

## What is Vicarious Trauma and How to Notice it at Work

Vicarious trauma is the emotional impact from exposure to others' trauma.

**Signs:** Emotional numbness, irritability, trust issues and worldview changes.

Note that vicarious trauma may be cited as part of a Worksafe BC claim.



## Key Signs and Differences

There are key differences between vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue and burnout

### Vicarious Trauma

Long-term emotional impact of others' trauma.

### Compassion Fatigue

Emotional exhaustion from caring.

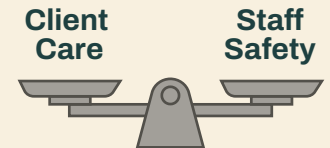
### Burnout

Stress-related exhaustion from overwork.

## Balancing Priorities

Balance staff safety and well-being with providing trauma-informed care for clients. Strategies include:

- Manage caseloads by acuity and volume to prevent overwhelm.
- Provide safe spaces for decompression to minimize environmental stress.
- Ensure timely debriefing for staff.



## Supporting & Empowering Staff



Offer support resources like employee assistance programs and peer support.



Conduct regular check-ins to understand and address staff concerns.



Implement policies emphasizing safety, trust, and empowerment.



Model and train staff in healthy coping strategies.

## Risk Factors and Solutions

**Risk Factors:** Inadequate support systems and high workload.

### Solutions:

- Train staff on self-care and resilience-building techniques.
- Develop personal self-care plans and integrate mindfulness into daily routines.
- Promote a culture that prioritizes mental health to lower turnover and boost productivity.