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INFORM

Military Counseling Division Presents:

*WELCOME!
THE WEBINAR WILL BEGIN
MOMENTARILY.*



Magellan FEDERAL

We inspire healthier, more productive communities by delivering innovative, total well-being solutions to the Federal Government, military personnel, government employees, and their families.



BEFORE WE BEGIN

WEBINAR ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Certificates will be sent by email to those in attendance for the entirety of today's **live** webinar.
 - Certificates include 1.0 NBCC continuing education credit.
 - Please allow 4 weeks to receive certificates via email.
- Closed captions have been enabled.

MEET THE FACILITATORS



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WEBINAR AGENDA

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

APPLYING COUNSELOR WELLNESS TO THE
MILITARY CONTEXT

COUNSELOR WELLNESS DIMENSIONS &
STRATEGIES

SETTING BOUNDARIES AND SEEKING SUPPORT

EXERCISING SELF-CARE PRACTICES

WRAP UP & Q&A



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the importance of self-care in mental health counseling
- Identify the key dimensions of wellness
- Develop practical self-care strategies for professional sustainability
- Recognize & prevent burnout through stress management techniques
- Create a sustainable personal wellness plan
- Foster a culture of self-compassion and continuous reflection

WHY IS SELF-CARE ESSENTIAL FOR COUNSELORS, ESPECIALLY COUNSELORS WHO SUPPORT THE MILITARY COMMUNITY?



Self-care is essential for counselors.



Military-specific challenges exist.



Effective self-care strategies are key.

THE IMPACT OF BURNOUT AND COMPASSION FATIGUE

Burnout

Prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job.

Compassion Fatigue

Emotional and physical toll of empathizing with client trauma.

Impacts

Lower quality care, higher medical errors, high turnover.

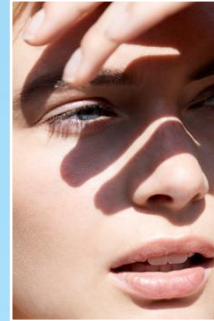
Risk Factors

High case loads, long work hours, working with minimal support and high pressure.

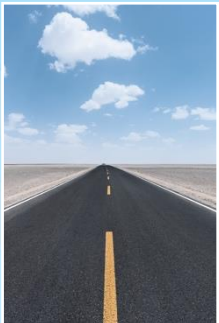
RECOGNIZING EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF STRESS



Physical – Headaches, fatigue, sleep disturbance, changes in appetite, digestive and other health issues.



Mental – Emotional exhaustion, feeling drained, detached, and reduced empathy. Difficulty concentrating and making decisions. Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness.



Social – Social Isolation/ withdrawal pulling away from friends, family, and colleagues.



Additional - Substance abuse.

DIMENSIONS OF COUNSELOR WELLNESS



DIMENSIONS OF COUNSELOR WELLNESS

Ancient Roots

More than the absence of disease

e.g., Greek, Chinese

Modern Wellness

"Wellness is a direction in progress toward an ever-higher potential of functioning." - Dunn, 1961

Integration, harmony, and balance of various dimensions.

Wellness Dimensions

Physical, emotional, social, occupational, spiritual

(Dunn, 1961; Hettler, 1976)

Physical Wellness for Counselors

Elements of Physical Wellness

Nutrition

Sleep

Movement

Wellness Strategies

Nutrient-dense meals

Hydration

Sleep hygiene practices

Regular movement



Emotional Wellness for Counselors

Elements of Emotional Wellness

Self-awareness

Regulation

Management

Resilience

Support seeking

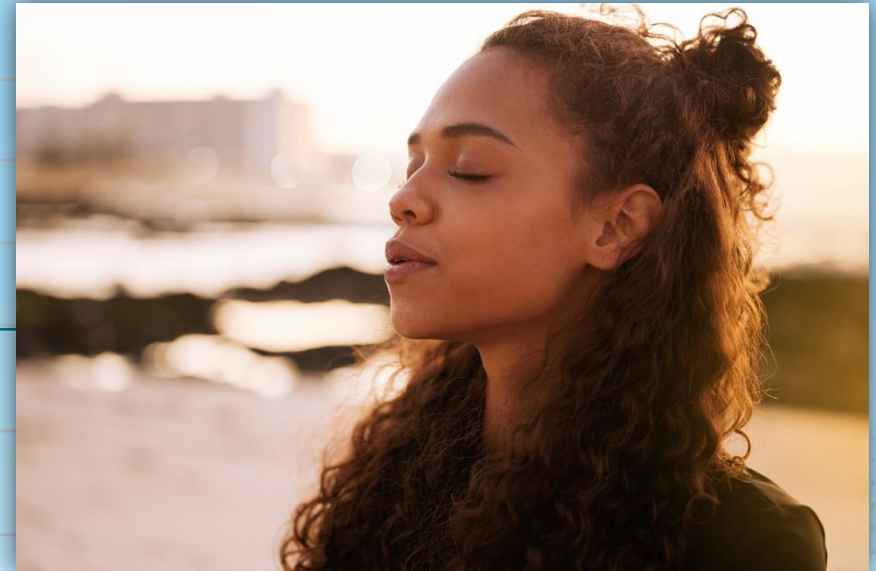
Wellness Strategies

Mindfulness

Peer support

Reflective journaling

Mental resets



Social Wellness for Counselors

Elements of Social Wellness

Healthy, supportive
relationships

Sense of belonging

Wellness Strategies

Cultivate social connection

Setting boundaries

Good communication

Regular movement



(Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016; Hettler, 1976)

Intellectual & Occupational Wellness for Counselors

Elements of Intellectual Wellness

- Pursuit of personal growth
- Curiosity and critical thinking
- Opportunities to expand understanding
- Using knowledge to make decisions

Elements of Occupational Wellness

- Developing Work Goals
- Carving time to sharpen work skills
- Prioritizing
- Setting healthy professional boundaries
- Understanding the culture (OCONUS work)



(Hettler, 1976)

Spiritual Wellness for Counselors

Elements of Spiritual Wellness

Sense of meaning and purpose

Alignment between values and actions

Connection to something greater (faith, community, nature)

Practices that promote reflection and inner peace

Respect for diverse belief systems

Wellness Strategies

Prayer

Meditation

Reflective journaling

Time in nature

Assessment of alignment of personal and work values



Counselor Wellness in the Military Context



Setting Boundaries in a Military Context



Signs of Poor Boundaries

Over identification or feelings of resentment

Longer sessions or overthinking

Seeking emotional relief via clients or stakeholders

Self-disclosure; bleed over of personal challenges to professional realm

Strategies for Boundaries with Clients and Colleagues

Assertive and tactful communication

Understand your ethical and professional responsibilities

Seek any personal needs outside of the workplace

Participate in supervision

****Particularly important for counselors who work in smaller or more remote communities or OCONUS.***

Time Management in a High OPTEMPO Military Environment



Use a structured, tech-supported workflow.

Prioritize tasks and document efficiently.

Make space for recovery and self-care.

Audit, adjust, and advocate for your time.

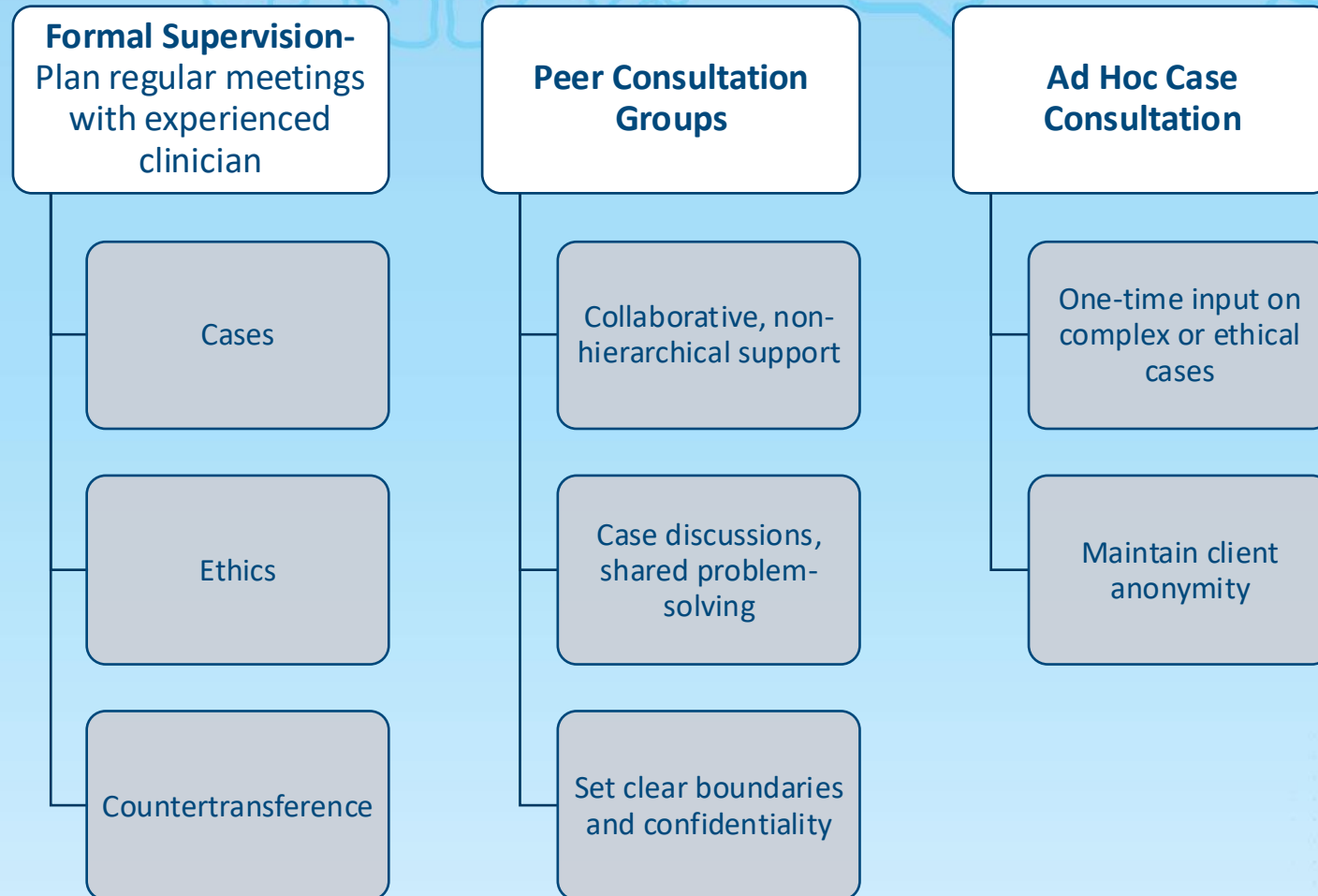
Communicate burdens with your supervisor.

Decline non-essential meetings.

Suggest time-saving meeting formats.

Set some time aside for energy and recovery.

Using Supervision and Peer Support Effectively



Identifying Triggers

- Trauma
- Grief/loss

Relaxation Techniques

- Box breathing, meditation
- Journaling
- Taking a break
- Stretching

Exercise: Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)



Engaging in Restorative Wellness Activities



Engage in self-
reflection



Consider
Mindfulness-Based
Stress
Reduction (MBSR)



Complete
Resilience Training



Practice Healthy
Sleep Hygiene



Frequent Nature
Exposure



Prioritize Social
Support



Setting Wellness Goals

Use a Holistic Framework

- Assess physical, emotional, psychological, social, spiritual, and professional domains.

Use Tools & Worksheets

- Consider utilizing Self-Care Assessment, MSCS, or Wellness Inventory.

Observe Indirect Signs

- Fatigue, irritability, isolation, neglect of needs.

Revisit Regularly

- Self check-in on progress and adapt goals.

Encourage Self-Compassion

- Normalize self-care as essential, not indulgent.

Resources for Continued Counselor Wellbeing

Books

- Therapist Burnout by Kelly Higoon & Miranda Plamer
- Mindful Self-Compassion for Burnout by Kiristen Neff, PD & Crhistopher Germer, PHD
- The Resilient Practitioner: Burnout Prevention and Self-care Strategies for counselors by Thomas Skovholt
- The Thriving Therapist Sustainable Self-Care to Prevent Burnout and Enhance Well-Being by Matthew A. Hersh

Podcast

- Finding Contentment by the American Institute of Stress
- The Therapist Burnout Podcast by Dr Jen Banchette
- Counseling Insights Podcast - Episode 12: Burnout and Boundaries
- Fried: The Burnout Podcast with Cait Donovan

Articles

- American Psychological Association (APA) - Avoiding Therapist Burnout.
- Psychotherapy.net - Preventing Therapist Burnout.
- SimplePractice - Therapist Self-Care Checklist.
- Counseling Today- Recognizing burnout and compassion fatigue among counselors.

Conclusion and Review



Webinar attendees are now able to:

- Describe the importance of self-care in mental health counseling
- Identify the key dimensions of wellness
- List practical self-care strategies for professional sustainability
- Name ways to recognize & prevent burnout through stress management techniques
- Create a sustainable personal wellness plan
- Contribute to a culture of self-compassion and continuous reflection

Special Thanks

WEBINAR FACILITATORS:

SUSAN TROTMAN AND TONYA NASCIMENTO

CONTENT DEVELOPERS:

TONYA NASCIMENTO AND ELIZABETH DUPREY



Special Thanks

MAGELLAN FEDERAL MFLC LEADERSHIP

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