

FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING:

Navigating Stress and Expanding
the Window of Tolerance

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DEPARTMENT OF
BEHAVIORAL
WELLNESS
A SYSTEM OF CARE AND RECOVERY



AGENDA

- Understanding Compassion Fatigue vs. Empathic Strain
- Explore the Complexities of Empathic Strain
- Window of Tolerance
- Action and Implementation Plan



Surviving or Thriving?



There is a cost to caring.



Burnout



Contributing factors:

- High workload and few rewards
- Feelings of being unsupported
- Inadequate training and supervision
- Values and ethical conflicts
- Burdensome policies / excessive bureaucracy

What's the Difference?



Burnout

Empathic Strain

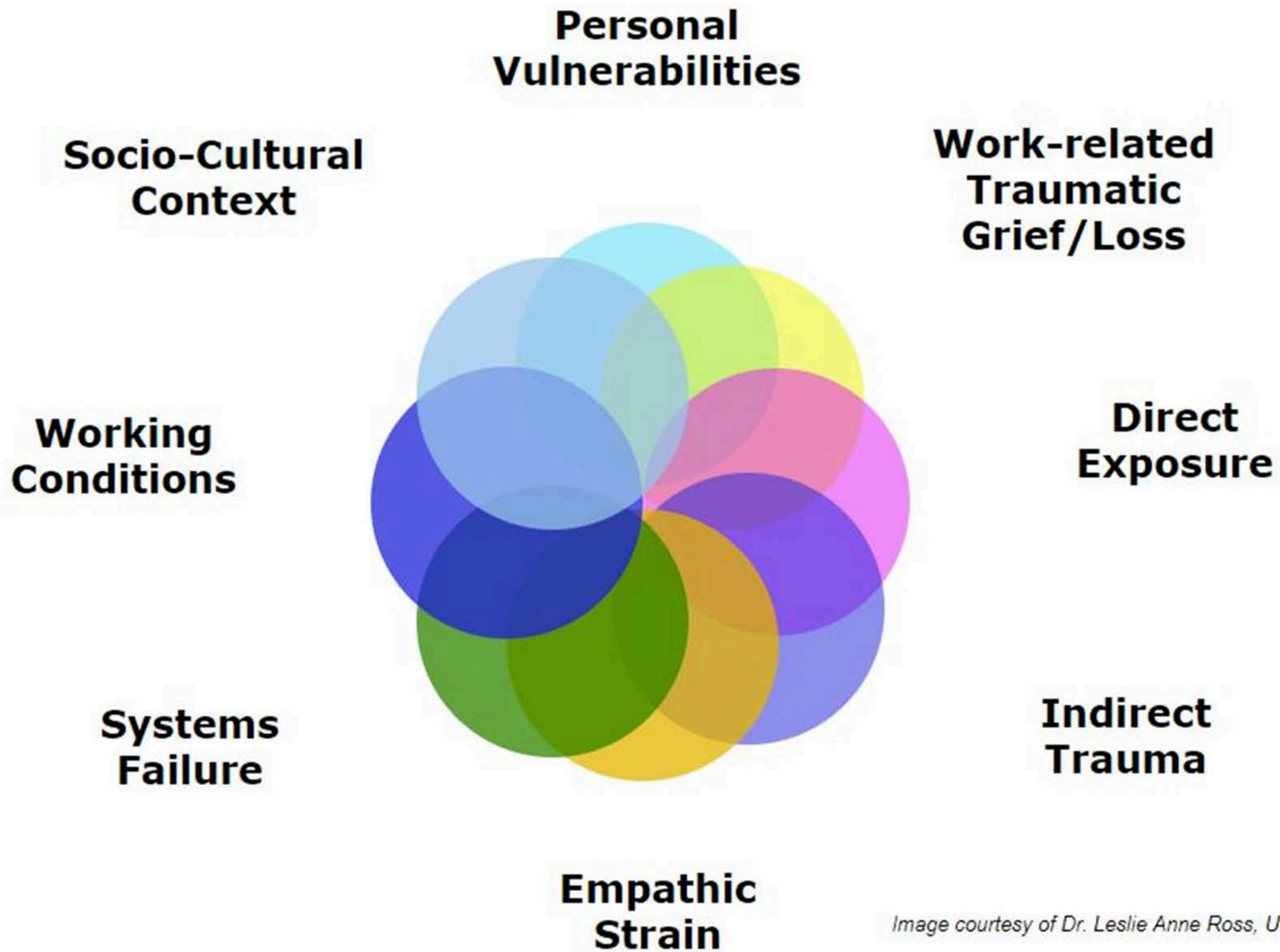
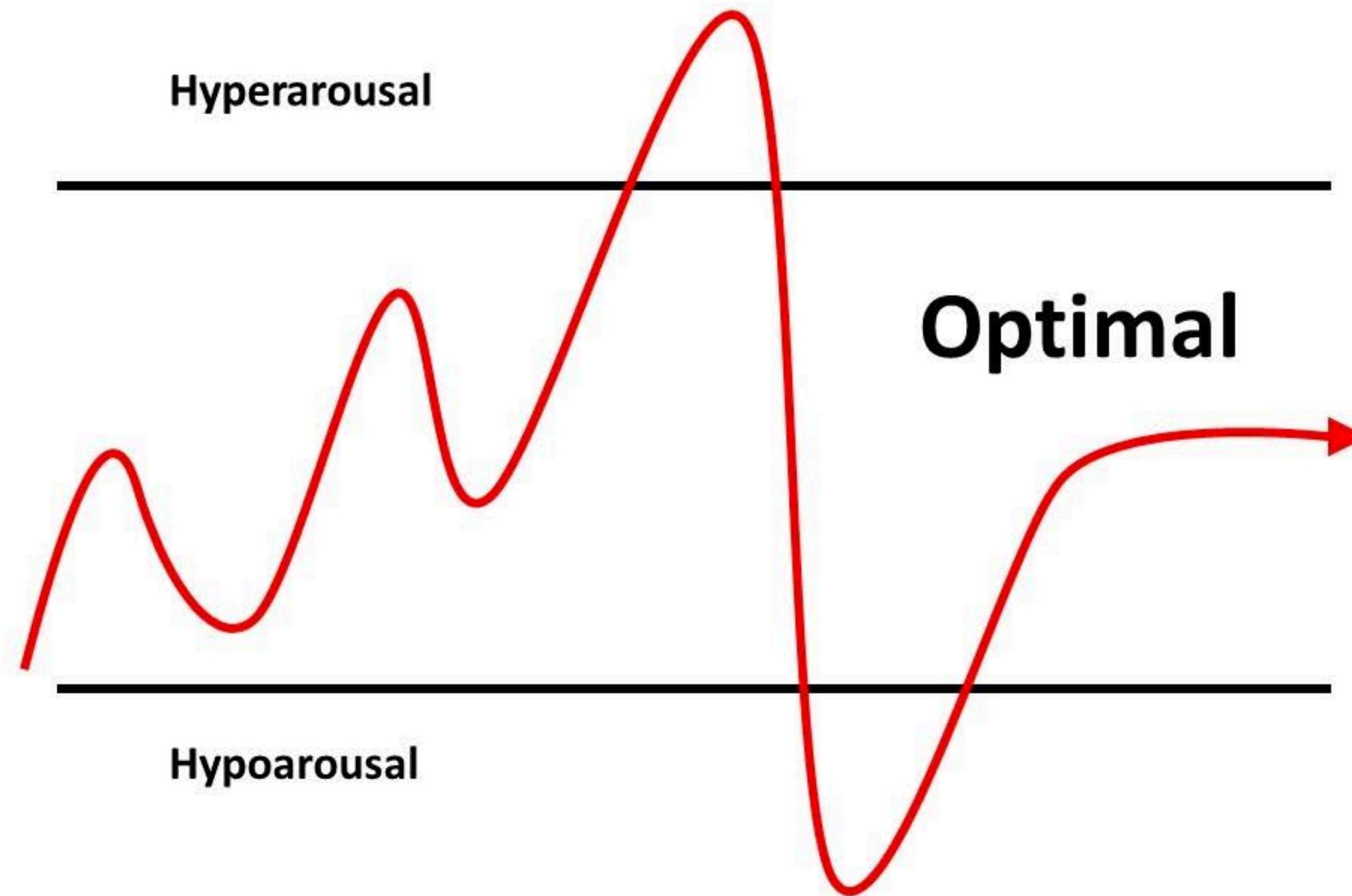


Image courtesy of Dr. Leslie Anne Ross, UCLA

REFLECTION

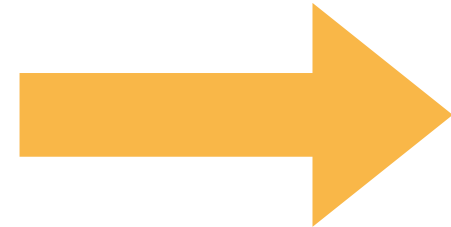
Think about the complex elements related to the empathic strain. Take a few moments to write down 3 issues that most impact your experience. Is there a time of day or sensory experience that is associated with your feelings?

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE MODEL



WINDOW OF TOLERANCE MODEL

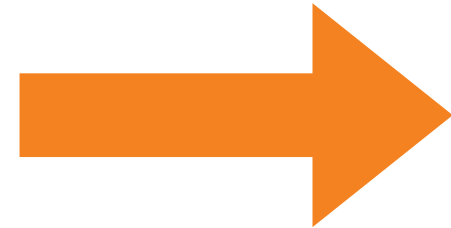
Hyper-Aroused
(fight or flight response)



Anger/rage, aggression, outbursts, overwhelmed, impulsivity, rigidity, chaotic responses, sleep disruptions, overeating

Causes of movement outside the window of tolerance: high doses of indirect exposure, feeling physically or psychologically unsafe, repeated loss or threat of loss, perceived loss of control, high exposure to trauma reminders

Window of Tolerance



Unavailable, shut down, disconnected, disassociation, no display of emotion, separation from feelings/self/emotions, flat, memory loss, auto-pilot, not present

Hypo-Aroused
(freeze response)



Unavailable, shut down, disconnected, disassociation, no display of emotion, separation from feelings/self/emotions, flat, memory loss, auto-pilot, not present

REFLECTION

Review the 3 things you wrote down earlier.
How do these issues move you outside of your
Window of Tolerance? Do you see signs of
hyperarousal? Do you see signs of hypoarousal?

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Individual



Organizational



INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES



INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES

Self-monitor

Cultivate a self-
other perspective

Engage in reflective
meaning-making

Mark boundaries

Express gratitude

Be your own story
editor

Engage in self
compassion

Manage trauma
impacts

Enact real-time
practice strategies

Employ cognitive
flexibility

Build your support
network

Seek professional
help as needed

MY INDIVIDUAL PLAN

- What puts you in your Window of Tolerance?
- What impacts or closes your Window of Tolerance?
- What can you do when you are hyperaroused? Hypoaroused?
- What strategies have we discussed today that might move you back inside your Window of Tolerance (given YOUR unique challenges)? What coping skills work for YOU?



PUT YOUR PLANNING INTO ACTION



How will you implement the strategies selected?



Which one can you work on within the next week?

ONGOING CARE:

- Overwhelming material/exposure
- Use self care plans each evening
- Share personal stories of experiences
- Take care of yourself; sleep, eat, drink water, use care networks
- Take inventory of your window of tolerance and changes



THANK YOU

Questions?



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