

MODULE IX - UNIT 1



CLINICIAN WELLBEING:  
SELF-CARE IN THE HEARING CLINIC  
THE SCIENCE OF SELF-CARE I

INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

Estimated time for this unit: The time will be dependent on the number of activities selected, as well as the time allocated to the activities.

An ideal time allocation for this lecture would be three hours. For a more content-only focus, allow 60-90 minutes per lecture.

### **1. Learning objectives**

1. To understand and describe the risks and challenges of selfcare in contemporary clinical practice
2. To understand the characteristics, manifestation and early warning signals of compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and burnout
3. To use an assessment tool to determine your own risk
4. To define, and differentiate between empathy, and compassion and gain experience in identifying strategies during clinical practice

### **2. Concepts to master**

Professional fatigue has become a concern of professional associations. There is a heightened concern about the wellbeing of the professional. It is recognized that without attention and early intervention, professional fatigue reactions may blossom into larger, more sinister phenomena. This concern is warranted because in our attempt to embody person-centered care in our practice, philosophy, principles, and behaviors, we sometimes fail to recognize the impact of:

- Constant empathy
- Interpersonal sensitivity
- One-way caring

For a professional, fatigue becomes an occupational hazard, and before we dismiss professional fatigue as 'just being tired' or 'everyone gets tired'. It is important to note that there is a cost to caring!

One of our difficulties is that we lack the vocabulary around professional fatigue and how client exposure may impact our wellbeing. We do not have realistic expectations of client success, we believe that if we do everything right, every client will be happy. This is an unlikely scenario. We also do not admit that part of being person-centered is to allow ourselves, as people, to remain happy and thriving in our profession.

When we do struggle and feel weary, we lack the knowledge, and vocabulary to look after ourselves.

To better understand the cost, the following concepts will be mastered in Lecture 1:

- Empathy
- Emotional contagion
- Compassion fatigue
- Vicarious traumatisation
- Burnout

### 3. Reading and preparation

Listen to Brené Brown's Unlocking us Podcast: with Emily and Amelia Nagoski on Burnout and how to complete the stress cycle.

After lecture 1: Reflect on your ProQol scores and access readings from the ProQol website:

[http://www.proqol.org/ProQol\\_Test.html](http://www.proqol.org/ProQol_Test.html)

Bring some of your reflections along.

### 4. Lecture

The science of selfcare I

Lecture 1 will explore the various faces of emotional exhaustion in the work place, including burnout, compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma. Early warning signs, as well as the strategies to combat and manage exhaustion in the workplace, will be discussed.

### 5. Activity

#### Activity 1: Professional fatigue

(slide 8, 10-15 minutes)

Small group activity

Ask participants to reflect on a clinical encounter where they had awareness of the impact of constant empathy, or interpersonal sensitivity or one-way caring.

1. Reflect on the role players – what stood out?
2. Reflect on the case context and history.
3. Describe how you managed with your awareness at the time?
4. Share in your small group. Identify any commonalities within the group, across groups.

#### Activity 2: Pulse check

(slide 22, optional)

If anyone had a specific question or comment, spend a few minutes to discuss. It is also recommended that participants will have the opportunity to assess and take stock of their own

wellbeing in the next activity.

**Activity 3: Take the ProQol test**

(slides 36-37, allow at least 20 minutes for this activity)