

Mental health and Property Management

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- Mental health
- Vicarious trauma
- Burnout
- How does it happen
- What can be done
- Domestic/Family Violence and the Property Manager
- Q&A



Some stats about mental health

It is estimated that 91% of worker's compensation claims involving a mental health condition were connected to work-related stress or mental stress.



Carrying a great weight

*Mental pain is less visible
than physical pain but it is
more common and harder
to bear*

CS Lewis

Achieving mental wellness takes an integrated approach

- To truly sustain a mentally healthy workplace, however, takes an integrated and collaborative approach from people across all levels of an organisation.
- It is important for leaders to commit to mental wellness initiatives and education, and even be good role models demonstrating their own healthy work habits and self-care.



The key attributes of a mentally healthy workplace



- Prioritise mental health across all levels of employees
- Build a trusting, fair and respectful culture
- Demonstrate a commitment and shared purpose from leadership
- Match roles to employees' skills and abilities
- Set reasonable workloads and timelines
- Encourage skills and career development
- Encourage work/life balance
- Be responsive and supportive to employees with mental health conditions



Shane

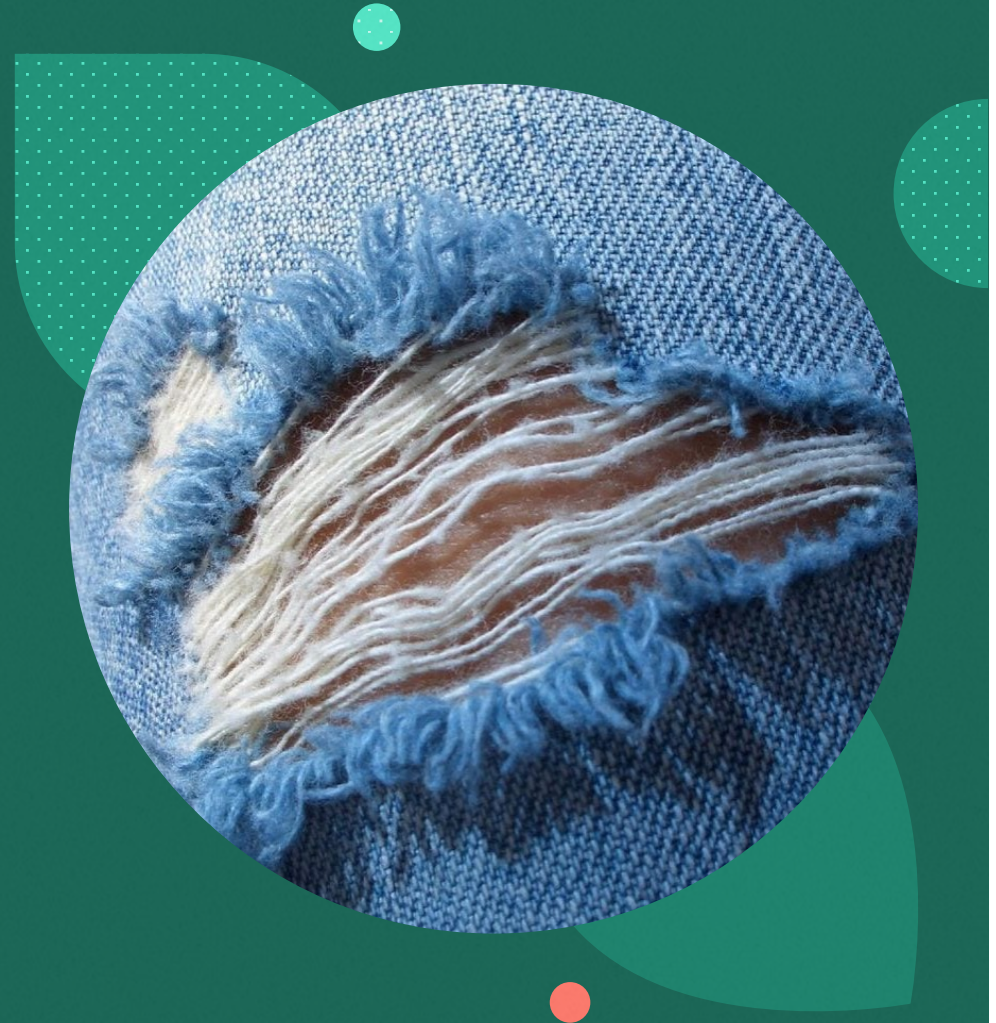
What is vicarious trauma?

- The transformation in the self ...that results from empathic engagement with traumatized clients and their reports of traumatic experiences.
- It is a special form of countertransference stimulated by exposure to the client's traumatic material ... Wikipedia



What is burnout?

- Burnout is when you have spent a lot of time and energy focusing on external projects — but little time and energy meeting your own needs
- You wake up one day with the realization that your life is not how you imagined, and you feel confused about where to begin to make changes.



What are they and why are they a big deal?

- Vicarious trauma is also called secondary trauma
- Burnout is also called compassion fatigue



Signs that you are experiencing Secondary Trauma:

- Apathy
- Isolation
- Sleeplessness
- Irritability
- Unexplained Anxiety
- Anger
- Headaches
- Stomach Problems
- Fatigue
- Mood Swings

Burnout

- The term “burnout” was first coined by psychologist Herbert Freudenberger in his 1974 book, “Burnout: The High Cost of High Achievement.” Freudenberger defined burnout as “the extinction of motivation or incentive, especially where one’s devotion to cause or relationship fails to produce the desired results.”
- Dr. Freudenberger was the first to identify the 12-stage Burnout Symptom Cycle.



The 12 stages of burnout

Stage 1: Compulsion to prove (Driven by an ideal)

Stage 2: Intensity (Working like a maniac)

Stage 3: Subtle deprivations (Putting your own needs last)

Stage 4: Dismissal of conflict and needs (Miserable and clueless as to why)

Stage 5: Distortion of values (The death of values)

Stage 6: Heightened denial (Frustrated, aggressive and cynical)

Stage 7: Disengagement (Emotionally exhausted and disengaged)

Stage 8: Observable behaviour changes (I've morphed into What?)

Stage 9: Depersonalization (Get away from me)

Stage 10: Emptiness (Inner emptiness)

Stage 11: Depression (Who cares and why bother?)

Stage 12: Total burnout exhaustion (Physical and mental collapse)



How is this relevant to
Property Managers in the
Real Estate industry?

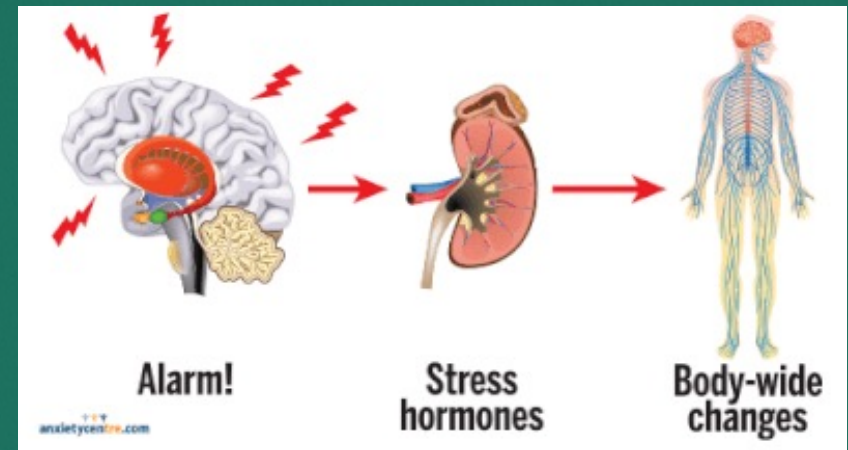
Vicarious trauma and burnout – Property Managers

Your stories are real



But how does it happen?

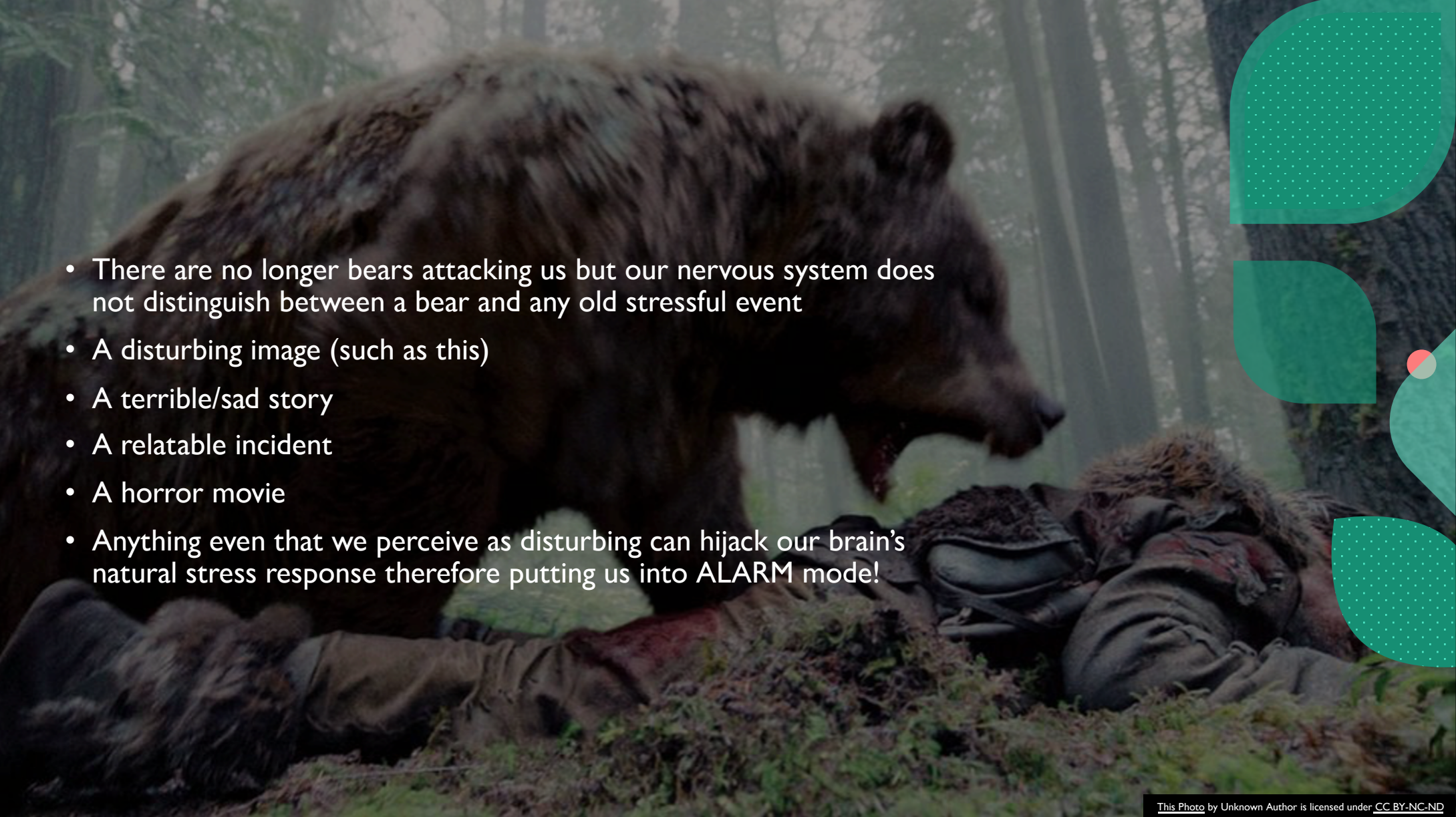
To understand how vicarious trauma and burnout happen you need to understand a little biology ...



Fight/Flight/Freeze

- Unfortunately— we don't make conscious decisions about what to do
- We are hardwired to have particular responses; these are fight, flight, freeze or submit. These are innate to us.
- So, it would work like an alarm – see grizzly bear – run like hell or fight him ...
- Not a great idea for this guy.



- 
- A large brown bear is shown in a forest, standing over a person lying on the ground. The bear's head is lowered towards the person, and its mouth is slightly open, showing its teeth. The person is wearing dark clothing and appears to be lying on their back. The background is a dense forest with tall trees and green foliage. The overall scene is dark and somewhat blurry, giving it a cinematic or documentary feel.
- There are no longer bears attacking us but our nervous system does not distinguish between a bear and any old stressful event
 - A disturbing image (such as this)
 - A terrible/sad story
 - A relatable incident
 - A horror movie
 - Anything even that we perceive as disturbing can hijack our brain's natural stress response therefore putting us into ALARM mode!

Vicarious trauma

- Occurs when our natural fight and flight response is engaged but nothing is done about it ... unlike a flood of emotional response (like that experienced with the bear)
- Vicarious trauma occurs quietly in the background ... more like a dripping tap
- How do you avoid a dripping tap?
- How do you stop a dripping tap?




4-Steps to avoid vicarious trauma

1. Self- awareness

2. Get active





I don't want to talk about it

3. Talk about it ...

4. Self-care

Learn to pace your
activities to avoid
burnout



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What can you do if you think you have vicarious trauma or burnout?

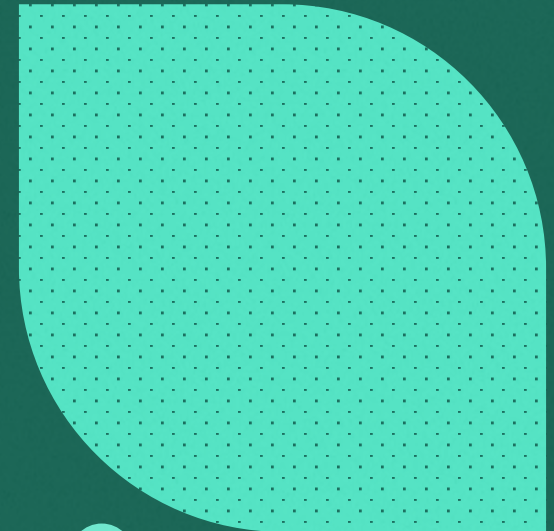
Self compassion

Emotion regulation
techniques



Other trauma related issues ... Symptoms of COVID Traumatic Stress™ show-up differently for everyone

- trouble concentrating;
- struggles with motivation;
- decreased problem-solving skills;
- difficulty with prioritization, organization, and planning;
- increased mistakes or errors;
- obsession with minute details or micro-managing;
- urges to control new aspects of themselves, their environment, or other people;
- denial and resistance to change;
- daily feelings of anxiety, tension, and being overwhelmed;
- difficulty sleeping, nightmares, or sleeping excessively;
- feelings of edginess, jumpiness, and the inability to relax;
- quick anger, irritability, and greatly increased emotional reactivity;
- excessive worry about the future;
- feelings of hopelessness or not being able to see a future;
- defaulting to black-and-white thinking;
- increased distrust and heightened fear of “others;”
- blaming of specific demographic groups;
- defaulting to stereotypical thinking;
- increased belief in conspiracy theories (in an effort to make sense of the unknown);
- abrupt and aggressive responses to intimacy;
- new compulsive responses or habits that don’t fit with who they know themselves to be;
- distinct changes in personality – for example, someone who was once very open now acts closed-off;
- depression;
- thoughts of suicide.



A photograph of a man with curly brown hair, wearing a yellow cardigan over a grey t-shirt, smiling and looking towards the left. He is in a bright, modern office setting. In the background, another man with a beard and grey hair, wearing a dark blue sweater, is partially visible. The foreground is blurred, showing the back of a person with long blonde hair. The text "Tips for keeping well at work" is overlaid in white on the lower left.

Tips for keeping well at work

Trigger warning: Family Violence alarming stats

- On average, one woman a week is murdered by her current or former partner.
- 1 in 4 women have experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner since the age of 15.
- 1 in 5 women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.
- 85% of Australian women have been sexually harassed.
- Almost 40% of women continued to experience violence from their partner while temporarily separated.
- 1 in 6 women have experienced stalking since the age of 15.



Typologies of abuse and violence



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How can the Real Estate industry support victims of DV?

- Do know your organisational policies and procedures - what is your organisation's policy?
- Do know the legislated responsibilities relating to family violence,
- Do engage respectfully and non-judgmentally with victim-survivors,
- Do believe victim-survivors,
- Do not colluding with perpetrators,
- Do support victim-survivors to understand their rights,
- Do protect victim-survivors' confidentiality, and
- Do know how and when to refer to appropriate services.

How can you support?

- Don't assume anything – let her/him guide your understanding of the situation
- Don't ask the victim to engage with the ex/perpetrator, i.e. saying “can't you just call him and ask him to make a payment?” This is not useful as it assumes that there is open communication at best. However there may be trauma for the victim and she may not be able to even hear the mention of his name due to the trauma let alone make the call.
- Don't engage in an accusatory manner (oppositional, challenging, judging him, telling him his behaviour is bad or arguing with him) as it can make him disengage, resist, shame or anger him, therefore increasing the risk of him choosing to use violence toward his ex/partner.
- Don't bring attention to anything his ex/partner has said, as that could put them at further risk.

Collusion

This involves diminishing the safety of those experiencing the violence.

It's important not to engage with a man or his use of family violence in a way that increases the risk to a man's ex/ partner or kids.

Can you think of an example in which it would be easy to do this in a property management scenario?

What are we saying?

This is not a DV training session it is important to highlight domestic violence and family violence for two reasons – 1 it is happening out there and you'll be exposed to it – know how to be part of the solution not the problem And 2, it may affect you in terms of vicarious trauma and burnout.



Contacts and references

Family violence in tenancy real estate agents
and landlords PDF.pdf

Family and domestic violence support services:

1800 Respect National Helpline: 1800 737 732

Safe Steps Crisis Line (Vic): 1800 015 188

Men's Referral Service: 1300 766 491

Lifeline (24-hour crisis line): 131 114

Relationships Australia: 1300 364 277

A photograph of a white computer keyboard with a black stethoscope resting on it. The stethoscope's chest piece is positioned over the spacebar area, and its two earpieces extend towards the bottom right corner. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

DV as a trigger for Vicarious Trauma or Burnout



Some relaxation
techniques to try

Relaxation breath
Progressive muscle
relaxation

Discussion / Q&A



Thank you

If today has brought up any
feelings or thoughts for you
please see me or a
professional for a debrief

