



Compassion versus Complacency

*DoD Special Needs Conference
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Compassion Defined

- A feeling, and acting with great empathy and sometimes sorrow, for those who suffer
- Necessary but not sufficient ingredient for human services
- Compassion Satisfaction – a term that reflect a true motivation to help others

Compassion Satisfaction Assessment

- I get satisfaction from helping others
- I have beliefs that sustain me
- I believe I make a difference
- I feel connected to others
- I am happy
- I like my job
- I feel invigorated after working with those I help
- I have happy thoughts about the people I help
- I think I am successful at helping people
- I am happy that I chose this line of work



Compassion Fatigue

- In extreme, a state of exhaustion and dysfunction due to prolonged exposure to compassion stress
- Ongoing sense of responsibility for care giving
- Can include an array of symptoms including:
 - *Bottled –up emotions*
 - *Feelings of isolation*
 - *Over reaction to administrative tasks*
 - *Poor self-care*
 - *Unhealthy behaviors*
 - *Physical ailments*

Complacency Defined

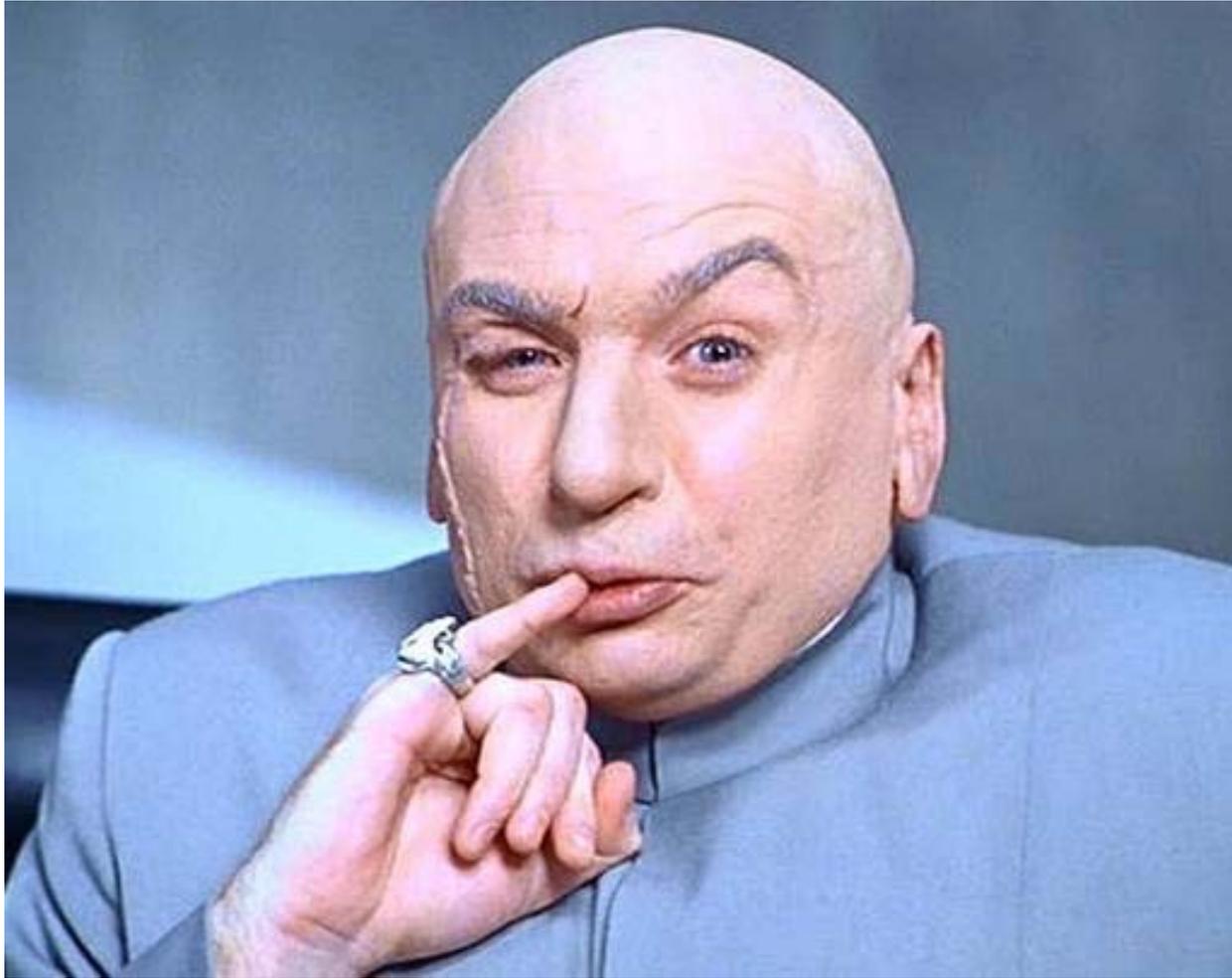
- Unaware of potential defect, danger, or deficiencies; satisfied with how things are; unmotivated to change
- Closely related to *apathy*, a state of indifference, suppression of emotions, absence of interest
- Workplace manifestations:
 - Low morale, negativity
 - Low motivation, task avoidance
 - Lack of appreciation
 - Staff conflicts, withdrawn, detached
 - Absenteeism
- Opposite of apathy is *flow*, where an individual is fully engaged and energized, even joy when performing a task

Compassion Fatigue Assessment

- I feel trapped by my work
- At work, I feel “on edge”
- Because of my work, I feel exhausted
- I feel overwhelmed, helpless
- I feel “bogged down” by the system
- I don’t look forward to going to work
- I lose sleep after helping a family
- It’s difficult to separate my work life from my personal life
- I’m not sure I want to continue in this line of work
- I have negative thoughts about the people I help

Research Findings

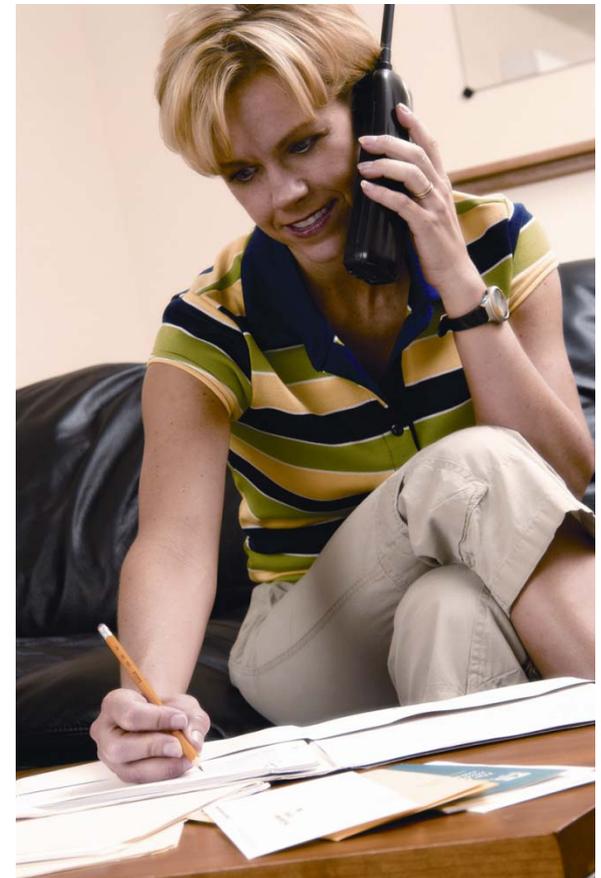
- Influential factors
 - Age
 - Marital status
 - Workload
 - Work overload
 - Individual factors
- Organizational response
 - Training
 - Awareness/knowledge



5. Acknowledge Your Feelings



4. Focus on Building Resiliency



Focus on Resilience

- Helps define role of service provider
 - Validate situation/emotions
 - Motivate behavior
 - Empathetic response
- Outcome
 - Teaching vice doing yields more positive outcomes
 - Independent families are happier



“What About Bob?”



Baby Steps!

3. Revisit Your Values and Goals



Revisit Values and Goals

- Revalidate your values
 - Revisit attraction to field of work/study
 - Examine your purpose in life
 - Identify macro/micro values
 - Values can *change*
- Explore *incongruence*
 - Behaviors versus values
 - Organizational goals versus career goals
 - Organizational values versus personal values

*Give Yourself Permission to Change
Your Mind*

2. Reshape Your Internal Perspective



Patterns of Thinking

- Avoid faulty thinking
 - Hero mentality
 - All or nothing thinking
 - Perfectionism mentality
 - Emotional reasoning
- Do
 - Recast your role
 - Silence the Gremlin
 - Focus on evidence
 - Look at the positive

1. Get Happy!



Happiness – The Big 4

- Optimism
- Self-confidence
- Extroversion
- Self-efficacy



Use Your Strengths

- Using strengths at work:
 - Less absenteeism, turnover
 - More productive
- Signs of strengths:
 - Ownership, authenticity
 - Excitement, enthusiasm, emotional
 - Rapid learning curve when using
 - Activities revolve around strength
 - Yearn to use



Three keys to long lasting happiness:

1. Choosing more pleasurable activities
2. Become more engaged in what you do
3. Find ways to make your life feel meaningful



“We make a living by what we get,
We make a life by what we give.”

-Winston Churchill