

Professional Issues Across the Recovery Continuum: Boundaries and Self Care

Why is the obvious so elusive?



Cultural models
and rituals
promote sacrifice
for the welfare of
others



“Normal reactions to abnormal events”
“Every disaster is different”



Relationship
Between
Unrealistic
Optimism and
Secondary
Traumatic Stress

Shalvi, Shenkman, Handgraaf, and De Dreu¹
Journal of Applied Social Psychology

Project Heartland OKC Bombing MH Recovery Program

- Only small percentage within clinical range of symptoms
- 65% positive for some symptoms of PTSD
- 77% assessed at risk for burnout
- Several developed health problems*

Stress responses of mental health workers following disaster: The Oklahoma City bombing. Treating compassion fatigue. Wee, David F.; Myers, Diane. Figley, Charles R. (Ed), (2002). Treating compassion fatigue, Psychosocial stress series, no. 24 (pp. 57-83). New York, NY, US: Brunner-Routledge, viii, 227 pp.

“Compassion fatigue results from taking on the emotional burden of a patient's agony”



- Self care begins before the disaster
- Self assessment of readiness for deployment
- Lifestyle not a technique or “stop gap” measure

