

Common Reactions to Caring for Survivors of Trauma

Helplessness

- Depressive symptoms
- Feeling ineffective with patients [clients]
- Reacting negatively to patients [clients]
- Thinking of quitting clinical [contact with clients] work

Fear

- Recurrent thoughts of threatening situations
- Chronic suspicion of others
- Sleep disruptions
- Physical symptoms
- Inability to relax or enjoy pleasurable activities

Anger

- Reacting angrily to patients [clients] /staff, colleagues
- Feelings of guilt
- Decreased self-esteem

Detachment

- Avoiding patients
- Avoiding emotional topics during patient encounters
- Ignoring clues from patients [clients] about trauma
- Failing to fulfill social or professional roles
- Chronic lateness

Boundary Violation and Transference

- Taking excessive responsibility for the patient [client]
- Seeing patient [client] after hours
- Doing something out of usual practice patterns
- Sharing own problems with patient [client]
- Patient [client] trying to care for service provider

Use of Alcohol and Drugs

- Increased use of alcohol
- Initiation or use of drugs
- Misuse of prescription medication