CARE OF THE COMPASSIONATE HEART

Essential Tools to Manage Burnout and Compassion Fatigue in your Work for Horses
Saving You Saves Animals
The Unique Challenges of Compassion for Animals

- The desire to do more to help
- Frequent & multiple loss
- People are difficult
Natural compassion extends to

Those we help

Animal companions of family, friends and co-workers

Even those we only know of through social media

The plight of animals
Our Hearts are Larger than our Hands
The Desire to Do More to Help

How is there time to take care of myself when animals are in need?
Grief Overload

- Adoptions & fosters
- Hard decisions
- Ones you cannot help
- Other people’s losses
- Crisis and trauma
Cumulative Grief
Frequent & multiple loss

There is too much loss to feel joy.
The People Paradox

People are both the problem and the solution.
So many challenging people!

OWNERS
DONORS
ADOPTERS
FOSTERS
COMMUNITY
THE PUBLIC
OTHER GROUPS
CO-WORKERS
YOU!
THE BOARD
VOLUNTEERS
THE PRESS
People are difficult.

I love animals – but people cannot be trusted to help.
## Individual Signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BODY</th>
<th>MIND</th>
<th>SOUL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant tension</td>
<td>Crabby, hot-tempered</td>
<td>No pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head &amp; stomach aches</td>
<td>Anxiety &amp; fears</td>
<td>Looking for escapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouble sleeping</td>
<td>Negativity &amp; dread</td>
<td>Effects on family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhaustion</td>
<td>Crying, sadness, panic</td>
<td>Gambling, smoking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard to get going</td>
<td>Feeling ineffective</td>
<td>Drinking, addictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aches for no reason</td>
<td>Foggy &amp; forgetful</td>
<td>Over &amp; under-eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More prone to illness</td>
<td>Making more mistakes</td>
<td>Feeling fragile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes longer to get well</td>
<td>More critical of others</td>
<td>General distrust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organizational Signs

- Low morale and negativity
- Poor teamwork and reduced energy
- Less creativity and problem-solving
- People leave
Fallout extends further......

- Affects our family.
- Negativity and social media talk spreads.
- We give the message that this is not fun.
- Animals feel our stress.
Self-Inventory Screening

Discover how the unique challenges of compassion for animals may be affecting you!
The Neuroscience of Compassion

Empathy → distress → fight or flight → no space → reaction

Empathy → distress → a calm center → access to inner resources → response

- Burnout, compassion fatigue, negativity and exhaustion
- Fulfillment, good feelings for self and others, enhanced well-being, oxytocin, creativity, courage to act again

**depleting**

**energizing**
ESSENTIAL TOOLS

I. BE HUMAN

II. HONOR FEELINGS
REFRAME STORY

III. STAY CONNECTED
Tool I: BE HUMAN
Being human means...

You cannot do it all. Find the best fit for you.
Your journeys intersect

You did not create the problem but you want to help.

You do not know all things.

Do your part and then let them go.
Set limits for the organization

Stay within your focus and size

Good for the people and the animals.
Take charge of your needs!

Forest bathing
Model & encourage self-care

OUT OF OFFICE

TURN IT OFF
PUT IT AWAY

Lunch Time
Take comfort

“Compassionate toward yourself, you reconcile all beings in the world.”

Tao Te Ching
Make Space
Space works!

CINCO
TOOL II: HONOR FEELINGS
REFRAME STORY

LOOK IN A NEW WAY!
Honor the feelings

- Sadness is normal
- Grief responses vary
- Acknowledge & accept
- Unprocessed grief can attach and accumulate
Hold opposing emotions at the same time
Reframe the Story
Thoughts make up our stories
Observe and Question
Automatic thoughts flood in

Did I do enough?
If only I would have...
If only they would have...
I should have...
They should have....
Why didn’t I?
We can choose to let go of..

1) judgments and regret

2) details that sink you deeper into pain

3) Assumptions about what the other path would have been

4) Repetitive thoughts about what went wrong and painful images that come to mind
We can choose our focus

Self-judgments and “what-ifs” and “if-onlys”

We do the best we can at the time with love
Reframe the Story
Gratitude

Gifts

Growth

Going On
Going on in their honor....

Death can never extinguish our love. It cannot destroy our compassion. It cannot silence our courage. It cannot vanquish our spirit.

Dan Zandra
Author of Forever Remembered
What’s your story?

Gratitude

Gifts

Growth

Going On
TOOL III: STAY CONNECTED
To what grounds you
To what you do

You are part of the whole growing movement for horses.
To your furry friends

To the loving, healing power of the animals
To people with a similar vision
Have fun together

What do your people like to do together? Ask them.
To people with requests

Listen & seek to understand
Respond with compassion

A quality “no” may be the best response.

Am I the right person?
Do I have enough information?
Do the conditions and timing work?
Respond with “yes” where you can

Acknowledge the situation
Find the common ground
Reframe your role:
  ❖ educate & empower
  ❖ share resources
They may stretch and find a “yes”
Commit to joy!

The Power of Joy in Giving to Animals

Linda R. Harper, Ph.D.
Foreword and Contributions by Faith Maloney

Great resource for everyone in animal welfare to keep their sanity!

Rick Ducharme, Founder/CEO, First Coast No More Homeless Pets, Inc.
Find the Joy
Embrace its Power
Live fully now!

Is this thought worth taking away my joy?

Commit to Joy
Joy attracts

- You are more enjoyable to be around for animals and people.

- The flow of joy is irresistible. People want to join in.
The Power of Joy expands……

Transmit Joy
The animals teach us
A wise teacher

FELIX THE CAT
Be who you are

- Asked for what he needed
- Comfort with whole body hugs and wet sneezes
- *Felix is Felix!*
Honor Feelings, Reframe Story

Embraced the new story

Gratitude
Growth
Gifts
Going On
Stay Connected

Connected to Many

- Cats
- Cat lovers
- Delivery persons
- Clients
- Vet and staff
- Volunteers
- Dogs
Listen to their wisdom

FELIX THE CAT