

**Vicarious Trauma | Secondary Trauma | Self Care
Scenario Discussion for Collaborative Learning**

Scenario options

| Category | Scenario |
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| Client/Staff relationship – Secondary trauma | <p>#1.</p> <p>You did an in-home assessment that was designed to gather information about your adult client’s exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences. The client got a 6 out of 10 on the assessment. Though you worked with this client and their family for a few months, this is the first time the client disclosed some of the information provided during the assessment. Every night this week since the assessment you find yourself unable to sleep thinking about your client’s childhood trauma. The sleeplessness is starting to have a noticeable influence your interactions with colleagues, other clients, and your family.</p> |
| Personal life affecting work | <p>#2.</p> <p>You’ve had a lot going on in your personal life the last few months – everything at home feels like chaos. Your brother was recently diagnosed with a life-threatening medical condition, so he has had to stop working, and everyone in the family is very scared for him and his health. You and your intimate partner have been getting into regular disagreements about cooking and cleaning at home. Aside from that, your car has been making a funny noise for a while now and you just haven’t had time to stop and get it checked out. One of your clients, who you have a positive relationship with, has been reaching out and you haven’t been able to get back to her. Lately you’ve sat at your desk with a million emails to read, a thousand calls to return, and a to-do list that is a mile long, but you have no idea where to even start. Your positive relationship is starting to feel strained though, because this client has been sending you messages that are short and accusatory. In her last voicemail she was fuming mad, saying you didn’t turn in the paperwork that was due a week ago, and you realize you did not get that done.</p> |
| Client/Staff relationship – appropriateness of relationship | <p>#3.</p> <p>Your client of 18 months texted you that their family needed toys for Christmas, and is leaving town early tomorrow morning. This client has suffered with food and housing insecurity in the past several months. You were there when this client gave birth to their most recent child, and you helped them work through the postpartum depression. This client was on your case load longer than any other client. In trying to secure a Goodwill voucher for this client, you got mad and scolded the Office Assistant for giving you the wrong form. Once you received the voucher you leave immediately for the closest Goodwill, skipping lunch and a team meeting. While at the store shopping for gifts you ignored several emails, missed three calls from other clients, and ignored a text from your boss. Once you almost got to the register, the cashier states this voucher is only good for a different store across town and that store closes in 5 minutes.</p> |
| Staff trauma – secondary trauma | <p>#4.</p> <p>You worked at your center for over 10 years that provides in-home and center-based services. In your third year, your team member was assaulted at your center by an upset parent. After that you noticed that you were afraid to be at the center and found ways to avoid working there unless necessary. Soon, you found ways to avoid interaction with clients that looked like the upset parent that assaulted your</p> |

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| | <p>colleague. None of your other colleagues or supervisors complained because you were one of the more experienced/permanent staff and you were still getting your work done. However, you declined several opportunities for promotions because you were afraid to spend more time at the center. Recently, your new supervisor noticed your avoidant behaviors and asked you about it in reflective supervision.</p> |
| Staff reaching out | <p>#5. A colleague approaches you and states that the stress and anxiety from the trauma experiences lately have become oppressive. This person shares that nightmares are occurring and that sleep time is limited. Your colleague expresses a desire to use sick days for recuperation, take a leave of absence, transfer to a different department, or simply resign. This person wants you to think about their predicament and that he/she will get back in touch with you later in the week to hear your advice.</p> |
| Client emergency | <p>#6. A 13 year-old is threatening to commit suicide. She is calling from a cell phone in an undisclosed location. She states she has several bottles of pills and some alcohol. You recall the largest growing population for suicide is ages 10-14.</p> |
| Client disengagement | <p>#7. A kindergarten student is consistently displaying sexual behaviors and touching other students inappropriately. Lately, the mother has left her boyfriend and is seeking a restraining order. She has informed the school not to let anyone else pick the child up from school unless she calls. You have talked to her numerous times regarding her child's behaviors, but she seems too preoccupied to extend the conversation.</p> |
| Client situation escalating | <p>#8. A middle school student has become increasingly violent and aggressive. Other students have voiced their fears and some parents have called the school with concerns. The parents seem unable to control the child and live in a rural area with no medical or mental health clinics nearby.</p> |