifts or positions, additional time dedicated to correcting staff mistakes, ultimately increasing the costs of operation (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). The agency is negatively affected because employees are not being as productive as possible, inefficiencies resulting from having to spend increased time having shifts or positions covered, dedicating time to correcting mistakes made by staff, ultimately increasing the costs of operation. Both burnout and poor psychological and physical well-being are positively correlated with decreased patient safety and a higher risk of making occupational errors, primarily medical errors. It is, therefore, crucial to consider the emotional and physical well-being of employees when assessing perceived quality of life of the
clients. Stress management training combined with relaxation exercises and training measures help to reduce burnout. It is important to incorporate mindfulness techniques while dealing with stressful situations.

**Compassion Fatigue**

Burnout and compassion fatigue have a positive correlation, this means that they commonly co-exist, and can be a causation factor of the other. The distinctive difference is that compassion fatigue is more strongly correlated with psychological factors. Compassion fatigue is common in helping professionals, as helping professionals have the potential to be negatively affected by their clients. Compassion fatigue is caused from continuous empathic strain from working in a psychologically distressing environment; this results in emotional exhaustion. Compassion fatigue is the inability to empathize with others and associated side effects including feelings of hopelessness, decreased ability to cope at work, and negative perception of one’s work. The inability to have compassion and empathize with others is concerning, as it can lead to mistakes being made at the patient’s expense. Risk factors in the development of compassion fatigue include poor coping methods, high levels of empathy, lack of mindfulness, perception of fairness in the workplace, perceived social support, and perceived support from employers and co-workers. Maladaptive coping skills are correlated with increased likelihood of compassion fatigue. Emotional self-awareness is an individual’s ability to recognize how they are feeling and how it is affecting them. Emotional self-awareness has been identified by Turgoose and Maddox as a protective factor against compassion fatigue. As empathy increases, the occurrence of compassion fatigue becomes more likely. Elevated levels of mindfulness are correlated with lower levels of compassion fatigue. Turgoose and Maddox (2017) also reported that demographic factors can play a role in the development of compassion fatigue (i.e. age, sex). Compassion satisfaction is a term used to explain the positive feelings helping professionals feel towards their colleagues and from the ability to help their clients. Compassion satisfaction is important in reducing levels of compassion fatigue in the workplace. Protective factors against compassion fatigue include cognitive and behavioural coping methods such as mindfulness.
Week Two: Self-Care, Importance of Overall Wellness

Important topics to discuss during this session include diet, sleep, exercise, social support, and making time for personal interests.
Checklist for Better Sleep

Good sleep is influenced by many factors. Record how many of these things you have done in the last week and consider making changes to your routine.

Things that are known to make sleep worse

- Napping during the day
- Watching television in bed
- Using a device with a bright screen in the hour before bedtime (e.g. a smartphone, a laptop)
- Consuming drinks containing caffeine (includes tea, coffee, cola, energy drinks, hot chocolate)
  - How many each day?
  - What time of the day was your last caffeinated drink? (try to avoid caffeine after 6pm)
- Drinking alcohol [alcohol typically leads to interrupted sleep]
- Eating a heavy meal less than 3 hours before bedtime
- Staying in bed even if you can’t fall asleep (it’s better to get up and do something relaxing, then try again later)

Things that are known to improve sleep

- Regular exercise
  - How many times a week? (it is recommended to do at least 3 x 30 minutes per week)
  - What time of the day? (it is best not to exercise in the 3-4 hours before bedtime)
- Setting aside some ‘worry time’ each day to write down any issues that are bothering or concerning you, then deciding to leave those worries behind until tomorrow (make sure to do this at least one hour before bedtime)
- Relaxation exercises (e.g. relaxed breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation)
- Having a relaxing bedtime routine (e.g. taking a bath or a shower, reading a comforting book)
- Setting the conditions for sleep
  - Make sure the bedroom is completely dark (blackout curtains are cheap and effective)
  - Make sure the mattress and pillows are comfortable (make bed an attractive place to be!)
  - Make sure the bedroom is the right temperature (think like Goldilocks: not too hot, not too cold)
Guidelines For Better Sleep

Sleeping well is a habit that you can learn. Small changes can have big effects. Start today by following these rules:

**Take care of your body**
- Do not drink caffeine: no tea, coffee, or coca-cola after 4 o'clock
- Do not eat a big or spicy meal late in the evening
- Do not go to bed hungry
- Avoid alcohol as it interferes with sleep

**Physical exercise,** such as a brisk walk, in the late afternoon can help to make your body tired and help you to sleep. Try to do some exercise every day.

**Sleep only at night-time** and do not have day-time naps, no matter how tired you feel. Naps keep the problem going by making it harder for you to get to sleep the next night.

**Having a regular bedtime routine** teaches your body when it's time to go to sleep.
- Have a soothing drink like camomile tea or a milky drink
- Have a bath, or a routine of washing your face and brushing your teeth
- Go to bed at the same time each night
- When in bed think of nice things (e.g. think of 5 nice things that happened that day — they might be big or small, such as a nice conversation, seeing the sunshine, or hearing nice music on the radio)
- Do a relaxed breathing exercise (one hand on stomach the other on your chest, deliberately slow your breathing, breathe deeply in your stomach instead of high in your chest) • Try and wake up the same time every day, even if this is tiring to begin with

**Coping with bad dreams can be difficult.** Some people don’t like relaxation before going to sleep, or are scared of letting go. If that is you, try these preparation techniques instead:
- Prepare yourself in case you have bad dreams by thinking of a bad dream then think of a different ending for it. Practice this new ending many times before going to sleep.
- Before going to sleep prepare to re-orient yourself when you wake from a bad dream.
- Remind yourself that you are at home, that you are safe. Imagine your street, buses, local shops.
- Put a damp towel or a bowl of water by the bed to splash your face, place a special object by the bed, such as a photograph, or a small soft toy.
- Practice imagining yourself waking up from a bad dream and reorienting yourself to the present, to safety, by splashing your face, touching special object, having a bottle of rose or lavender essential oil to sniff, going to window to see surroundings.
- When you wake up from a bad dream - move your body. If you can and reorient yourself immediately (touching an object, wetting face, going to the window, talk to yourself in a reassuring way)

**Make your bedroom a pleasant place to be**
- Get a nightlight
- Keep it clean and tidy
- Introduce pleasant smells such as a drop of lavender oil onto the pillow
- Get extra pillows
- Make sure that your home is safe e.g. doors locked, windows closed.

**REMEMBER:** Bed is for sleeping, so if you cannot sleep after 30 minutes, get up and do another activity elsewhere such as reading or listening to music (try and avoid TV as it can wake you up). After 15 minutes return to bed and try to sleep again. If you still can’t sleep after 30 minutes get up again. Repeat this routine as many times as necessary and only use your bed for sleeping in.
### Sleep Diary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complete in the MORNING</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I went to bed last night at (time)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I got up this morning at (time)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I slept for a total of (hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I woke up during the night (# times)</td>
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<td><strong>Complete in the EVENING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of caffeinated drinks today</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Time of last caffeinated drink</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise completed today (minutes)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I did in the hour before I fell asleep</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood today? (0=awful, 10=great)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Mental Health Benefits of Exercise

Research has shown us that people who exercise regularly tend to be more resistant to many mental illnesses. Exercise can help treat current symptoms, and prevent future episodes. **What problems can exercise help with?**

**Mental Illness**
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Substance Abuse
- Bulimia
- Alzheimer’s Disease

**Other**
- Sleep Difficulties
- Stress
- Physical Health
- Low Energy
- Self-Esteem

Beginning an exercise plan doesn’t have to be difficult. Walking for as little as 30 minutes, 3 times a week, has been found to be beneficial. Don’t worry too much about what exercise you choose. Aerobic and anaerobic exercises are both effective at improving mental health.

**Anaerobic Exercises**
- Weightlifting
- Sprinting (running, biking, etc.)
- Interval training
- Climbing

**Aerobic Exercises**
- Walking, jogging, or biking
- Elliptical or ski machines
- Swimming
- Dancing

If you’re cramped for time, you might still be able to squeeze some exercise into your day. Two 15 minute walks work just as well as one 30 minute walk! Here are some tips to help:

- **Need to make a phone call?** Walk and talk.
- **Get an exercise partner to hold you accountable.**
- **Park at the back of the parking lot and walk.**
- **Do an activity you enjoy, and it won’t be a chore.**
- **Skip the elevator and take the stairs.**
- **Head outside for 10 minutes during lunch.**
The Mental Health Benefits of Exercise

What days of the week can you find time to exercise?
Choose a minimum of three days per week to exercise. You should exercise for at least 30 minutes, but the time can be split up throughout the day.

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</table>

List three types of exercise you would like to try.
The best exercises are activities that you’ll genuinely enjoy, without having too many obstacles to get started.

1.

2.

3.

What strategies can you use to make sure you remember to exercise?
It’s easy to put off exercise, prioritize other things, or simply forget about your plan. Circle the ideas that might help you stick to your plan.

- Plan to exercise with a friend so you can both hold one another responsible.
- Set an alarm to remind you when to exercise. If you’re using your phone alarm, set it to automatically repeat every day at the same time!
- Get into a routine by exercising at the same time every day. Try attaching exercise to a particular part of your day, such as walking every evening right after dinner.
- Reward yourself for a job well done. Treat yourself to something you enjoy when you exercise. However, you have to be honest! No exercise, no reward.
Protective Factors

Protective factors are things that contribute to mental health, and allow a person to be resilient in the face of challenges. Someone with a lot of protective factors—such as strong relationships and healthy coping skills—will be better equipped to overcome life’s obstacles.

Many protective factors are out of your control. For example, genetics, the neighborhood where you grew up, and family cannot be changed. However, plenty of factors can be controlled. You choose the people in your life, how to cope with problems, and how you’ll spend each day.

By focusing on what you can control, and building upon those protective factors, you will improve your ability to cope with many of life’s challenges.

My Protective Factors

Instructions: Review each of the following protective factors, and mark the scales to indicate how well you are performing in each area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Support</th>
<th>Coping Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• ability to talk about problems</td>
<td>• ability to manage uncomfortable emotions in a healthy way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• people to ask for practical help (e.g. a ride if car breaks down)</td>
<td>• awareness of one’s own emotions, and recognition of how they influence behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• feelings of love, intimacy, or friendship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak      Moderate      Strong</td>
<td>Weak      Moderate      Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Health</th>
<th>Sense of Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• adequate exercise or physical activity</td>
<td>• meaningful involvement in work, education, or other roles (e.g. parenting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a balanced and healthy diet</td>
<td>• understanding of personal values, and living in accordance with those values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• medical compliance (e.g. taking medications as prescribed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak      Moderate      Strong</td>
<td>Weak      Moderate      Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Esteem</th>
<th>Healthy Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• belief that one’s self has value</td>
<td>• does not ruminate on mistakes, personal flaws, or problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• acceptance of personal flaws, weaknesses, or mistakes</td>
<td>• ability to recognize personal strengths and weaknesses rationally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• belief in ability to overcome challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak      Moderate      Strong</td>
<td>Weak      Moderate      Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Protective Factors

**Instructions:** Refer to the protective factors on the previous page to answer the following questions.

Which protective factor has been the most valuable to you during difficult times?

Specifically, how have you used this protective factor to your advantage in the past?

What are two protective factors that you would like to improve?

1  
2  

Describe how things might be different if you were able to improve these protective factors.

1  
2  

List *specific steps or actions* that might help to make these goals a reality.

1  
2  

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Workshop Week Three: Mindfulness

The practice of using mindfulness techniques has becoming more popular in recent years. Mindfulness has stemmed from the Buddhist meditation teachings of the Buddha. Buddhism is not a religion, a philosophy, or a belief; it is a way of life, a practice adapted by individuals that involves training the mind to be mindful. Kabat-Zinn (2003) identified Buddhism as the connection between the mind and the body that has a significant impact on in the psychological fields, including, clinical psychology, behavioural medicine. Research into the use of mindfulness continues to be of interest because of its regarded benefits. Although this research is still new, it seems promising as mindfulness can be used among a variety of helping professionals. Mindfulness refers to the ability to be attentive to internal and external stimuli in the present moment. Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) elaborated on the present awareness and attention by adding that there is a limited amount of interference while practicing mindfulness techniques. The use of mindfulness techniques is effective in reversing and preventing many health conditions, both mental and physical. The implementation of mindfulness practices can aid in self-regulation, effective coping methods, and relaxation. Jamieson and Tuckey identify that in contemporary workplace environments the conditions are typically high stress and intensive, increasing the importance of having readily available techniques in place to benefit the employees to lessen the negative impacts of stress. Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) is a program created in the 1970s by Kabat-Zinn that incorporated meditation, yoga, and body awareness. The emotional and physical well-being of staff members is important and important, and using mindfulness techniques is helpful in achieving this. Improving the well-being of staff creates an environment where the employers benefit due to increased productivity rates. The result of Mindfulness training is the ability to react to mentally and physically straining situations. It is important for participants learning mindfulness to practice mindfulness techniques in order to benefit fully from the skills they have learned. A review of the literature studied 32 articles showed that elevated levels of mindfulness are correlated with lower levels of compassion fatigue. Mindfulness is a protective factor against compassion fatigue because of the resilience that is built against it. Common mindfulness techniques practiced include diaphragmatic breathing, yoga, and meditation. It is important to consider both the needs and goals of the staff members and the organization, before implementing a mindfulness technique intervention Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) found that if the intervention was not properly designed or properly executed, the mindfulness training is at risk for not being effective and there is even a possibility that it could even be detrimental to the well-being of the participants. If the participants in the mindfulness intervention are not following the instructions and not meeting expectation with the exercise, the intervention will not be successful. A systematic review by Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) examined 40 articles, this study shows that mindfulness has been proven
beneficial in a variety of occupations with diverse participants. Many studies show that mindfulness interventions are effective in improving the well-being of individuals in an occupational environment; however, a limited amount of research has been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of mindfulness in healthy individuals that are physically and emotionally well. Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) identify that the use of mindfulness is thought to improve the attentional stability, control, and proficiency, which in turn impact many secondary functions. These secondary functions can be categorized into four domains consisting of physiology, emotion, cognition, and behaviour. Overall, mindfulness is a useful technique in improving the physical and emotional health of employees who are or are at risk of being affected by occupational burnout or compassion fatigue.
What Is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the short term for mindfulness meditation practice. This is a form of self-awareness training adapted from Buddhist mindfulness meditation. Mindfulness is about being aware of what is happening in the present, moment-by-moment, without making judgements about what we notice. Mindfulness meditation practice is a key ingredient in a variety of evidence-based psychotherapies, including dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) and acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT).

Why should I practice mindfulness?

Our minds can be focused on things in the past, present or future. We often find ourselves ruminating about things that have already happened, or worrying about things that could happen. This can often be distressing.

Mindfulness is a practice which encourages us to attend to the present moment. There is good evidence that mindfulness practice can help people cope with a wide variety of feeling-states such as depression and anxiety, but also physical health conditions including pain and chronic illness.

Why do I need to practice? Can’t I pay attention to the present moment already? We can all pay attention to the present moment, at least for a short while. If you haven’t tried meditation before, though, you might notice that your attention wanders and is not easily controlled. Mindfulness strengthens our ability to pay attention in the present moment, but also increases our awareness of how our minds fluctuate, often in unhelpful ways. People who practice mindfulness regularly find that it helps their ability to stay in the present moment without being deflected.

What does it mean to ‘cultivate a non-judgemental attitude’?

Shakespeare said “there is nothing is either good or bad, but thinking makes it so”, and this is a core idea in therapies like cognitive behavioral therapy. Making judgements about our own experiences can often lead to us becoming quite distressed. For example, thoughts like “this is horrible” and “I can’t take any more” are both judgements associated with distress. Practising mindfulness teaches us to accept more of our experience without judging it. This has been shown to help people live more fulfilling lives.

Some helpful quotes about mindfulness

“If you let cloudy water settle, it will become clear. If you let your upset mind settle, your course will also become clear”
- Jack Kornfield, Buddha’s Little Instruction Book (1994)

“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally”

“The non-judgemental observation of the ongoing stream of internal and external stimuli as they arise”

“Keeping one’s consciousness alive to the present reality”
- Thich Nhat Hanh, The Miracle of Mindfulness (1975)

“Mindfulness is simply the knack of noticing without comment whatever is happening in your present experience”
- Guy Claxton, The Heart of Buddhism (1996)
**Mindfulness Activity**

Instructions: Ask your participants to go through the process of making a cup of coffee in their head (if they do not regularly make coffee they can do another activity such as brushing their teeth or getting dressed for the day). Ask them to close their eyes and complete the task. When they are done ask how it went and provide time for discussion. After you have talked about the first try asking them to complete this task again while being mindful. Remind them not to think about anything but what is in the present while they are completing the task, encourage them to think about what they see, smell, task, hear, and feel. When they are done, ask how it went, have them compare the first and second time they did the activity, and provide time for discussion.
Workshop Week Four: Meditation

Meditation is beneficial in promoting positive physical and emotional outcomes in a variety of populations. Rausch, Gramling, and Auerbach (2006) state that the implementation of meditation techniques has been shown to influence stress levels. It is important to acknowledge the fact that many people do find it difficult to meditate as it is essentially shutting out all of those thoughts (i.e. what am I going to make for dinner, I need to remember to add milk to the grocery list, etc.).
Mindfulness Meditation

The goal of mindfulness meditation is simple: to pay attention to the present moment, without judgement. However, as you practice, you’ll find that this is easier said than done.

During mindfulness meditation, you will focus on your breathing as a tool to ground yourself in the present moment. It’s normal that your mind will wander. You’ll simply bring yourself back into the moment by refocusing on your breathing, again and again.

Follow the instructions below to begin practicing mindfulness meditation.

**Time & Place**

Aim to practice daily for 15-30 minutes. More frequent, consistent, and longer-term practice leads to the best results. However, some practice is better than no practice. Find a time and place where you are unlikely to be interrupted. Silence your phone and other devices and set a timer for your desired practice length.

**Posture**

- Sit in chair, or on the floor with a cushion for support.
- Straighten your back, but not to the point of stiffness.
- Let your chin drop slightly, and gaze downward at a point in front of you.
- If in a chair, place the soles of your feet on the ground. If on the floor, cross your legs.
- Let your arms fall naturally to your sides, with your palms resting on your thighs.
- If your pose becomes too uncomfortable, feel free to take a break or adjust.

**Awareness of Breathing**

Because the sensations of breathing are always present, they are useful as a tool to help you focus on the present moment. Whenever you become distracted during meditation, turn your focus back to breathing.

Notice the sensation of air as it passes through your nose or mouth, the rise and fall of your belly, and the feeling of air being exhaled, back into the world. Notice the sounds that accompany each inhalation and exhalation.

**Wandering Mind**

It’s normal that your thoughts will wander during mindfulness meditation. At times, it might feel like a constant battle to maintain focus on your breathing. Don’t worry—that’s normal. Instead of struggling against your thoughts, simply notice them, without judgment. Acknowledge that your mind has wandered and return your attention to breathing. Expect to repeat this process again and again.
Workshop Week Five: Diaphragmatic Breathing

Mindful breathing is a technique that is commonly cited as effective in the MBSR. The idea stems from an instinctive human trait of taking a deep breath to feel better. Although it is known that breathing deeply is beneficial, this is often forgotten when an individual is experiencing anxiety or stress. Zhu, Feng, and Osika (2017) explain that when the body is experiencing an anxiety or stress response an individual is likely to breath quick and shallow breaths that will continue to enhance the negative response. Instead of allowing this unconscious reaction to occur, it is important to be mindful of breath and focus on deep, abdominal breathing. This conscious breathing style will have a calming effect on the body, both preventing and reducing the negative results of increased sympathetic nervous system reaction and promoting engagement of the parasympathetic nervous system instead.
Relaxed Breathing

When we are anxious or threatened our breathing speeds up in order to get our body ready for danger. Relaxed breathing (sometimes called abdominal or diaphragmatic breathing) signals the body that it is safe to relax. Relaxed breathing is slower and deeper than normal breathing, and it happens lower in the body (the belly rather than the chest).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-breath</th>
<th>Pause</th>
<th>Out-breath</th>
<th>Pause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 | 1 ... | ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 | 1 ...

How to do relaxed breathing

- To practice make sure you are sitting or lying comfortably
- Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so
- Try to breathe through your nose rather than your mouth
- Deliberately slow your breathing down. Breathe in to a count of 4, pause for a moment, then breathe out to a count of four
- Make sure that your breaths are smooth, steady, and continuous - not jerky
- Pay particular attention to your out-breath - make sure it is smooth and steady

Am I doing it right? What should I be paying attention to?

- Relaxed breathing should be low down in the abdomen (belly), and not high in the chest. You can check this by putting one hand on your stomach and one on your chest. Try to keep the top hand still, your breathing should only move the bottom hand
- Focus your attention on your breath - some people find it helpful to count in their head to begin with (“In ... two ... three ... four ... pause ... Out ... two ... three ... four ... pause ...”)

How long and how often?

- Try breathing in a relaxed way for at least a few minutes at a time - it might take a few minutes for you to notice an effect. If you are comfortable, aim for 5-10 minutes
- Try to practice regularly - perhaps three times a day

Variations and troubleshooting

- Find a slow breathing rhythm that is comfortable for you. Counting to 4 isn’t an absolute rule. Try 3 or 5. The important thing is that the breathing is slow and steady
- Some people find the sensation of relaxing to be unusual or uncomfortable at first, but this normally passes with practice. Do persist and keep practising
Workshop Week Six: Yoga

Yoga is a practice that is directed towards a mind, body, and spiritual connection. Recently, the use of yoga as a form of intervention for stress related illness has become increasingly popular in Western culture. Pascoe, Thompson, and Ski (2017) note that yoga as a form of intervention for stress management has demonstrated its effectiveness with as proven to be effective with a variety of populations. The practice of yoga as a mindfulness-based intervention is regarded as a safe method. Yoga has been correlated with decreasing heart rate (HR), blood pressure (BP), and cortisol levels, ultimately playing a role in regulating the sympathetic nervous system. Pascoe, Thompson and Ski state that by regulating the sympathetic nervous system, and decreasing the HR, BP, and cortisol levels the body is protecting itself from the development of stress related mental illness. Practicing yoga will also increase an individual’s ability to use controlled breathing, improve physical posture, and enhance meditative techniques. The mind and body connection are so interconnected you cannot consider one without the other. Yoga can result in regulating both mental and bodily processes, ultimately promoting overall well-being.
Facilitating Yoga

A great resource to use and provide to your participants to help facilitate the yoga is DoYogaWithMe. This is an online resource that provides free yoga sessions via video. [https://www.doyogawithme.com/](https://www.doyogawithme.com/)

During this workshop session it would be beneficial to have a yoga instructor come in as a guest speaker.
Workshop Week Seven: Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) has effectively been utilized to produce a variety of positive outcomes in individuals. A study done by Rausch, Gramling, & Auerbach (2006) consisted of three hundred eighty-seven undergraduate students who partook in either the practice of meditation or PMR or were in a control group; 71.3% of participants were female and the mean age was 19. This study identified the use of PMR as effective in regulating physiological processes, managing anxiety, and decreasing stress levels. The PMR process consists of the tensing and relaxing of various muscle groups in a systematic order; both breath and mindfulness are important factors in PMR. Overall, PMR is an effective method of increasing well-being.
**Progressive Muscle Relaxation**

Our bodies respond automatically to stressful situations and thoughts by becoming tense. The opposite relationship also works: a good way of relaxing the mind is to deliberately relax the body.

In a progressive muscle relaxation each muscle group is tensed in turn, and the tension is then released. This relaxes the muscles and allows you to notice the contrast between tension and relaxation.

Relaxation should be enjoyable so if any part of the exercise is too difficult skip it for the moment. If you have any injuries, you may wish to leave out that part of the exercise.

**Preparation**

Lie down flat on your back, on a firm bed, a couch, or on the floor. Support your head and neck with a pillow or cushion. Alternatively sit in a comfortable chair with your head well-supported. Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so.

**Instructions**

Focus your attention on different parts of your body in sequence. Go through the sequence three times:

1) **Tense & release**: Tense that body part, hold it for a few moments, then relax

2) **Lightly tense & release**: Tense that body part with just enough tension to notice, then relax

3) **Release only**: Just pay attention to each muscle group and decide to relax it
Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script

Progressive muscle relaxation is an exercise that reduces stress and anxiety in your body by having you slowly tense and then relax each muscle. This exercise can provide an immediate feeling of relaxation, but it’s best to practice frequently. With experience, you will become more aware of when you are experiencing tension and you will have the skills to help you relax. During this exercise, each muscle should be tensed, but not to the point of strain. If you have any injuries or pain, you can skip the affected areas. Pay special attention to the feeling of releasing tension in each muscle and the resulting feeling of relaxation. Let’s begin.

Sit back or lie down in a comfortable position. Shut your eyes if you’re comfortable doing so.

Begin by taking a deep breath and noticing the feeling of air filling your lungs. Hold your breath for a few seconds.

(brief pause)

Release the breath slowly and let the tension leave your body.

Take in another deep breath and hold it.

(brief pause)

Again, slowly release the air.

Even slower now, take another breath. Fill your lungs and hold the air.

(brief pause)

Slowly release the breath and imagine the feeling of tension leaving your body.

Now, move your attention to your feet. Begin to tense your feet by curling your toes and the arch of your foot. Hold onto the tension and notice what it feels like.

(5 second pause)

Release the tension in your foot. Notice the new feeling of relaxation.

Next, begin to focus on your lower leg. Tense the muscles in your calves. Hold them tightly and pay attention to the feeling of tension.

(5 second pause)

Release the tension from your lower legs. Again, notice the feeling of relaxation. Remember to continue taking deep breaths.

Next, tense the muscles of your upper leg and pelvis. You can do this by tightly squeezing your thighs together. Make sure you feel tenseness without going to the point of strain.

(5 second pause)
And release. Feel the tension leave your muscles.

Begin to tense your stomach and chest. You can do this by sucking your stomach in. Squeeze harder and hold the tension. A little bit longer.

*(5 second pause)*

Release the tension. Allow your body to go limp. Let yourself notice the feeling of relaxation.

Continue taking deep breaths. Breathe in slowly, noticing the air fill your lungs, and hold it.

*(brief pause)*

Release the air slowly. Feel it leaving your lungs.

Next, tense the muscles in your back by bringing your shoulders together behind you. Hold them tightly. Tense them as hard as you can without straining and keep holding.

*(5 second pause)*

Release the tension from your back. Feel the tension slowly leaving your body, and the new feeling of relaxation. Notice how different your body feels when you allow it to relax.

Tense your arms all the way from your hands to your shoulders. Make a fist and squeeze all the way up your arm. Hold it.

*(5 second pause)*

Release the tension from your arms and shoulders. Notice the feeling of relaxation in your fingers, hands, arms, and shoulders. Notice how your arms feel limp and at ease.

Move up to your neck and your head. Tense your face and your neck by distorting the muscles around your eyes and mouth.

*(5 second pause)*

Release the tension. Again, notice the new feeling of relaxation.

Finally, tense your entire body. Tense your feet, legs, stomach, chest, arms, head, and neck. Tense harder, without straining. Hold the tension.

*(5 second pause)*

Now release. Allow your whole body to go limp. Pay attention to the feeling of relaxation, and how different it is from the feeling of tension.

Begin to wake your body up by slowly moving your muscles. Adjust your arms and legs.

Stretch your muscles and open your eyes when you’re ready.
Workshop Week Eight: Conclusion

Alzheimer’s disease, a progressive disorder of the brain alters a person’s behaviours, cognitions, and emotions. Being a care provider to individuals with AD is challenging and complex because of the reduction in cognitions and psychological changes associated with the disease. Staff members providing care to an AD population are susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. Occupational burnout is chronic stress that develops resulting from work-related settings. There are many risk factors that contribute to burnout within the workplace (Hall, Johnson, Watt, Tsipa, & O’Connor, 2016; Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014) which attribute to indifferent and pessimistic attitudes in employees, lack of perceived personal accomplishment, decreased work satisfaction, and a decrease in physical and psychological health (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014). There are many risk factors that contribute to burnout within the workplace resulting in indifferent and pessimistic attitudes amongst employees, lack of perceived personal accomplishment, decreased work satisfaction, and decrease in physical and psychological health. Occupational burnout is detrimental to the emotional and physical well-being of employees; being emotionally or physically unwell negatively affects the individual, the agency, and the clients. The individual’s overall health is declined, the organization and other employees are also affected by staff shortages and turnover rates. The clients are affected through decreased patient safety resulting from a higher risk for occupational errors. Compassion fatigue is caused from continuous empathetic strain from working in a psychologically distressing environment resulting in emotional exhaustion. The inability to have compassion and empathize with others is concerning, as it can lead to mistakes being made at the patient’s expense. An individual’s level of mindfulness is correlated with compassion fatigue. The practice of mindfulness techniques has become more popular in recent years. Mindfulness is the ability to concentrate on current internal and external stimuli. This practice is effective in preventing and managing both physical and psychological health conditions. Elevating the emotional and physical well-being of staff members will decrease stress, burnout, and turnover rates in employees, while improving job satisfaction, and patient level of care. Mindfulness has been proven beneficial in a variety of occupations in diverse participants; therefore, using mindfulness techniques such as meditation, mindful breathing, yoga, and progressive muscle relaxation can create resilience against occupational burnout and compassion fatigue in caregivers working with the AD population.
Additional Resources for Stress

Recognizing Stress

1. List the ways you experience stress physically, emotionally, and behaviorally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physically</th>
<th>Emotionally</th>
<th>Behaviorally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. Circle the ways stress affects you that are most troubling.

3. List two or three things you can do to reduce these symptoms or times when you notice these symptoms are less intense.
## Symptoms of Stress

Stress is one way that our bodies respond to the demands of our lives. A little bit of stress can be healthy—it keeps us alert and productive. However, all too often, we experience too much stress. Too much stress can result in serious **physical**, **emotional**, and **behavioral** symptoms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Fatigue</td>
<td>□ Loss of motivation</td>
<td>□ Unhealthy eating (over or under eating)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Sleep difficulties</td>
<td>□ Increased irritability and anger</td>
<td>□ Drug or alcohol use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Stomach ache</td>
<td>□ Anxiety</td>
<td>□ Social Withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Chest pain</td>
<td>□ Depression or sadness</td>
<td>□ Nail biting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Muscle pain and tension</td>
<td>□ Restlessness</td>
<td>□ Constant thoughts about stressors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Headaches and migraines</td>
<td>□ Inability to focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Indigestion</td>
<td>□ Mood instability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Nausea</td>
<td>□ Decreased sex drive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Increased sweating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Weakened immune system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Neck and back pain</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Stress Management Tips

Keep in mind that stress isn’t a bad thing.
Stress motivates us to work toward solving our problems. Reframing thoughts to view stress as an acceptable emotion, or as a tool, has been found to reduce many of the negative symptoms associated with it. The goal is to manage stress, not to eliminate it.

Talk about your problems, even if they won’t be solved.
Talking about your stressors—even if you don’t solve them—releases hormones in your body that reduce the negative feelings associated with stress. Time spent talking with friends and loved ones is valuable, even when you have a lot on your plate.

Prioritize your responsibilities.
Focus on completing quick tasks first. Having too many “to-dos” can be stressful, even if none of them are very big. Quickly knocking out the small tasks will clear up your mind to focus on larger responsibilities.

Focus on the basics.
Stress can start a harmful cycle where basic needs are neglected, which leads to more stress. Make a point to focus on your basic needs, such as eating well, keeping a healthy sleep schedule, exercising, and other forms of self-care.

Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.
People who are overinvolved in one aspect of their life often struggle to deal with stress when that area is threatened. Balance your time and energy between several areas, such as your career, family, friendships, and personal hobbies.

Set aside time for yourself.
Personal time usually gets moved to the bottom of the list when things get hectic. However, when personal time is neglected, everything else tends to suffer. Set aside time to relax and have fun every day, without interruptions.

Keep things in perspective.
The heat of the moment, little problems can feel bigger than they are. Take a step back, and think about how important your stressors are in a broader context. Will they matter in a week? In a year? Writing about your stressors will help you develop a healthier perspective.
Stress Management

**Stress:** an emotional and physical response to demanding situations, including symptoms that may include worry, a feeling of being overwhelmed, increased heart rate, headaches, sleep difficulties, procrastination, and more.

Describe your largest source of stress, in detail.

---

Briefly list two other stressors you are experiencing.

1

2

Circle any symptoms you have experienced in response to stress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anger / Frustration</th>
<th>Anxiety</th>
<th>Decreased Sex Drive</th>
<th>Drug or Alcohol Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Headaches</td>
<td>Indigestion</td>
<td>Muscle Tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nail Biting</td>
<td>Over or Under Eating</td>
<td>Procrastination</td>
<td>Sleep Difficulties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Withdrawal</td>
<td>Teeth Grinding</td>
<td>Worry</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contrary to popular belief, not all stress is bad. The stress response is a powerful tool used by your body to increase the odds of overcoming obstacles. It’s when stress becomes too intense, or lasts for too long, that it becomes problematic.

The negative effects of stress can be reduced with the use of social support, emotional management skills, maintaining a healthy life balance, and attending to basic needs. In the following pages, we’ll explore each of these strategies.
Social Support

Even when your social support cannot solve a problem, just talking can sometimes be enough. When we talk about our problems, hormones are released inside our brains that ease the undesirable symptoms of stress.

List three people who you can turn to for support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>How they can help:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How can you use social support to ease one of your current stressors?

<p>| |</p>
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</table>

Emotional Management

Stress can trigger many emotions such as anxiety, self-doubt, and anger. When these feelings are ignored, they can exacerbate the original stressor. Remember, emotional management isn’t about eliminating emotions—it’s about dealing with them in a healthy way.

When faced with unpleasant emotions, do you have any habits or tendencies that worsen the situation?

<p>| |</p>
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</tbody>
</table>

List two ways that you have successfully handled unpleasant emotions in the past.

1

2

Life Balance

Stress can be especially destructive if your life is heavily focused on one area. For example, a person who is only focused on a relationship will struggle if their relationship becomes rocky.
Rate each of the following life areas from 1 to 5. A “1” means that you devote little attention to this part of your life, while a “5” means that you devote a high amount of attention to this area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Fun / Recreation</th>
<th>Spirituality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socializing</td>
<td>Intimate Relationship</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based upon your ratings, are there any areas where you would like to devote more attention?

Basic Needs
During periods of high stress, many people take shortcuts when it comes to their basic needs. Examples include sleep, a healthy diet, exercise, and other forms of self-care. When basic needs are neglected, health and mental well-being deteriorate, which contributes to additional stress.

Circle any basic needs that you tend to neglect during periods of high stress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sleep</th>
<th>Healthy Diet</th>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th>Medical Adherence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Hygiene</td>
<td>Social / Love Needs</td>
<td>Managing Addictions</td>
<td>medications, appointments, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe the steps you can take to protect your basic needs during periods of high stress.


Consent Form

Mindfulness Techniques Workshop to Preventative Occupational Burnout and Compassion Fatigue in Employees Working with an Alzheimer's Population

Invitation

You are invited to participate in a mindfulness workshop. The purpose of this workshop is to prevent occupational burnout and compassion fatigue in individuals working with an Alzheimer's population. The workshop will take place over 8-week period, one 60-minute session will take place a week. Each week a different topic is covered, the schedule is as follows: week one is an introduction to Alzheimer's Disease, occupational burnout, and compassion fatigue; week two is the topic of self-care and the importance of overall wellness; week three will be an introduction to the use of mindfulness; week four the topic is meditation; week five is diaphragmatic breathing; week six is yoga; week seven is progressive muscle relaxation; and the workshop will finish on the eighth week with a conclusion session. For all eight sessions time will be set aside for group discussions, activities, and questions.

Why is this being done?

The purpose of this study is to use psychoeducation to explain occupational burnout and compassion fatigue to staff members helping them gain a better understanding of the importance of self-care. Teaching mindfulness techniques will assist employees in preventing and addressing occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, while promoting emotional and physical wellness.

What will you need to do if you take part?

The participants will be required to attend 8 one-hour sessions and participate in self-care and mindfulness activities each week. Following the workshop, the participants will be asked to provide feedback on the workshop and provide the facilitator with suggestions for the future.

What are the potential direct benefits of taking part?

Using psychoeducation to explain occupational burnout and compassion fatigue will help you gain a better understanding of the importance of self-care. Learning mindfulness techniques may assist employees in preventing and addressing occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, while promoting emotional and physical wellness.

What are the potential disadvantages or risks of taking part?
A potential disadvantage of this project is what participants choose to do with the information provided. Without an effort to modify both cognitions and behaviours there will not be any change within the work environment.

The risks of taking part in this project include increased stress due to the additional work required through their participation and the possibility of elevated anxiety from having to incorporate the new skill of mindfulness into everyday life.

Do you have to take part?

You are not required to attend the workshop. Participation is on a volunteer basis and you can withdraw consent at any point. If you choose not to participate or withdraw consent you will not be penalized.

Contact for further information

If you would like to receive more information about the workshop, please contact the workshop facilitator directly.

I understand and consent to the information on the previous page.

Name:

______ I consent to participate in the workshop.

______ I do NOT consent to participate in the workshop.

Participant Signature: Date:

Witness Signature: Date:
References


Appendix D: Participants Manual

The Use of Mindfulness Techniques to Prevent Occupational Burnout and Compassion Fatigue in Individuals Working with an Alzheimer’s Population

A Participant Workbook
Created by Ainslie Plouffe
The Use of Mindfulness Techniques to Prevent Occupational Burnout and Compassion Fatigue in Individuals Working with an Alzheimer’s Population

This manual is intended to aid the participants in the mindfulness workshop. It is equipped with all of information needed for the workshop and has reader friendly overviews of the topics that will be covered (Alzheimer’s, occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, mindfulness, mindfulness practice through meditation, mindfulness practice through diaphragmatic breathing, mindfulness through yoga, and mindfulness through progressive muscle relaxation), instructions, and materials for the activities and worksheets.

The facilitator should be a Hildegarde Centre employee in a management position; this individual should be comfortable with the material and familiar with this manual. This individual should also have good interpersonal and communication skills to engage and encourage their participants. It would be helpful if the facilitator was already in good standing and respected by the participants.

The workshop is intended to take place over an 8-week period. Each week, one hour is to be designated for a pre-determined topic (following the guidelines set out in the facilitator’s manual). Week one will be designated as an introduction to Alzheimer’s Disease, occupational burnout, and compassion fatigue. Week two the group will move into the topic of self-care and the importance of overall wellness. The topic covered in week three will be an introduction to the use of mindfulness. Following week three, mindfulness techniques will be broken down into more specific sections: week four being meditation; week five, diaphragmatic breathing; week six yoga; and week seven progressive muscle relaxation. The workshop will finish on the eighth week with a conclusion session. It is important to note that, prior to each session beginning, the previous week’s subject matter will be summarized. For all eight sessions, time will be set aside for group discussions, activities, and questions.
Workshop Week One: Alzheimer’s Disease, Occupational Burnout, Compassion Fatigue

Alzheimer’s Disease

Alzheimer’s Disease (AD) was first identified in 1906; this neurodegenerative disorder alters a person’s behaviours, cognitions, and emotions and is becoming more prevalent, currently affecting 564,000 Canadians. The rate of those diagnosed with AD is steadily on the rise. In the next 15 years, the number of individuals living with AD is anticipated to increase by over 66%. In Canada, it is estimated that approximately 118,000 of elderly individuals in long-term care facilities have a dementia diagnosis (Statistics Canada, 2017). Statistics Canada (2017) also noted that of the 45% of Canadians that have a diagnosis of dementia, 85% of these individuals depend on the help of a caregiver. Providing care to individuals with Alzheimer’s is demanding and emotionally straining because of the reduction in cognitions and psychological changes associated with dementia. As the disease progresses, the challenging behaviours become more severe, resulting in increased demands and stress for the caregiver. When an individual becomes overwhelmed they express stress in their cognitions, behaviours, and emotions. Staff members providing care to a geriatric population, especially an AD population, are susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue.

Occupational Burnout

Burnout is a term used to describe chronic stress in an occupational setting. Environmental and work-related stressors are the distinctive indications of burnout rather than psychological and emotional processes. There are many risk factors that contribute to burnout within the workplace including staff shortages, difficult work environment, lack of benefits, low pay, extensive work-related demands, poor social relationships, insufficient resources, lack of support from co-workers or management, and physical stress. Common effects of burnout include indifferent and pessimistic attitudes, lack of perceived personal accomplishment, decrease in work satisfaction, and decrease in physical and psychological health. Occupational burnout is detrimental to staff emotional and physical well-being. Everyone is susceptible to occupational burnout; being emotionally or physically unwell does not only affect the individual but also the other employees and the clients. The agency is negatively affected due to employees lack of productivity, inefficiencies resulting from time spent covering shifts or positions, additional time dedicated to correcting staff mistakes, ultimately increasing the costs of operation (Baker, Huxley, Dennis, Islam, & Russell, 2015). The agency is negatively affected because employees are not being as productive as possible, inefficiencies resulting from having to spend increased time having shifts or positions covered, dedicating time to correcting mistakes made by staff, ultimately increasing the costs of operation. Both burnout and poor psychological and physical well-being are positively correlated with decreased patient safety and a higher risk of making occupational errors, primarily medical errors. It is, therefore, crucial to consider the emotional and physical well-being of employees when assessing perceived quality of life of the clients. Stress management training combined with relaxation exercises and
training measures help to reduce burnout. It is important to incorporate mindfulness techniques while dealing with stressful situations.

**Compassion Fatigue**

Burnout and compassion fatigue have a positive correlation, this means that they commonly co-exist, and can be a causation factor of the other. The distinctive difference is that compassion fatigue is more strongly correlated with psychological factors. Compassion fatigue is common in helping professionals, as helping professionals have the potential to be negatively affected by their clients. Compassion fatigue is caused from continuous empathic strain from working in a psychologically distressing environment; this results in emotional exhaustion. Compassion fatigue is the inability to empathize with others and associated side effects including feelings of hopelessness, decreased ability to cope at work, and negative perception of one’s work. The inability to have compassion and empathize with others is concerning, as it can lead to mistakes being made at the patient’s expense. Risk factors in the development of compassion fatigue include poor coping methods, high levels of empathy, lack of mindfulness, perception of fairness in the work place, perceived social support, and perceived support from employers and co-workers. Maladaptive coping skills are correlated with increased likelihood of compassion fatigue. Emotional self-awareness is an individual’s ability to recognize how they are feeling and how it is affecting them. Emotional self-awareness has been identified by Turgoose and Maddox as a protective factor against compassion fatigue. As empathy increases, the occurrence of compassion fatigue becomes more likely. Elevated levels of mindfulness are correlated with lower levels of compassion fatigue. Turgoose and Maddox (2017) also reported that demographic factors can play a role in the development of compassion fatigue (i.e. age, sex). Compassion satisfaction is a term used to explain the positive feelings helping professionals feel towards their colleagues and from the ability to help their clients. Compassion satisfaction is important in reducing levels of compassion fatigue in the workplace. Protective factors against compassion fatigue include cognitive and behavioural coping methods such as mindfulness.
Week Two: Self-Care, Importance of Overall Wellness

Important topics to discuss during this session include diet, sleep, exercise, social support, and making time for personal interests.
Checklist for Better Sleep

Good sleep is influenced by many factors. Record how many of these things you have done in the last week and consider making changes to your routine.

Things that are known to make sleep worse

- Napping during the day
- Watching television in bed
- Using a device with a bright screen in the hour before bedtime (e.g. a smartphone, a laptop)
- Consuming drinks containing caffeine (includes tea, coffee, cola, energy drinks, hot chocolate)
  - How many each day?
  - What time of the day was your last caffeinated drink? (try to avoid caffeine after 6pm)
- Drinking alcohol (alcohol typically leads to interrupted sleep)
- Eating a heavy meal less than 3 hours before bedtime
- Staying in bed even if you can’t fall asleep (it’s better to get up and do something relaxing, then try again later)

Things that are known to improve sleep

- Regular exercise
  - How many times a week? (it is recommended to do at least 3 x 30 minutes per week)
  - What time of the day? (it is best not to exercise in the 3-4 hours before bedtime)
- Setting aside some ‘worry time’ each day to write down any issues that are bothering or concerning you, then deciding to leave those worries behind until tomorrow (make sure to do this at least one hour before bedtime)
- Relaxation exercises (e.g. relaxed breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation)
- Having a relaxing bedtime routine (e.g. taking a bath or a shower, reading a comforting book)
- Setting the conditions for sleep
  - Make sure the bedroom is completely dark (blackout curtains are cheap and effective)
  - Make sure the mattress and pillows are comfortable (make bed an attractive place to be!)
  - Make sure the bedroom is the right temperature (think like Goldilocks: not too hot, not too cold)
Guidelines For Better Sleep

Sleeping well is a habit that you can learn! Small changes can have big effects. Start today by following these rules:

**Take care of your body**
- Do not drink caffeine: no tea, coffee, or coca-cola after 4 o'clock
- Do not eat a big or spicy meal late in the evening
- Do not go to bed hungry
- Avoid alcohol as it interferes with sleep

**Physical exercise**, such as a brisk walk, in the late afternoon can help to make your body tired and help you to sleep. Try to do some exercise every day.

Sleep only at **night-time** and do not have day-time naps, no matter how tired you feel. Naps keep the problem going by making it harder for you to get to sleep the next night.

**Having a regular bedtime routine** teaches your body when it's time to go to sleep.
- Have a soothing drink like camomile tea or a milky drink
- Have a bath, or a routine of washing your face and brushing your teeth
- Go to bed at same time each night
- When in bed think of nice things (e,g. think of 5 nice things that happened that day – they might be big or small, such as a nice conversation, seeing the sunshine, or hearing nice music on the radio)
- Do a relaxed breathing exercise (one hand on stomach the other on your chest, deliberately slow your breathing, breathe deeply in your stomach instead of high in your chest) *Try and wake up the same time every day, even if this is tiring to begin with*

**Coping with bad dreams can be difficult.** Some people don't like relaxation before going to sleep, or are scared of letting go. If that is you, try these preparation techniques instead:
- Prepare yourself in case you have bad dreams by thinking of a bad dream then think of a different ending for it. Practice this new ending many times before going to sleep.
- Before going to sleep prepare to re-orient yourself when you wake from a bad dream.
- Remind yourself that you are at home, that you are safe. Imagine your street, buses, local shops.
- Put a damp towel or a bowl of water by the bed to splash your face, place a special object by the bed, such as a photograph, or a small soft toy.
- Practice imagining yourself waking up from a bad dream and reorienting yourself to the present, to safety by splashing your face, touching special object, having a bottle of rose or lavender essential oil to sniff, going to window to see surroundings.
- When you wake up from a bad dream - move your body. If you can and reorient yourself immediately (touching an object, wetting face, going to the window, talk to yourself in a reassuring way)

**Make your bedroom a pleasant place to be**
- Get a nightlight
- Keep it clean and tidy
- Introduce pleasant smells such as a drop of lavender oil onto the pillow
- Get extra pillows
- Make sure that your home is safe e.g. doors locked, windows closed.

**REMEMBER:** Bed is for sleeping, so if you cannot sleep after 30 minutes, get up and do another activity elsewhere such as reading or listening to music (try and avoid TV as it can wake you up). After 15 minutes return to bed and try to sleep again. If you still can't sleep after 30 minutes get up again. Repeat this routine as many times as necessary and only use your bed for sleeping in.
# Sleep Diary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Complete in the MORNING

- I went to bed last night at (time)
- I got up this morning at (time)
- I slept for a total of (hours)
- I woke up during the night (# times)

### Complete in the EVENING

- Number of caffeinated drinks today
- Time of last caffeinated drink
- Exercise completed today (minutes)
- What I did in the hour before I fell asleep
- Mood today? (0=awful, 10=great)
The Mental Health Benefits of Exercise

Research has shown us that people who exercise regularly tend to be more resistant to many mental illnesses. Exercise can help treat current symptoms, and prevent future episodes. What problems can exercise help with?

**Mental Illness**
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Substance Abuse
- Bulimia
- Alzheimer’s Disease

**Other**
- Sleep Difficulties
- Stress
- Physical Health
- Low Energy
- Self-Esteem

Beginning an exercise plan doesn’t have to be difficult. Walking for as little as 30 minutes, 3 times a week, has been found to be beneficial. Don’t worry too much about what exercise you choose. Aerobic and anaerobic exercises are both effective at improving mental health.

**Anaerobic Exercises**
- Weightlifting
- Sprinting (running, biking, etc.)
- Interval training
- Climbing

**Aerobic Exercises**
- Walking, jogging, or biking
- Elliptical or ski machines
- Swimming
- Dancing

If you’re crunched for time, you might still be able to squeeze some exercise into your day. Two 15 minute walks work just as well as one 30 minute walk! Here are some tips to help:

- Need to make a phone call? Walk and talk.
- Get an exercise partner to hold you accountable.
- Park at the back of the parking lot and walk.
- Do an activity you enjoy, and it won’t be a chore.
- Skip the elevator and take the stairs.
- Head outside for 10 minutes during lunch.
The Mental Health Benefits of Exercise

What days of the week can you find time to exercise?
Choose a minimum of three days per week to exercise. You should exercise for at least 30 minutes, but the time can be split up throughout the day.

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</tbody>
</table>

List three types of exercise you would like to try.
The best exercises are activities that you’ll genuinely enjoy, without having too many obstacles to get started.

1.

2.

3.

What strategies can you use to make sure you remember to exercise?
It’s easy to put off exercise, prioritize other things, or simply forget about your plan. Circle the ideas that might help you stick to your plan.

- Plan to exercise with a friend so you can both hold one another responsible.

- Set an alarm to remind you when to exercise. If you’re using your phone alarm, set it to automatically repeat every day at the same time!

- Get into a routine by exercising at the same time every day. Try attaching exercise to a particular part of your day, such as walking every evening right after dinner.

- Reward yourself for a job well done. Treat yourself to something you enjoy when you exercise. However, you have to be honest! No exercise, no reward.

Provided by TherapistAid.com © 2015
# Protective Factors

**Protective factors** are things that contribute to mental health, and allow a person to be resilient in the face of challenges. Someone with a lot of protective factors—such as strong relationships and healthy coping skills—will be better equipped to overcome life’s obstacles.

Many protective factors are out of your control. For example, genetics, the neighborhood where you grew up, and family cannot be changed. However, plenty of factors can be controlled. You choose the people in your life, how to cope with problems, and how you’ll spend each day.

By focusing on what you can control, and building upon those protective factors, you will improve your ability to cope with many of life’s challenges.

## My Protective Factors

**Instructions:** Review each of the following protective factors, and mark the scales to indicate how well you are performing in each area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Support</th>
<th>Coping Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- ability to talk about problems</td>
<td>- ability to manage uncomfortable emotions in a healthy way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- people to ask for practical help (e.g., a ride if car breaks down)</td>
<td>- awareness of one’s own emotions, and recognition of how they influence behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- feelings of love, intimacy, or friendship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Health</th>
<th>Sense of Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- adequate exercise or physical activity</td>
<td>- meaningful involvement in work, education, or other roles (e.g., parenting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a balanced and healthy diet</td>
<td>- understanding of personal values, and living in accordance with those values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- medical compliance (e.g., taking medications as prescribed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Esteem</th>
<th>Healthy Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- belief that one’s self has value</td>
<td>- does not ruminate on mistakes, personal flaws, or problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- acceptance of personal flaws, weaknesses, or mistakes</td>
<td>- ability to recognize personal strengths and weaknesses rationally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- belief in ability to overcome challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Protective Factors

Instructions: Refer to the protective factors on the previous page to answer the following questions.

Which protective factor has been the most valuable to you during difficult times?

Specifically, how have you used this protective factor to your advantage in the past?

What are two protective factors that you would like to improve?

1 2

Describe how things might be different if you were able to improve these protective factors.

1

2

List specific steps or actions that might help to make these goals a reality.

1

2
Workshop Week Three: Mindfulness

The practice of using mindfulness techniques has become more popular in recent years. Mindfulness has stemmed from the Buddhist meditation teachings of the Buddha. Buddhism is not a religion, a philosophy, or a belief; it is a way of life, a practice adapted by individuals that involves training the mind to be mindful. Kabat-Zinn (2003) identified Buddhism as the connection between the mind and the body that has a significant impact on in the psychological fields, including clinical psychology, behavioral medicine. Research into the use of mindfulness continues to be of interest because of its regarded benefits. Although this research is still new, it seems promising as mindfulness can be used among a variety of helping professionals. Mindfulness refers to the ability to be attentive to internal and external stimuli in the present moment. Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) elaborated on the present awareness and attention by adding that there is a limited amount of interference while practicing mindfulness techniques. The use of mindfulness techniques is effective in reversing and preventing many health conditions, both mental and physical. The implementation of mindfulness practices can aid in self-regulation, effective coping methods, and relaxation. Jamieson and Tuckey identify that in contemporary workplace environments the conditions are typically high stress and intensive, increasing the importance of having readily available techniques in place to benefit the employees to lessen the negative impacts of stress. Jamieson and Tuckey identify that in contemporary workplace environments the conditions are typically high stress and intensive, increasing the importance of having readily available techniques in place to benefit the employees by lessening the stress. Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) is a program created in the 1970s by Kabat Zinn that incorporated meditation, yoga, and body awareness. The emotional and physical well-being of staff members is important and important, and using mindfulness techniques is helpful in achieving this. Improving the well-being of staff creates an environment where the employers benefit due to increased productivity rates. The result of Mindfulness training is the ability to react to mentally and physically straining situations. It is important for participants learning mindfulness to practice mindfulness techniques in order to benefit fully from the skills they have learned. A review of the literature studied 32 articles showed that elevated levels of mindfulness are correlated with lower levels of compassion fatigue. Mindfulness is a protective factor against compassion fatigue because of the resilience that is built against it. Common mindfulness techniques practiced include diaphragmatic breathing, yoga, and meditation. It is important to consider both the needs and goals of the staff members and the organization, before implementing a mindfulness technique intervention. Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) found that if the intervention was not properly designed or properly executed, the mindfulness training is at risk for not being effective and there is even a possibility that it could even be detrimental to the well-being of the participants. If the participants in the mindfulness intervention are not following the instructions and not meeting expectation with the exercise, the intervention will not be successful. A systematic review by Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) examined 40 articles, this study shows that mindfulness has been proven
beneficial in a variety of occupations with diverse participants. Many studies show that mindfulness interventions are effective in improving the well-being of individuals in an occupational environment; however, a limited amount of research has been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of mindfulness in healthy individuals that are physically and emotionally well. Jamieson and Tuckey (2017) identify that the use of mindfulness is thought to improve the attentional stability, control, and proficiency, which in turn impact many secondary functions. These secondary functions can be categorized into four domains consisting of physiology, emotion, cognition, and behaviour. Overall, mindfulness is a useful technique in improving the physical and emotional health of employees who are or are at risk of being affected by occupational burnout or compassion fatigue.
What Is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the short term for mindfulness meditation practice. This is a form of self-awareness training adapted from Buddhist mindfulness meditation. Mindfulness is about being aware of what is happening in the present, moment-by-moment, without making judgements about what we notice. Mindfulness meditation practice is a key ingredient in a variety of evidence-based psychotherapies, including dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) and acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT).

Why should I practice mindfulness?

Our minds can be focused on things in the past, present or future. We often find ourselves ruminating about things that have already happened, or worrying about things that could happen. This can often be distressing.

Mindfulness is a practice which encourages us to attend to the present moment. There is good evidence that mindfulness practice can help people cope with a wide variety of feeling-states such as depression and anxiety, but also physical health conditions including pain and chronic illness.

Why do I need to practice? Can’t I pay attention to the present moment already? We can all pay attention to the present moment, at least for a short while. If you haven’t tried meditation before, though, you might notice that your attention wanders and is not easily controlled. Mindfulness strengthens our ability to pay attention in the present moment, but also increases our awareness of how our minds fluctuate, often in unhelpful ways. People who practice mindfulness regularly find that it helps their ability to stay in the present moment without being deflected.

What does it mean to ‘cultivate a non-judgemental attitude’?

Shakespeare said “there is nothing is either good or bad, but thinking makes it so”, and this is a core idea in therapies like cognitive behavioral therapy. Making judgements about our own experiences can often lead to us becoming quite distressed. For example, thoughts like “this is horrible” and “I can’t take any more” are both judgements associated with distress. Practising mindfulness teaches us to accept more of our experience without judging it. This has been shown to help people live more fulfilling lives.

Some helpful quotes about mindfulness

“If you let cloudy water settle, it will become clear. If you let your upset mind settle, your course will also become clear”
- Jack Kornfield, Buddha’s Little Instruction Book (1994)

“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally”

“The non-judgemental observation of the ongoing stream of internal and external stimuli as they arise”

“Keeping one’s consciousness alive to the present reality”
- Thich Nhat Hanh, The Miracle of Mindfulness (1975)

“Mindfulness is simply the knack of noticing without comment whatever is happening in your present experience”
- Guy Claxton, The Heart of Buddhism (1990)
Mindfulness Activity
Instructions: Go through the process of making a cup of coffee in your head (if you do not regularly make coffee you can do another activity such as brushing your teeth or getting dressed for the day). Close your eyes and complete the task. When you are done reflect on how it went and participate in discussion. After you have talked about this try to complete this task again while being mindful. Do not to think about anything but what is in the present while completing the task, think about what you see, smell, task, hear, and feel. When you are done, reflect on how it went, compare the first and second time you did this activity, and discuss.
Workshop Week Four: Meditation

Meditation is beneficial in promoting positive physical and emotional outcomes in a variety of populations. Rausch, Gramling, and Auerbach (2006) state that the implementation of meditation techniques has been shown to influence stress levels. It is important to acknowledge the fact that many people do find it difficult to meditate as it is essentially shutting out all of those thoughts (i.e. what am I going to make for dinner, I need to remember to add milk to the grocery list, etc.).
Mindfulness Meditation

The goal of mindfulness meditation is simple: to pay attention to the present moment, without judgement. However, as you practice, you’ll find that this is easier said than done.

During mindfulness meditation, you will focus on your breathing as a tool to ground yourself in the present moment. It’s normal that your mind will wander. You’ll simply bring yourself back into the moment by refocusing on your breathing, again and again.

Follow the instructions below to begin practicing mindfulness meditation.

**Time & Place**

Aim to practice daily for 15-30 minutes. More frequent, consistent, and longer-term practice leads to the best results. However, some practice is better than no practice. Find a time and place where you are unlikely to be interrupted. Silence your phone and other devices and set a timer for your desired practice length.

**Posture**

- Sit in chair, or on the floor with a cushion for support.
- Straighten your back, but not to the point of stiffness.
- Let your chin drop slightly, and gaze downward at a point in front of you.
- If in a chair, place the soles of your feet on the ground. If on the floor, cross your legs.
- Let your arms fall naturally to your sides, with your palms resting on your thighs.
- If your pose becomes too uncomfortable, feel free to take a break or adjust.

**Awareness of Breathing**

Because the sensations of breathing are always present, they are useful as a tool to help you focus on the present moment. Whenever you become distracted during meditation, turn your focus back to breathing.

Notice the sensation of air as it passes through your nose or mouth, the rise and fall of your belly, and the feeling of air being exhaled, back into the world. Notice the sounds that accompany each inhalation and exhalation.

**Wandering Mind**

It’s normal that your thoughts will wander during mindfulness meditation. At times, it might feel like a constant battle to maintain focus on your breathing. Don’t worry—that’s normal. Instead of struggling against your thoughts, simply notice them, without judgment. Acknowledge that your mind has wandered and return your attention to breathing. Expect to repeat this process again and again.

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Workshop Week Five: Diaphragmatic Breathing

Mindful breathing is a technique that is commonly cited as effective in the MBSR. The idea stems from an instinctive human trait of taking a deep breath to feel better. Although it is known that breathing deeply is beneficial, this is often forgotten when an individual is experiencing anxiety or stress. Zhu, Feng, and Osika (2017) explain that when the body is experiencing an anxiety or stress response an individual is likely to breath quick and shallow breaths that will continue to enhance the negative response. Instead of allowing this unconscious reaction to occur, it is important to be mindful of breath and focus on deep, abdominal breathing. This conscious breathing style will have a calming effect on the body, both preventing and reducing the negative results of increased sympathetic nervous system reaction and promoting engagement of the parasympathetic nervous system instead.
Relaxed Breathing

When we are anxious or threatened our breathing speeds up in order to get our body ready for danger. Relaxed breathing (sometimes called abdominal or diaphragmatic breathing) signals the body that it is safe to relax. Relaxed breathing is slower and deeper than normal breathing, and it happens lower in the body (the belly rather than the chest).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-breathe</th>
<th>Pause</th>
<th>Out-breathe</th>
<th>Pause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4</td>
<td>1 ...</td>
<td>... 2 ... 3 ... 4</td>
<td>1 ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to do relaxed breathing

- To practice make sure you are sitting or lying comfortably
- Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so
- Try to breathe through your nose rather than your mouth
- Deliberately slow your breathing down. Breathe in to a count of 4, pause for a moment, then breathe out to a count of four
- Make sure that your breaths are smooth, steady, and continuous - not jerky
- Pay particular attention to your out-breath - make sure it is smooth and steady

Am I doing it right? What should I be paying attention to?

- Relaxed breathing should be low down in the abdomen (belly), and not high in the chest. You can check this by putting one hand on your stomach and one on your chest. Try to keep the top hand still, your breathing should only move the bottom hand
- Focus your attention on your breath - some people find it helpful to count in their head to begin with (“In ... two ... three ... four ... pause ... Out ... two ... three ... four ... pause ...”)

How long and how often?

- Try breathing in a relaxed way for at least a few minutes at a time - it might take a few minutes for you to notice an effect. If you are comfortable, aim for 5-10 minutes
- Try to practice regularly - perhaps three times a day

Variations and troubleshooting

- Find a slow breathing rhythm that is comfortable for you. Counting to 4 isn’t an absolute rule. Try 3 or 5. The important thing is that the breathing is slow and steady
- Some people find the sensation of relaxing to be unusual or uncomfortable at first, but this normally passes with practice. Do persist and keep practising
Workshop Week Six: Yoga

Yoga is a practice that is directed towards a mind, body, and spiritual connection. Recently, the use of yoga as a form of intervention for stress related illness has become increasingly popular in Western culture. Pascoe, Thompson, and Ski (2017) note that yoga as a form of intervention for stress management has demonstrated its effectiveness with as proven to be effective with a variety of populations. The practice of yoga as a mindfulness-based intervention is regarded as a safe method. Yoga has been correlated with decreasing heart rate (HR), blood pressure (BP), and cortisol levels, ultimately playing a role in regulating the sympathetic nervous system. Pascoe, Thompson and Ski state that by regulating the sympathetic nervous system, and decreasing the HR, BP, and cortisol levels the body is protecting itself from the development of stress related mental illness. Practicing yoga will also increase an individual’s ability to use controlled breathing, improve physical posture, and enhance meditative techniques. The mind and body connection are so interconnected you cannot consider one without the other. Yoga can result in regulating both mental and bodily processes, ultimately promoting overall well-being.
Facilitating Yoga

A great resource to help facilitate the yoga is DoYogaWithMe. This is an online resource that provides free yoga sessions via video.

https://www.doyogawithme.com/
Workshop Week Seven: Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) has effectively been utilized to produce a variety of positive outcomes in individuals. A study done by Rausch, Gramling, & Auerbach (2006) consisted of three hundred eighty-seven undergraduate students who partook in either the practice of meditation of PMR or were in a control group; 71.3% of participants were female and the mean age was 19. This study identified the use of PMR as effective in regulating physiological processes, managing anxiety, and decreasing stress levels. The PMR process consists of the tensing and relaxing of various muscle groups in a systematic order; both breath and mindfulness are important factors in PMR. Overall, PMR is an effective method of increasing well-being.
**Progressive Muscle Relaxation**

Our bodies respond automatically to stressful situations and thoughts by becoming tense. The opposite relationship also works: a good way of relaxing the mind is to deliberately relax the body.

In a progressive muscle relaxation each muscle group is tensed in turn, and the tension is then released. This relaxes the muscles and allows you to notice the contrast between tension and relaxation.

Relaxation should be enjoyable so if any part of the exercise is too difficult skip it for the moment. If you have any injuries, you may wish to leave out that part of the exercise.

**Preparation**

Lie down flat on your back, on a firm bed, a couch, or on the floor. Support your head and neck with a pillow or cushion. Alternatively sit in a comfortable chair with your head well-supported. Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so.

**Instructions**

Focus your attention on different parts of your body in sequence. Go through the sequence three times:

1) **Tense & release**: Tense that body part, hold it for a few moments, then relax

2) **Lightly tense & release**: Tense that body part with just enough tension to notice, then relax

3) **Release only**: Just pay attention to each muscle group and decide to relax it
Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script

Progressive muscle relaxation is an exercise that reduces stress and anxiety in your body by having you slowly tense and then relax each muscle. This exercise can provide an immediate feeling of relaxation, but it’s best to practice frequently. With experience, you will become more aware of when you are experiencing tension and you will have the skills to help you relax. During this exercise, each muscle should be tensed, but not to the point of strain. If you have any injuries or pain, you can skip the affected areas. Pay special attention to the feeling of releasing tension in each muscle and the resulting feeling of relaxation. Let’s begin.

Sit back or lie down in a comfortable position. Shut your eyes if you’re comfortable doing so.

Begin by taking a deep breath and noticing the feeling of air filling your lungs. Hold your breath for a few seconds.

(brief pause)

Release the breath slowly and let the tension leave your body.

Take in another deep breath and hold it.

(brief pause)

Again, slowly release the air.

Even slower now, take another breath. Fill your lungs and hold the air.

(brief pause)

Slowly release the breath and imagine the feeling of tension leaving your body.

Now, move your attention to your feet. Begin to tense your feet by curling your toes and the arch of your foot. Hold onto the tension and notice what it feels like.

(5 second pause)

Release the tension in your foot. Notice the new feeling of relaxation.

Next, begin to focus on your lower leg. Tense the muscles in your calves. Hold them tightly and pay attention to the feeling of tension.

(5 second pause)

Release the tension from your lower legs. Again, notice the feeling of relaxation. Remember to continue taking deep breaths.

Next, tense the muscles of your upper leg and pelvis. You can do this by tightly squeezing your thighs together. Make sure you feel tenseness without going to the point of strain.

(5 second pause)
And release. Feel the tension leave your muscles.

Begin to tense your stomach and chest. You can do this by sucking your stomach in. Squeeze harder and hold the tension. A little bit longer.

(5 second pause)

Release the tension. Allow your body to go limp. Let yourself notice the feeling of relaxation.

Continue taking deep breaths. Breathe in slowly, noticing the air fill your lungs, and hold it.

(brief pause)

Release the air slowly. Feel it leaving your lungs.

Next, tense the muscles in your back by bringing your shoulders together behind you. Hold them tightly. Tense them as hard as you can without straining and keep holding.

(5 second pause)

Release the tension from your back. Feel the tension slowly leaving your body, and the new feeling of relaxation. Notice how different your body feels when you allow it to relax.

Tense your arms all the way from your hands to your shoulders. Make a fist and squeeze all the way up your arm. Hold it.

(5 second pause)

Release the tension from your arms and shoulders. Notice the feeling of relaxation in your fingers, hands, arms, and shoulders. Notice how your arms feel limp and at ease.

Move up to your neck and your head. Tense your face and your neck by distorting the muscles around your eyes and mouth.

(5 second pause)

Release the tension. Again, notice the new feeling of relaxation.

Finally, tense your entire body. Tense your feet, legs, stomach, chest, arms, head, and neck. Tense harder, without straining. Hold the tension.

(5 second pause)

Now release. Allow your whole body to go limp. Pay attention to the feeling of relaxation, and how different it is from the feeling of tension.

Begin to wake your body up by slowly moving your muscles. Adjust your arms and legs.

Stretch your muscles and open your eyes when you’re ready.
Workshop Week Eight: Conclusion

Alzheimer’s disease, a progressive disorder of the brain alters a person’s behaviours, cognitions, and emotions. Being a care provider to individuals with AD is challenging and complex because of the reduction in cognitions and psychological changes associated with the disease. Staff members providing care to an AD population are susceptible to the effects of occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. Occupational burnout is chronic stress that develops resulting from work-related settings. There are many risk factors that contribute to burnout within the workplace (Hall, Johnson, Watt, Tsipa, & O’Connor, 2016; Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014) which attribute to indifferent and pessimistic attitudes in employees, lack of perceived personal accomplishment, decreased work satisfaction, and a decrease in physical and psychological health (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014). There are many risk factors that contribute to burnout within the workplace resulting in indifferent and pessimistic attitudes amongst employees, lack of perceived personal accomplishment, decreased work satisfaction, and decrease in physical and psychological health. Occupational burnout is detrimental to the emotional and physical well-being of employees; being emotionally or physically unwell negatively affects the individual, the agency, and the clients. The individual’s overall health is declined, the organization and other employees are also affected by staff shortages and turnover rates. The clients are affected through decreased patient safety resulting from a higher risk for occupational errors. Compassion fatigue is caused from continuous empathetic strain from working in a psychologically distressing environment resulting in emotional exhaustion. The inability to have compassion and empathize with others is concerning, as it can lead to mistakes being made at the patient’s expense. An individual’s level of mindfulness is correlated with compassion fatigue. The practice of mindfulness techniques has become more popular in recent years. Mindfulness is the ability to concentrate on current internal and external stimuli. This practice is effective in preventing and managing both physical and psychological health conditions. Elevating the emotional and physical well-being of staff members will decrease stress, burnout, and turnover rates in employees, while improving job satisfaction, and patient level of care. Mindfulness has been proven beneficial in a variety of occupations in diverse participants; therefore, using mindfulness techniques such as meditation, mindful breathing, yoga, and progressive muscle relaxation can create resilience against occupational burnout and compassion fatigue in caregivers working with the AD population.
# Additional Resources for Stress

## Recognizing Stress

1. List the ways you experience stress physically, emotionally, and behaviorally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physically</th>
<th>Emotionally</th>
<th>Behaviorally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. Circle the ways stress affects you that are most troubling.

3. List two or three things you can do to reduce these symptoms or times when you notice these symptoms are less intense.
Symptoms of Stress

Stress is one way that our bodies respond to the demands of our lives. A little bit of stress can be healthy—it keeps us alert and productive. However, all too often, we experience too much stress. Too much stress can result in serious physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Loss of motivation</td>
<td>Unhealthy eating (over or under eating)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep difficulties</td>
<td>Increased irritability and anger</td>
<td>Drug or alcohol use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stomach ache</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Social Withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chest pain</td>
<td>Depression or sadness</td>
<td>Nail biting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscle pain and tension</td>
<td>Restlessness</td>
<td>Constant thoughts about stressors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headaches and migraines</td>
<td>Inability to focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigestion</td>
<td>Mood instability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nausea</td>
<td>Decreased sex drive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased sweating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakened immune system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neck and back pain</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stress Management Tips

Keep in mind that stress isn’t a bad thing.
Stress motivates us to work toward solving our problems. Reframing thoughts to view stress as an acceptable emotion, or as a tool, has been found to reduce many of the negative symptoms associated with it. The goal is to manage stress, not to eliminate it.

Talk about your problems, even if they won’t be solved.
Talking about your stressors—even if you don’t solve them—releases hormones in your body that reduce the negative feelings associated with stress. Time spent talking with friends and loved ones is valuable, even when you have a lot on your plate.

Prioritize your responsibilities.
Focus on completing quick tasks first. Having too many “to-dos” can be stressful, even if none of them are very big. Quickly knocking out the small tasks will clear up your mind to focus on larger responsibilities.

Focus on the basics.
Stress can start a harmful cycle where basic needs are neglected, which leads to more stress. Make a point to focus on your basic needs, such as eating well, keeping a healthy sleep schedule, exercising, and other forms of self-care.

Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.
People who are overinvolved in one aspect of their life often struggle to deal with stress when that area is threatened. Balance your time and energy between several areas, such as your career, family, friendships, and personal hobbies.

Set aside time for yourself.
Personal time usually gets moved to the bottom of the list when things get hectic. However, when personal time is neglected, everything else tends to suffer. Set aside time to relax and have fun every day, without interruptions.

Keep things in perspective.
In the heat of the moment, little problems can feel bigger than they are. Take a step back, and think about how important your stressors are in a broader context. Will they matter in a week? In a year? Writing about your stressors will help you develop a healthier perspective.
Stress Management

Stress: an emotional and physical response to demanding situations, including symptoms that may include worry, a feeling of being overwhelmed, increased heart rate, headaches, sleep difficulties, procrastination, and more.

Describe your largest source of stress, in detail.


Briefly list two other stressors you are experiencing.
1
2

Circle any symptoms you have experienced in response to stress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anger / Frustration</th>
<th>Anxiety</th>
<th>Decreased Sex Drive</th>
<th>Drug or Alcohol Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Headaches</td>
<td>Indigestion</td>
<td>Muscle Tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nail Biting</td>
<td>Over or Under Eating</td>
<td>Procrastination</td>
<td>Sleep Difficulties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Withdrawal</td>
<td>Teeth Grinding</td>
<td>Worry</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contrary to popular belief, not all stress is bad. The stress response is a powerful tool used by your body to increase the odds of overcoming obstacles. It’s when stress becomes too intense, or lasts for too long, that it becomes problematic.

The negative effects of stress can be reduced with the use of social support, emotional management skills, maintaining a healthy life balance, and attending to basic needs. In the following pages, we’ll explore each of these strategies.
Social Support

Even when your social support cannot solve a problem, just talking can sometimes be enough. When we talk about our problems, hormones are released inside our brains that ease the undesirable symptoms of stress.

List three people who you can turn to for support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>How they can help:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How can you use social support to ease one of your current stressors?

---

Emotional Management

Stress can trigger many emotions such as anxiety, self-doubt, and anger. When these feelings are ignored, they can exacerbate the original stressor. Remember, emotional management isn't about eliminating emotions—it's about dealing with them in a healthy way.

When faced with unpleasant emotions, do you have any habits or tendencies that worsen the situation?

---

List two ways that you have successfully handled unpleasant emotions in the past.

1

2

Life Balance

Stress can be especially destructive if your life is heavily focused on one area. For example, a person who is only focused on a relationship will struggle if their relationship becomes rocky.
Rate each of the following life areas from 1 to 5. A “1” means that you devote little attention to this part of your life, while a “5” means that you devote a high amount of attention to this area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Fun / Recreation</th>
<th>Spirituality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socializing</td>
<td>Intimate Relationship</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based upon your ratings, are there any areas where you would like to devote more attention?

Basic Needs

During periods of high stress, many people take shortcuts when it comes to their basic needs. Examples include sleep, a healthy diet, exercise, and other forms of self-care. When basic needs are neglected, health and mental well-being deteriorate, which contributes to additional stress.

Circle any basic needs that you tend to neglect during periods of high stress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sleep</th>
<th>Healthy Diet</th>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th>Medical Adherence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Hygiene</td>
<td>Social / Love Needs</td>
<td>Managing Addictions</td>
<td>medications, appointments, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe the steps you can take to protect your basic needs during periods of high stress.
Consent Form

Mindfulness Techniques Workshop to Preventative Occupational Burnout and Compassion Fatigue in Employees Working with an Alzheimer's Population

Invitation

You are invited to participate in a mindfulness workshop. The purpose of this workshop is to prevent occupational burnout and compassion fatigue in individuals working with an Alzheimer’s population. The workshop will take place over 8-week period, one 60-minute session will take place a week. Each week a different topic is covered, the schedule is as follows: week one is an introduction to Alzheimer's Disease, occupational burnout, and compassion fatigue; week two is the topic of self-care and the importance of overall wellness; week three will be an introduction to the use of mindfulness; week four the topic is meditation; week five is diaphragmatic breathing; week six is yoga; week seven is progressive muscle relaxation; and the workshop will finish on the eighth week with a conclusion session. For all eight sessions time will be set aside for group discussions, activities, and questions.

Why is this being done?

The purpose of this study is to use psychoeducation to explain occupational burnout and compassion fatigue to staff members helping them gain a better understanding of the importance of self-care. Teaching mindfulness techniques will assist employees in preventing and addressing occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, while promoting emotional and physical wellness.

What will you need to do if you take part?

The participants will be required to attend 8 one-hour sessions and participate in self-care and mindfulness activities each week. Following the workshop, the participants will be asked to provide feedback on the workshop and provide the facilitator with suggestions for the future.

What are the potential direct benefits of taking part?

Using psychoeducation to explain occupational burnout and compassion fatigue will help you gain a better understanding of the importance of self-care. Learning mindfulness techniques may assist employees in preventing and addressing occupational burnout, compassion fatigue, while promoting emotional and physical wellness.

What are the potential disadvantages or risks of taking part?
A potential disadvantage of this project is what participants choose to do with the information provided. Without an effort to modify both cognitions and behaviours there will not be any change within the work environment.

The risks of taking part in this project include increased stress due to the additional work required through their participation and the possibility of elevated anxiety from having to incorporate the new skill of mindfulness into everyday life.

Do you have to take part?

You are not required to attend the workshop. Participation is on a volunteer basis and you can withdraw consent at any point. If you choose not to participate or withdraw consent you will not be penalized.

Contact for further information

If you would like to receive more information about the workshop, please contact the workshop facilitator directly.

I understand and consent to the information on the previous page.

Name:

_____ I consent to participate in the workshop.

_____ I do NOT consent to participate in the workshop.

Participant Signature:   Date:

Witness Signature:   Date:
References


Appendix E:

Request of permission to use worksheets from Psychology Tools and Therapist Aid

---

Matthew Whalley <matthew@psychologytools.com>
Hi. I'm Matthew Whalley.
Sure, no problem. Happy for you to include in your thesis.
Best wishes,
Matthew

On 12 Jan 2018, at 01:02, Ainslie Plouffe [Student] <APlouffe51@student.ualberta.ca> wrote:

Hi Ainslie,
Sure, no problem. Happy for you to include in your thesis.
Best wishes,
Matthew

On Thu, Jan 11, 2018 at 8:02 PM Ainslie Plouffe [Student] <APlouffe51@student.ualberta.ca> wrote:

To whom this may concern,

I am a behavioural psychology student and am writing a thesis on the use mindfulness techniques to prevent occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. I was hoping to use some of the free activity sheets you have available on your website. Do I have permission to proceed? Please let me know.

Thank you,
Ainslie Plouffe

---

Woody Schuldt <wschuldt@therapistaid.com>
Hi. I'm Woody Schuldt.

Thanks for reaching out. Yes, you're welcome to use our tools for your thesis as long as our copyright information remains intact on each form. Good luck with your project!

Thanks,

Woody Schuldt

---

On Thu, Jan 11, 2018 at 8:02 PM Ainslie Plouffe [Student] <APlouffe51@student.ualberta.ca> wrote:

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I am a behavioural psychology student and am writing a thesis on the use mindfulness techniques to prevent occupational burnout and compassion fatigue. I was hoping to use some of the free activity sheets you have available on your website. Do I have permission to proceed? Please let me know.

Thank you,
Ainslie Plouffe
Appendix F: Consent to use Agency Name

St. Lawrence College

Date: 2015-03

Consent for Use of Agency Name

I, Beth Bruce, consent to the use of the name of The Hildegardie Centre in Ainslie Plouffe's applied thesis for the Honours Bachelor of Behavioural Psychology program at St. Lawrence College.

Agency Staff Signature

Student Signature

Beth Bruce

Ainslie Plouffe

Printed Name

Printed Name