



Addressing  
Secondary Stress:  
**Strong in the  
Broken Places**

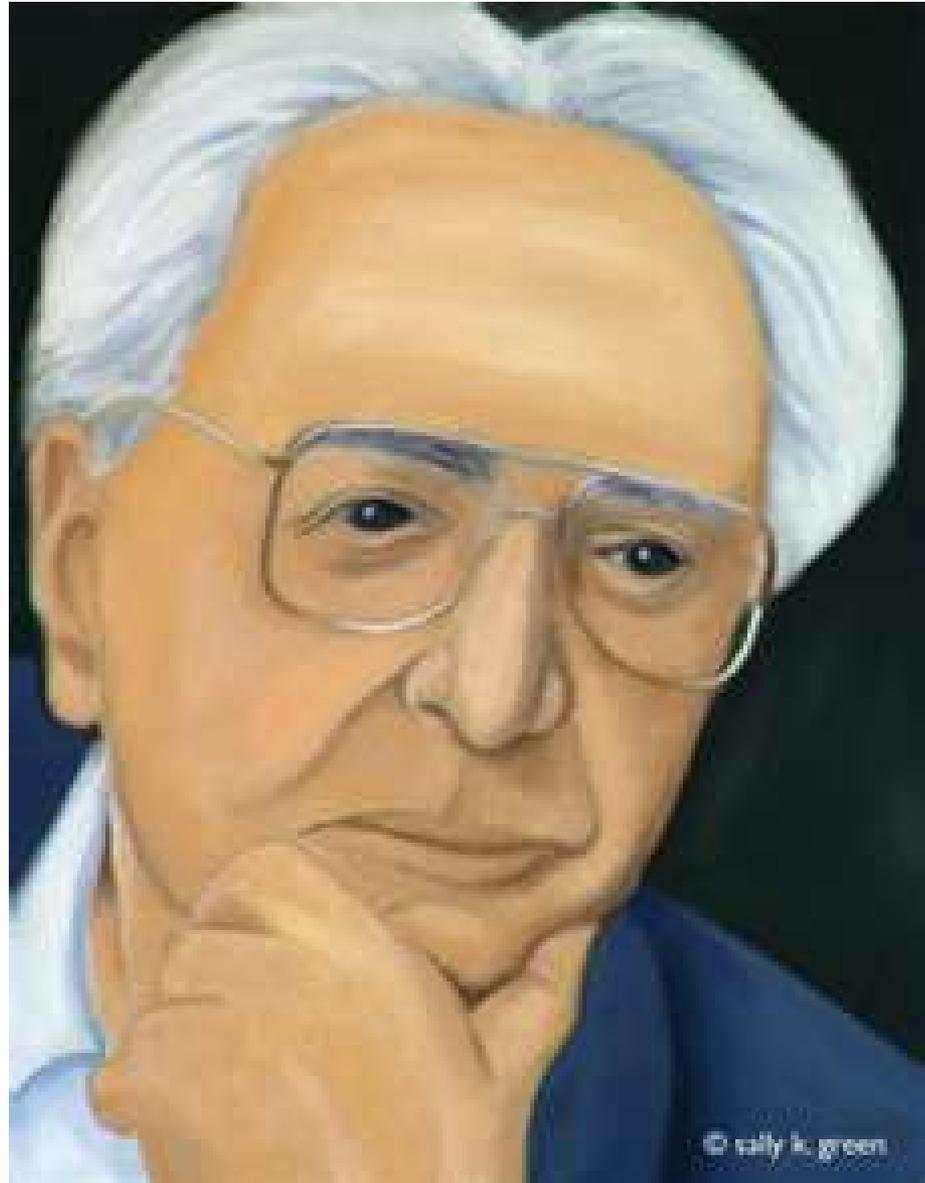
Wayne Scott, MA, LCSW

***The world  
breaks  
everyone and  
afterward  
many are  
strong in the  
broken places.***



**Ernest Hemingway**

**An abnormal  
reaction to  
an abnormal  
situation is  
normal  
behavior.**



**Viktor Frankl**

## OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To explain the idea of **SECONDARY STRESS**, its impact on self and others
- ❖ To identify strategies to build **RESILIENCE**
- ❖ To explore what **ORGANIZATIONS** can do to help



# Ground Rules



- ❖ **FOCUS** on what matters
- ❖ **CONTRIBUTE** your thinking and experience
- ❖ **SPEAK** your mind and heart
- ❖ Listen to **UNDERSTAND**
- ❖ **CONNECT IDEAS** for questions, deeper patterns, and insights.

# EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE: Creating Safety



## **EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE:** **Creating Safety**

**What steps have you  
taken to create a SAFE  
ENVIRONMENT and  
SAFE RELATIONSHIPS in  
your work units?**



## DVD AND DISCUSSION:

### Priest Best in Show

What does **SECONDARY STRESS** look like?



What makes individuals **VULNERABLE** to its impact?

## DEFINITION:

### **Vicarious trauma**

(Saakvitne & Pearlman, 1996)



“The **CUMULATIVE TRANSFORMATIVE** impact upon the [professional] of working with survivors of traumatic life events.... The **PERVASIVE** effect of doing this work on the **IDENTITY, WORLD VIEW**, psychological needs and **BELIEFS**, and **MEMORY** system of the [professional] .”

# TRAUMA STEWARDSHIP

(Van Dernoot Lipsky, 2007)



“Trauma stewardship refers to the **ENTIRETY** of how we interact with others’ suffering, pain, crisis, and trauma. It includes but is not limited to our **INTENTION** in choosing the work we do, our **PHILOSOPHY** of what it means to help others, the **TONE** our caregiving takes, and our daily decisions about **HOW WE LIVE OUR LIVES**. Trauma stewardship extends even to the ultimate **MEANING** we extract from our work.”

## EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE: Silent Witness



- ❖ Write down **THREE WAYS** you think secondary stress has impacted you.
- ❖ These should be impacts you are willing to share with others.
- ❖ Circulate **SILENTLY** throughout the room in **APPRECIATIVE WITNESS.**



**SIGNS of  
Secondary  
Stress**

**Anxiety**

**Addictions**

**Startle responses**

**Polarized thinking**

**Numbing/denial**

**Sleep disturbances**

**Nightmares**

**Depression**

**Entrenched cynicism**

**Intrusion of traumatic material**

**Obsession with evil**

**Sexual/eating disturbances**

**Reawakening of  
own past trauma**



**SIGNS of  
Secondary  
Stress**

**Secondary stress  
disrupts our BELIEFS  
about ourselves  
and the world.**

**POWER AND CONTROL**  
**BOUNDARIES**  
**SELF-WORTH**  
**TRUST**

**EXPERIENTIAL  
EXERCISE:  
Self-Care Inventory**





**SMALL GROUP BRAINSTORMING:**  
**Benefits of Adversity**





**AIDS**



# Arthritis



# Cancer

**Birth of  
seriously ill  
child**

get share images





# Caring for ill relative

## Stroke





**Sexual  
abuse**

**Death of  
a loved  
one**

**House fire**

**Tornado**



# Combat in Vietnam

**Mass shooting**





# Plane crash Tornado

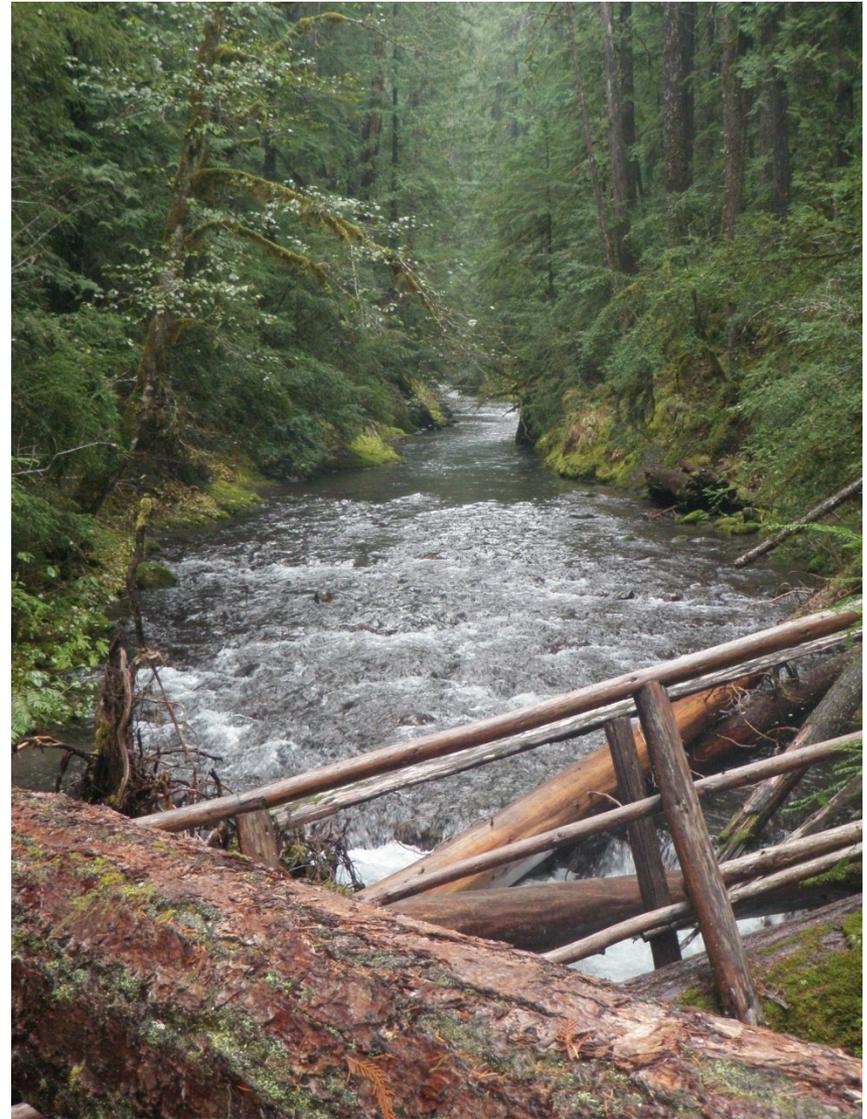


SMALL GROUP BRAINSTORMING:  
**Benefits of Adversity**

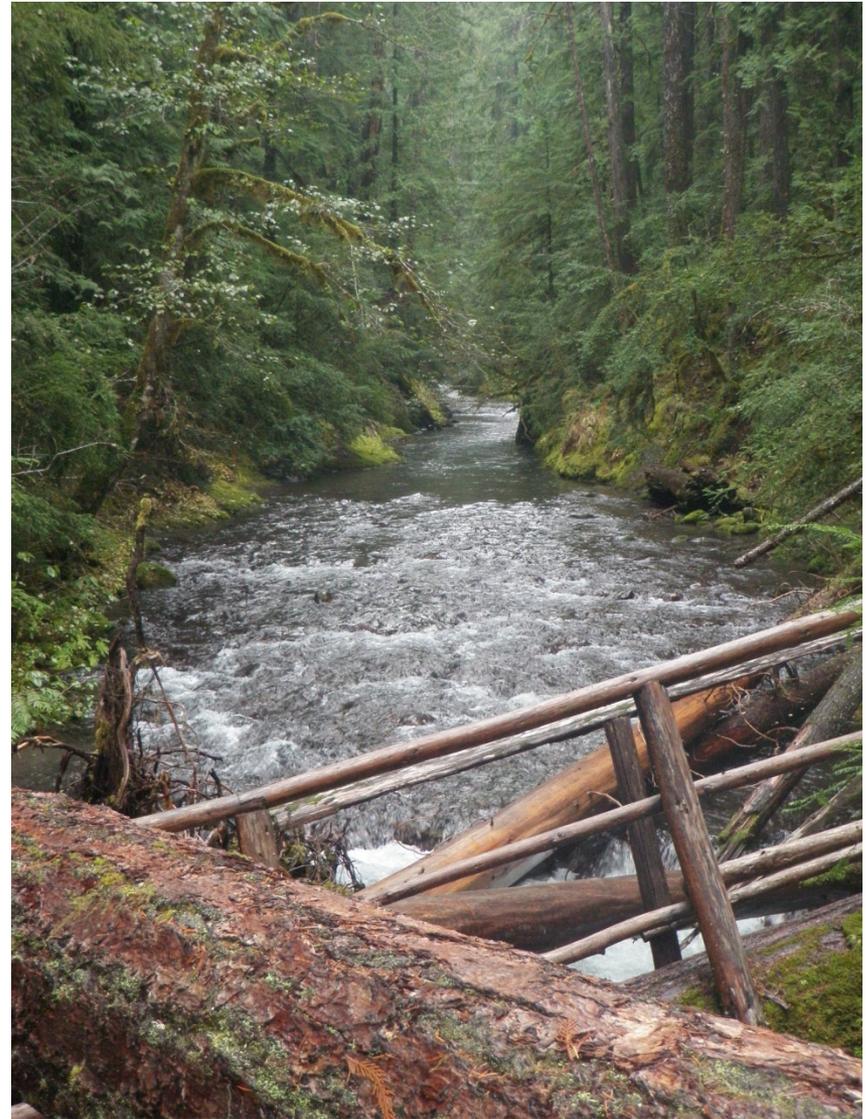


- ❖ What are the **BENEFITS** of working with clients facing extreme adversity?
- ❖ How has it **IMPROVED** your life at home or at work?

- ❖ Health enhancing changes in life structure
- ❖ Stress inoculation
- ❖ Changed view of others



- ❖ Transformation through interpretation
- ❖ Turning symptoms on their heads
- ❖ Money



*I tried to make  
my mind large,  
as the universe is  
large, so that  
there is room for  
**PARADOXES.***



**Maxine Hong Kingston**



**TED TALK**  
**The Power of  
Vulnerability**



**What steps can  
you take as a  
team to honor  
authentic  
connection?**



**How can team members assist each other to become “whole-hearted people living from a deep sense of worthiness”?**



**How do we  
cultivate the  
courage,  
compassion,  
connection in  
the workplace?**



Connection

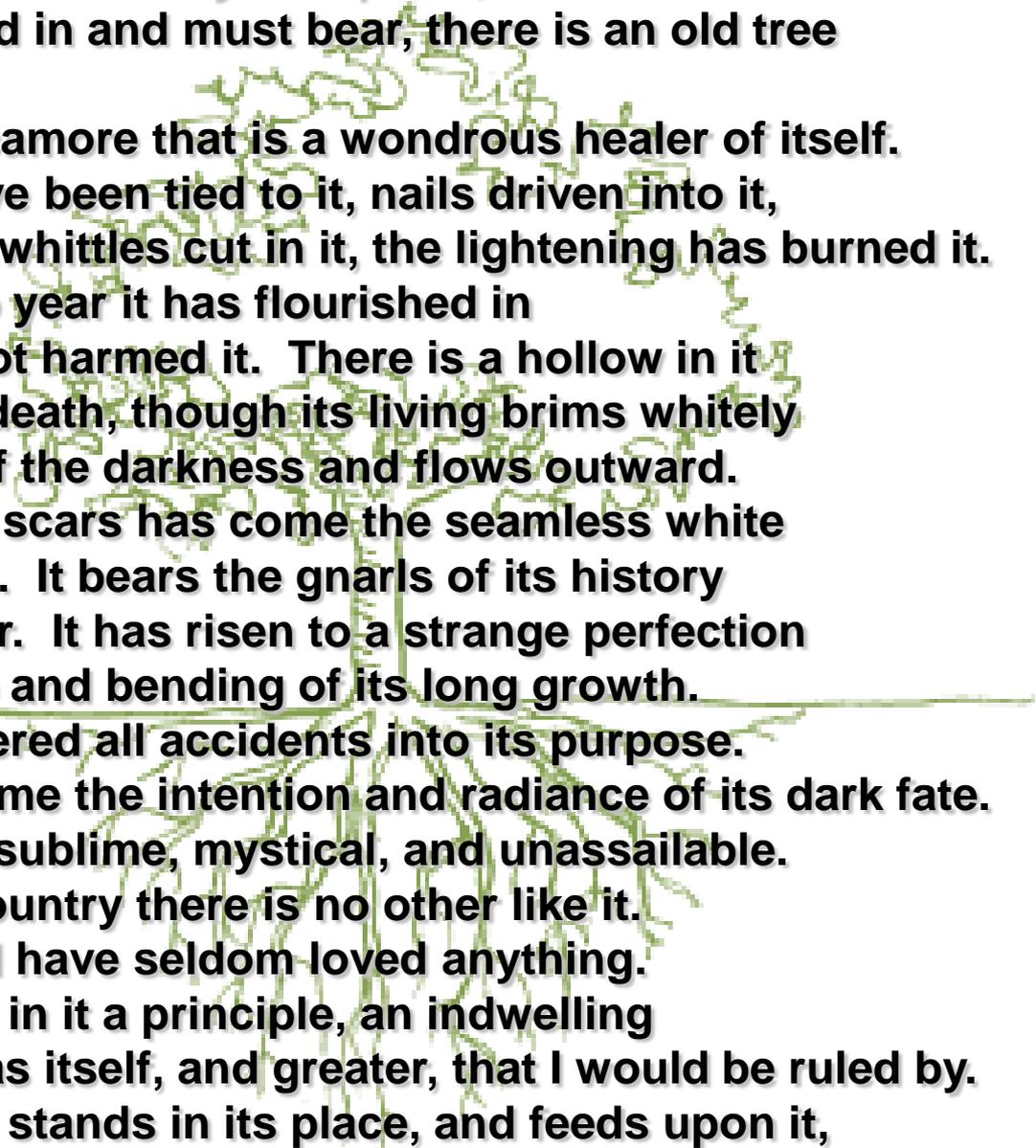
Courage

Vulnerability

Compassion



# From "The Return" by Wendell Berry



In the place that is my own place, whose earth  
I am shaped in and must bear, there is an old tree  
growing,  
A great sycamore that is a wondrous healer of itself.  
Fences have been tied to it, nails driven into it,  
Hacks and whittles cut in it, the lightning has burned it.  
There is no year it has flourished in  
That has not harmed it. There is a hollow in it  
That is its death, though its living brims whitely  
At the lip of the darkness and flows outward.  
Over all its scars has come the seamless white  
Of the bark. It bears the gnarls of its history  
Healed over. It has risen to a strange perfection  
In the warp and bending of its long growth.  
It has gathered all accidents into its purpose.  
It has become the intention and radiance of its dark fate.  
It is a fact, sublime, mystical, and unassailable.  
In all the country there is no other like it.  
I love it as I have seldom loved anything.  
I recognize in it a principle, an indwelling  
The same as itself, and greater, that I would be ruled by.  
I see that it stands in its place, and feeds upon it,  
And is fed upon, and is native, and maker.



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Broken Places**

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