

CLINICAL WEBINARS

FOR HEALTH SERVICE PSYCHOLOGISTS

TRANSLATING RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

Peer Consultation for Psychologists During and Beyond the Pandemic

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1 CE Credit, Instructional Level: Intermediate

1 Contact Hour (New York Board of Psychology)

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Disclosures/Conflicts of Interest

- We have no conflicts of interest to disclose

Learning Objectives

1. Explain how peer consultation can support health service psychologists and mitigate unique challenges throughout the pandemic.
2. Utilize self-assessment tools to identify peer consultation needs.
3. Demonstrate effective peer consultation group practices.

VIGNETTE

Back-to-back therapy with challenging patients

Sudden switch to telehealth

Clinician isolation

Added childcare responsibilities

Burnout



PROFESSIONAL IMPACTS OF THE PANDEMIC



- ☐ Increased clinical demands
 - ☐ Caseload
 - ☐ Severity
- ☐ Increased burnout
- ☐ Had to navigate teletherapy
 - ☐ Technology
 - ☐ Ethical concerns

PERSONAL IMPACTS OF THE PANDEMIC

- ☐ Additional responsibilities
 - ☐ Childcare
 - ☐ Supporting children with school
 - ☐ Elder care
- ☐ Fear of contracting and infecting loved ones
- ☐ Grief and loss

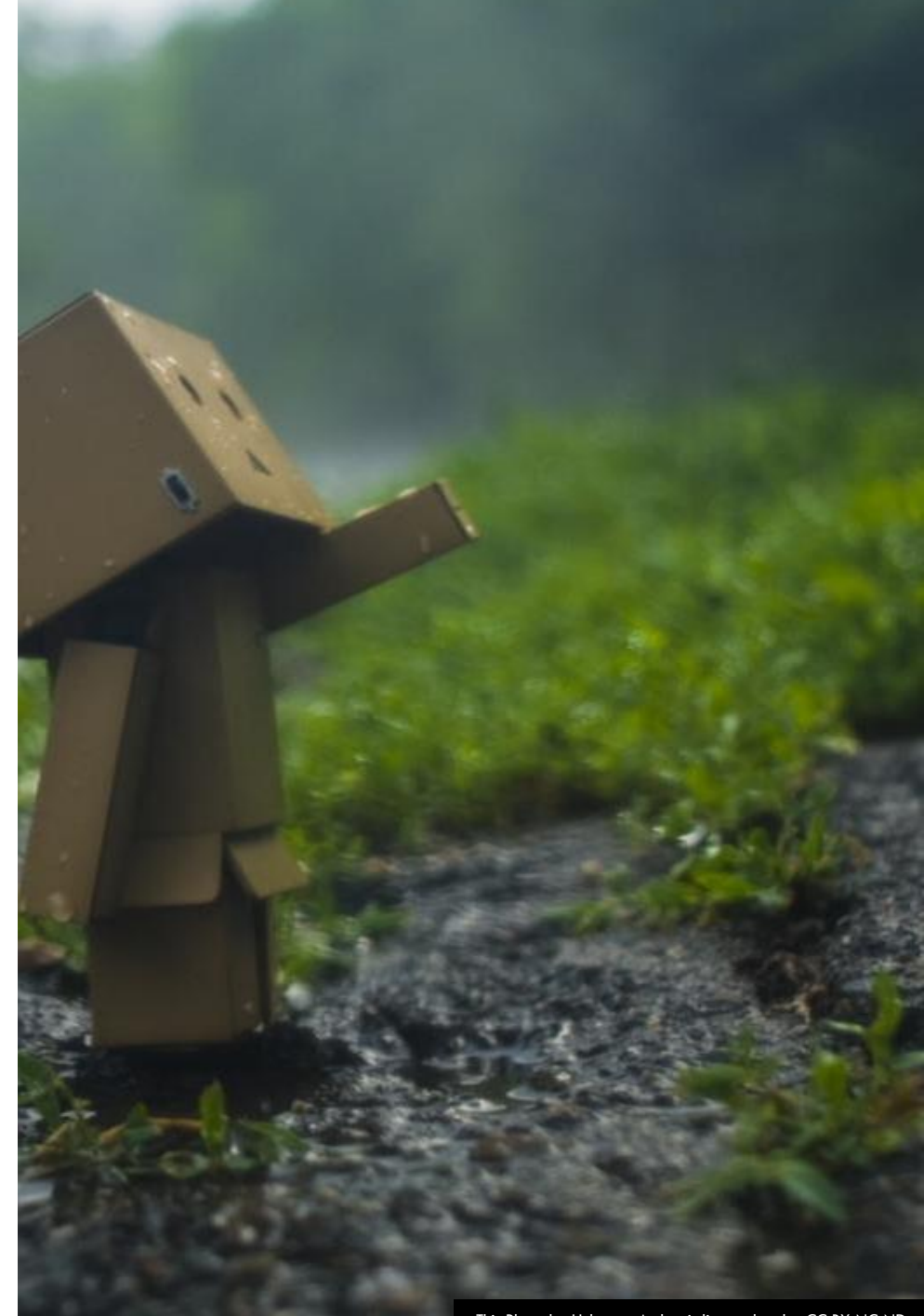


CONSULTATION AS A NECESSITY

- ❑ Increased isolation and burnout
- ❑ Reduced availability of consultation



- ❑ Therefore, increased need for peer consultation



OBSTACLES TO PEER CONSULTATION

- Unaware of the need
- Overly rely on personal clinical experiences
- Lack dedicated time or consultation opportunities

IDENTIFY NEEDS FOR PEER CONSULTATION



Maslach Burnout Inventory



Emotional exhaustion

“Physically and
emotionally drained”



Depersonalization



Personal Accomplishment

“Believed there was
minimal progress”

<i>Sources of therapist stress</i>	<i>What are the factors contributing to my work-related stress?</i>
Client factors: difficult interpersonal styles, emotional dysregulation, therapy-interfering behaviors such as avoidance, unrealistic expectations of therapy, paranoid or litigious behavior, self-harm, suicide attempts, or completions.	
Work-related factors: unmanageable caseloads, staff shortages, restructuring, poor supervision or lack of supervision, unrealistic goals and expectations, competency requirements, workplace bullying, difficult relationships with other staff members.	
Event-related factors: life crises such as bereavement, divorce, moving home, loss of employment, poor health, and money problems.	
Self-evaluative factors: negative beliefs about ability and competence, self-doubt, fear of being judged, perfectionism and negative self-schemas, such as beliefs concerning failure or not being good enough.	
Educational or training factors: high expectations, difficult-to-meet academic standards, being required to take on complex cases too soon, increasing self-awareness regarding “what I don’t know,” and continual evaluation.	

FIGURE 25.2. Sources of Therapist Stress Questionnaire. Copyright © 2019 B. A. Haarhoff and J. Levy.

SOURCES OF THERAPIST STRESS

Work-related factors: unmanageable caseloads, staff shortages, restructuring, poor supervision or lack of supervision, unrealistic goals and expectations, competency requirements, workplace bullying, difficult relationships with other staff members.

Event-related factors: life crises such as **Pandemic** bereavement, divorce, moving home, loss of employment, poor health, and money problems.

PEER CONSULTATION GROUP

Small
(4-6 members)

Non-
evaluative

Egalitarian,
leaderless

Content &
Process

Promotes
clinician
effectiveness

Counters
isolation and
burnout

POTENTIAL PITFALLS

Watch out for:

- Task drifting
- Lack of constructive feedback
- Advice giving
- Avoiding discussion of group dynamics

OUR EXPERIENCE

- Vision: Small, virtual consultation group with trauma focus
- Who: Four psychologists at UT Southwestern
- When: Monthly lunch meetings
- Intentional framework
 - Relational/Cultural approach
 - No specific group leader
 - Periodic process check-in
- Helpful tip = state what you are looking for



LESSONS LEARNED

1. View consultation as an enriching necessity
2. Accommodate busy schedules
3. Be intentional about choosing goals, members, and dynamic
4. Reinforce mutual self-care and compassion



Ellen Greenwald, Ph.D.



Anitha Joseph, Ph.D.



Ellie Hakim, Ph.D.

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Q&A With Dr. Miu & Dr. Cox



- Dr. Sammons will read select questions that were submitted via the Q&A feature throughout the presentation.
- Due to time constraints, we will not be able to address every question asked.