

TAKING CARE
The Workshop for Caregivers
Sally Fisher

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TAKING CARE

The Workshop for Caregivers

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1640 Florida Street

San Francisco, CA 94110

Dear Nancy:

At the end of our Oral History event at the skills building conference I found myself unable to tear myself away from audience members who came to chat in order to thank you. You did a wonderful job keeping order and allowing things to flow smoothly despite the barrage of artillery from the front. I'm not surprised at the amount of rage out there, just at the particular forum people chose to express it in.

I think under all of it is a fountain of fear and grief that express themselves as anger. I see this same phenomenon within the agencies and hospitals I work with. Once the real stuff come up then defenses and offenses come down. That's when people begin to "really" work together. I hope we have an opportunity to work together again.

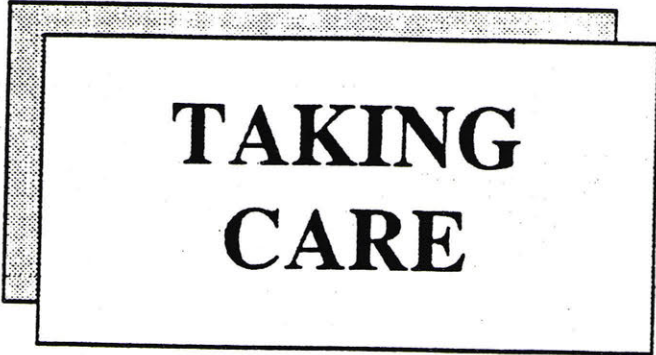
I'm sending you a packet of information on Taking Care, the work I'm most involved with at the moment. I haven't done this work in San Francisco yet, though I used to be up there a lot in the early days of the AIDS Mastery. If you have any ideas of where Taking Care could be valuable, please let me know. I love your town and would love to have a reason to be there.

Again, many thanks for your patients and skill.

Best regards,



Sally Fisher



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AGENCY / HOSPITAL SURVEY

Assessment of Burnout Among Employees
(To be completed by supervisors)

Name of Hospital/Agency: _____

Mission: _____

Location: _____

Number and type of employees: _____

It is important that the subtle signs of burnout be recognized. Individually the signs may seem harmless or explainable. Taken together they can present a startling picture. Multiplied by several employees working together, the results can be tragic. These signs include:

- Swings in an employee's pace of work and individual productivity and/or attendance. Peaks and valleys that get progressively more pronounced and closer together.
- Deadlines that are missed, or an overall decrease in efficiency.
- A gradual decline in work quality.
- Unreasonable excuses for not getting the job done properly.
- A promise to improve behavior, which may be kept temporarily, followed by a decline in performance.
- Attendance problems that begin infrequently with an increase of incidence.
- Accidents causing minor injuries to self, others or damage to equipment.
- An increase in physical complaints and medical ailments that cause a loss of time.
- Complaints from other workers, clients/patients and/or the public about work output, quality of care or attitude.
- Lack of attention to detail and inability to concentrate.

I. Describe the Work place:

What is the rate of absenteeism?

Tardiness?

Turnover?

Termination?

Work related accidents? (OSHA reports or other)

Workers compensation claims, including number and cost?

Grievances?

Health insurance claims?

II. Describe your staff.

How many of your staff will be participating in TAKING CARE?

Are they from one department, or from various areas? If so please elaborate.

How would you describe their jobs?

III. DESCRIBE THE WORK ENVIRONMENT.

What is the size of your agency/hospital? What population does it serve?

What is the average length of employment for your employees?

How would you describe relationships among staff members?

How would you describe the relationship between staff and various levels of supervisors and administrators? What is the general relationship between staff and authority\management?

excellent____ good____ fair____ poor____

Comments:

How would you describe the attitude of staff to work and to the patients/clients?

excellent____ good____ fair____ poor____

Comments:

How would you describe your communication with:

Co-workers: excellent____ good____ fair____ poor____

Supervisors: excellent____ good____ fair____ poor____

Patients/clients: excellent____ good____ fair____ poor____

Personal relations: excellent____ good____ fair____ poor____

Comments:

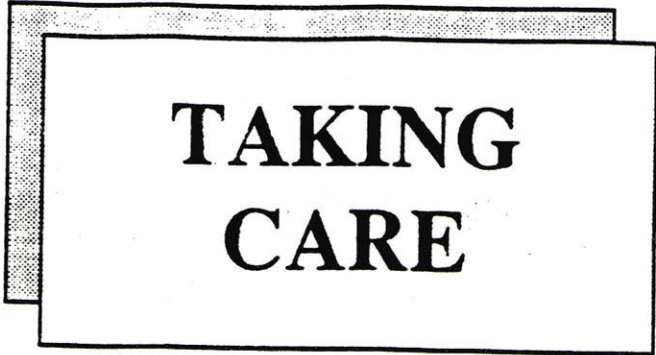
What are the major sources of stress for your staff?

What kinds of staff support systems currently are in place, and in what ways do they work?

What are the most frequently recurring complaints of staff?

From your on the job experience, what do you feel needs to happen in order for your staff to provide the best quality of care possible and to create a healthy work environment?

What other goals might you have for your staff that TAKING CARE could help facilitate?



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PARTICIPANT SURVEY

TAKING CARE is a workshop that is designed to get to the roots of burnout. The approach goes beyond the workplace, in order to affect a shift, because work is only one component of life. This questionnaire is designed to give you pause to look at the greater picture, and to give workshop planners and facilitators an awareness of individual and group dynamics. These forms will be kept confidential. Please feel free to write as much as you like. Don't let the space be a limitation. As you answer the questions you will begin the process of TAKING CARE.

Name:

Age:

What is your job description?

How long have you been in your current job?

How long have you been involved in caregiving?

What other types of work have you done?

What are the sources of satisfaction in your work?

How would you describe your relationship to co-workers? How well do you communicate?

excellent_____ good_____ fair_____ poor_____

Comments:

How would you describe your relationship to supervisors, administration and others in authority within the system? How well do you communicate with them?

excellent_____ good_____ fair_____ poor_____

Comments:

How would you describe your relationship with patients/clients.

excellent_____ good_____ fair_____ poor_____

Comments:

How would you describe your communication with:

Co-workers: excellent_____ good_____ fair_____ poor_____

Supervisors: excellent_____ good_____ fair_____ poor_____

Patients/clients: excellent_____ good_____ fair_____ poor_____

Personal relations: excellent_____ good_____ fair_____ poor_____

Comments:

What would you describe as the major sources of stress in your work environment?

What do you feel would need to shift in your work environment for you to be burnout free?

Are you able to leave work when you leave work? If not, why?

How would you describe your personal life?

What are some areas of stress in your personal life?

What are some areas of support and nurturing in your personal life?

How easily do you express your feelings and needs?

What would you describe as your most pressing needs at the moment?

What other workshops or seminars have you taken in the past?

Are you involved in any spiritual or religious groups?

Are you currently in therapy? If so, what kind and what has it been like for you?

What would you like most to get from your participation in TAKING CARE?

TAKING CARE

The Workshop for Caregivers

TAKING CARE is an innovative two-day workshop designed especially for any health care institution, agency or group suffering from the effects of caregiver stress and burnout. TAKING CARE is designed to guide your staff in relieving burnout and preventing its return.

"In this time of crisis, band-aids are not enough."

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ABOUT BURNOUT

Stress, conflict and burnout affects health care practitioners more acutely than professionals in other less stressful fields. Doctors, nurses, therapists, administrators, volunteers and other health service providers are especially vulnerable. The cost can be measured in devastating human terms as well as dramatic financial terms.

The human costs suffered by staff:

- Overwhelm and exhaustion
- Confusion and depression
- Sloppy performance
- Low motivation, apathy and anger
- Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness and personal worthlessness
- Substance abuse

The prohibitive financial expense incurred by institutions:

- Losses from absenteeism and sick leave
- High rates of attrition and staff turnover
- The high costs of temporary staffing, restaffing and retraining
- Negligence and malpractice

Burnout and stress are sometimes confused with exhaustion, overload, overwhelm, and grief. One can be replenished, revived and healed from the effects of work by a vacation. Not so for burnout. A vacation will only refresh a burned out caregiver for a brief time, after which the feelings will set in again.

TAKING CARE CAN HELP

HEALTH CARE IN CRISIS

- Budget limitations
- The aging population (the "graying of America")
- The AIDS epidemic, now in its second decade
- The overload of already burdened emergency care
- Unresolved grief in the work place
- The pressure of rapid technological advances
- The impending collapse of health care and insurance systems
- Ethical questions of life or death

These are just a few of the many issues confronting today's health care institutions. These pressures and the ever increasing stress incurred by health providers contribute to a new and rapidly emerging malady of potentially epidemic proportions: We call this epidemic "CAREGIVER BURNOUT".

TAKING CARE CAN HELP

BURNOUT IN THE AIDS SERVICES COMMUNITY

- Budget limitations
- High mortality rate and accumulation of grief
- Case loads expanding faster than the ability to expand services
- Changing demographics of the AIDS epidemic
- The overload of client per staff ratio
- Increase in client complaints
- The pressure of ever-changing client needs
- The impending collapse of health care and insurance systems
- Ethical questions
- Society's continuing indifference toward the AIDS epidemic

AIDS service providers work under even greater stress than the general health care population. Commonly the crisis they deal with at work spills into their personal lives. HIV may threaten not only clients, but also friends, colleagues and perhaps the caregivers themselves.

TAKING CARE CAN HELP

HOW IS TAKING CARE DIFFERENT

TAKING CARE recognizes three distinct areas which contribute to burnout, stress and conflict:

- 1) work related issues
- 2) personal issues brought into the work place
- 3) unresolved childhood issues

TAKING CARE differs from the many burnout workshops that are springing up, because it delves deeply into the areas of personal needs and personal past that often go unnoticed as they relate to issues in the work place. The coping skills and stress management offered by other workshops are valuable tools and are included in our program. Without deeper work, however, the effects will dissipate leaving staff once again burned out. What is called for is work which facilitates permanent rather than temporary relief. ***In this time of crisis, band-aids are not enough.***

TAKING CARE offers each participant a look at the reasons they were originally drawn to caregiving. Most important among these is a profound "call to service". TAKING CARE makes the distinction clear between personal issues and the call to service. The well-being of your staff will determine the quality of care provided by your institution.

TAKING CARE includes follow-up.

In order to assure the quality of care after the workshop, TAKING CARE is available for continuing support. As newly discovered feelings come to the surface or circumstances reveal new issues, our facilitators are available by phone to participants and agencies for consultation and referral.

Each participant receives our "Maintenance Manual" that includes data & exercises designed to provide continued learning and support.

TAKING CARE is uniquely suited to your specific needs.

TAKING CARE is tailored to your needs, blending the issues of concern to a specific institution with those of the individual participants. No two groups of people, nor the circumstances in which they work, are the same; thus each TAKING CARE workshop is unique. Much care has been given to content, structure and goals. Surveys of the needs of the agency, together with questionnaires completed by individual participants, guide the selection of materials, exercises and processes to be used. What remains constant is the quality of each TAKING CARE workshop experience, and the powerful and long lasting results achieved by each participant.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF TAKING CARE?

TAKING CARE seeks to replace sacrifice with service and to replace co-dependence with true caregiving.

Your staff benefits by learning to:

- hold realistic expectations
- set comfortable personal boundaries
- meet and express their needs
- communicate effectively
- create personal and professional support systems
- make decisions clearly
- realize that caring for themselves is an imperative part of caring for others

Your institution benefits by:

- increasing staff retention
- renewing compassion in patient care
- increasing productivity
- decreasing fatigue
- increasing efficiency
- increasing motivation
- increasing pride of work

The result of TAKING CARE is to affect a shift in the experience of the work place. The workshop provides insight and tools with which participants can directly effect their own sense of well-being and the quality of their lives. In turn, the quality of their work is improved. Participants learn how to keep from reaching burnout and to continue giving care in a fully effective manner. TAKING CARE is designed to bring a cohesive and committed energy to your staff.

These results are achieved by:

- creating a workshop uniquely designed for your needs
- identifying the sources of stress, and the sources of strength and nurturing
- developing communications skills
- creating support systems
- grief management
- breaking behavioral patterns
- reconnecting with the purpose of caregiving and personal vision
- visualization work
- family of origin exploration, in the context of its relevance to the present

MORE ABOUT TAKING CARE

TAKING CARE was created by Sally Fisher in response to the emergence of burnout in the health care profession. Ms. Fisher is the creator of the AIDS Mastery Workshop, which is currently offered in over 30 cities throughout the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Europe and Australia. In many of these cities NLA offers other programs for people with AIDS/HIV, their families and support systems, including counseling, support groups, children's services and education. TAKING CARE grew out of the work done with service providers and caregivers. Ms Fisher is the author of "Life Mastery".

Through interaction with the TAKING CARE Board of Advisors, Ms Fisher is able to identify and address the ever changing needs of the caregiver community to keep the workshop current.

TAKING CARE is led by a staff of facilitators which include PhDs, clinical psychologists and social workers, as well as a support staff of experienced leaders. In addition to formal training and clinical experience, our facilitators have life experience which enhances their effectiveness.

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PLEASE CALL ON TAKING CARE TO HELP:

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LOGISTICS

Workshop Time Frame:	Two full days
Scheduling:	Flexible
Location:	Provided by sponsoring health care institution or agency
Materials:	Provided by TAKING CARE
Fee:	Upon Request
Minimum workshop enrollment:	20 people (negotiable)

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FROM PAST CLIENTS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.