

# Powerlessness to Purpose – Navigating Uncertainty in a Changing Landscape

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# Disclosure

- I have no financial relationships to disclosure.



# Objectives

- Strategies for coping with uncertainty in caring for families
- Resources for learning and support







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## Star Fish Story and Opening Reflection

# Reflect

- What called you to this work?
- What keeps you in this work?
- What is one thing you would like to be different about yourself in this work?







A word cloud centered around the word "healing". The word "healing" is the largest and most prominent, located in the center. Surrounding it are various other words in different colors and orientations, including "transformative", "validating", "emotional", "intense", "relief", "empowering", "unexpected", "freeing", "supportive", "powerful", "reflective", and "eye-opening". The words are arranged in a circular pattern around the central word, with some words being larger than others.

transformative  
validating  
emotional intense  
healing  
relief  
empowering  
unexpected  
freeing  
supportive powerful  
reflective  
eye-opening

# What are the challenges and worries that lead to uncertainty and powerlessness?

- Mistrust (and its consequences)
  - Provider – patient
  - Patient – provider
- Feeling powerless, discouraged
  - Healthcare professional (compassion fatigue, burnout)
  - Patient/family
- Silos of care
  - Family/patient will get missed, fall through the cracks, not get care
- Negative outcomes for families
  - Maternal mortality
  - Separation of infants from families



# Anatomy of Trust – Brené Brown

- Boundaries – clear, respect them, hold yourself to them
- Reliability – do what you say/intend, be clear on limitations(see boundaries)
- Accountability – own mistakes, apologize, make amends
- Vault – respect stories, acknowledge and hold confidentiality
- *Integrity – align values and behavior, choose courage > comfort*
- *Non-judgment – “compassionate judgement”*
- Generosity – assume positive intentions, celebrate and raise up

# Compassion Fatigue/Powerlessness

- <https://proqol.org/proqol-health-measure>
  - Open in new tab
  - Take the survey
  - Enter your email if you also want the results emailed, but they will be available by pdf immediately
  - View pdf of results

# Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue

[www.proqol.org](http://www.proqol.org)



# Vocabulary

- Compassion Satisfaction
  - Positive aspects of working as a helper
- Compassion Fatigue
  - Negative aspects of working as a helper
- Burnout
  - Inefficacy and feeling overwhelmed
- Work-related traumatic stress
  - Primary traumatic stress direct target of event
  - Secondary traumatic exposure to event due to a relationship with the primary person (secondary traumatic stress – STS)

# Professional Quality of Life

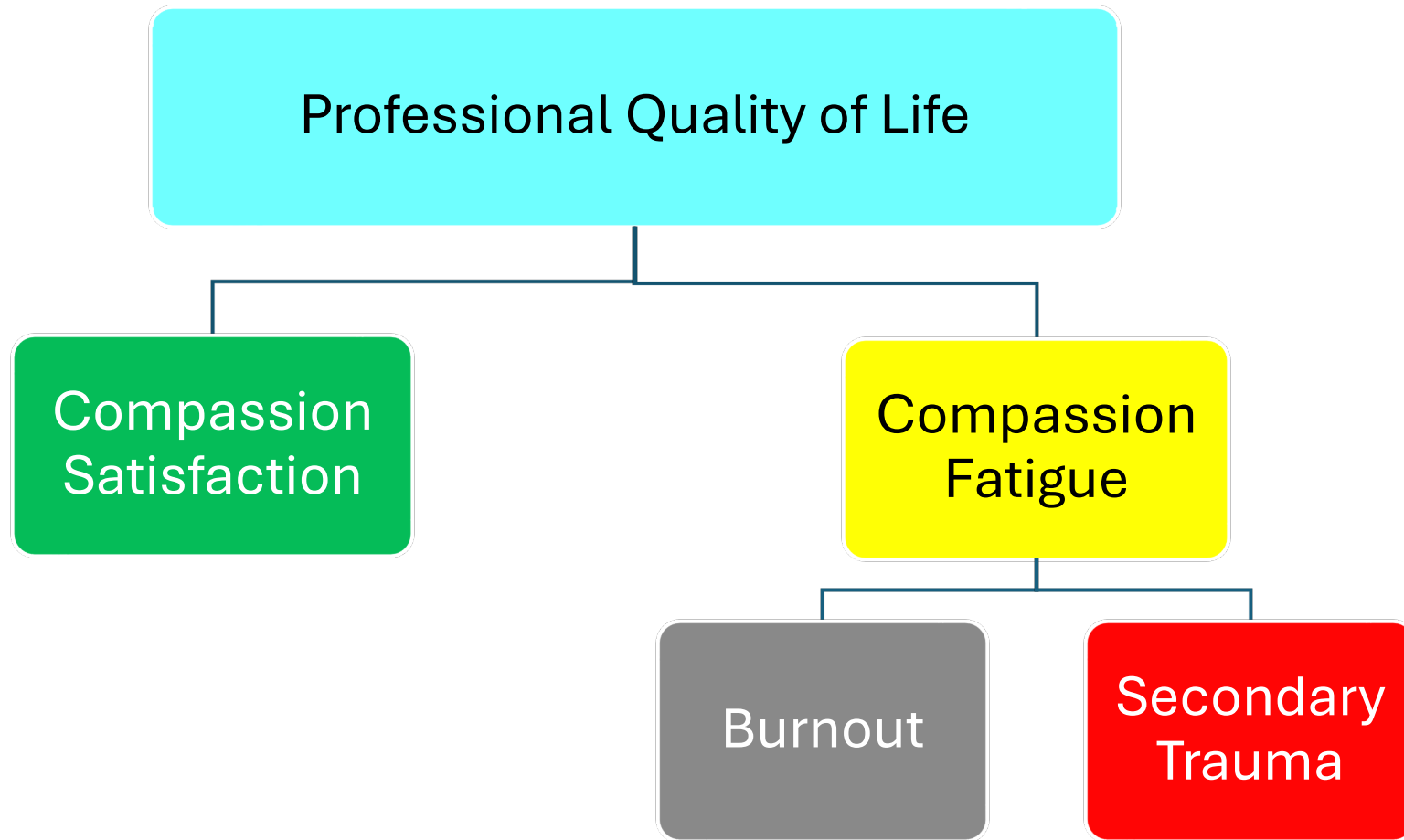
## **Compassion Satisfaction**

- The positive aspects of helping
- “The good stuff”

## **Compassion Fatigue**

- The negative aspects of helping
- “The bad stuff”

# CS-CF Model





# Compassion Satisfaction

- The positive aspects of helping
  - Pleasure and satisfaction derived from working in helping, care giving systems
- May be related to
  - Providing care
  - To the system
  - Work with colleagues
  - Beliefs about self
  - Altruism

# Compassion Fatigue

- The negative aspects of helping
- The negative aspects of working in helping systems may be related to
  - Providing care
  - To the system
  - Work with colleagues
  - Beliefs about self
- Burnout
- Work-related trauma

# Burnout and STS: Co Travelers

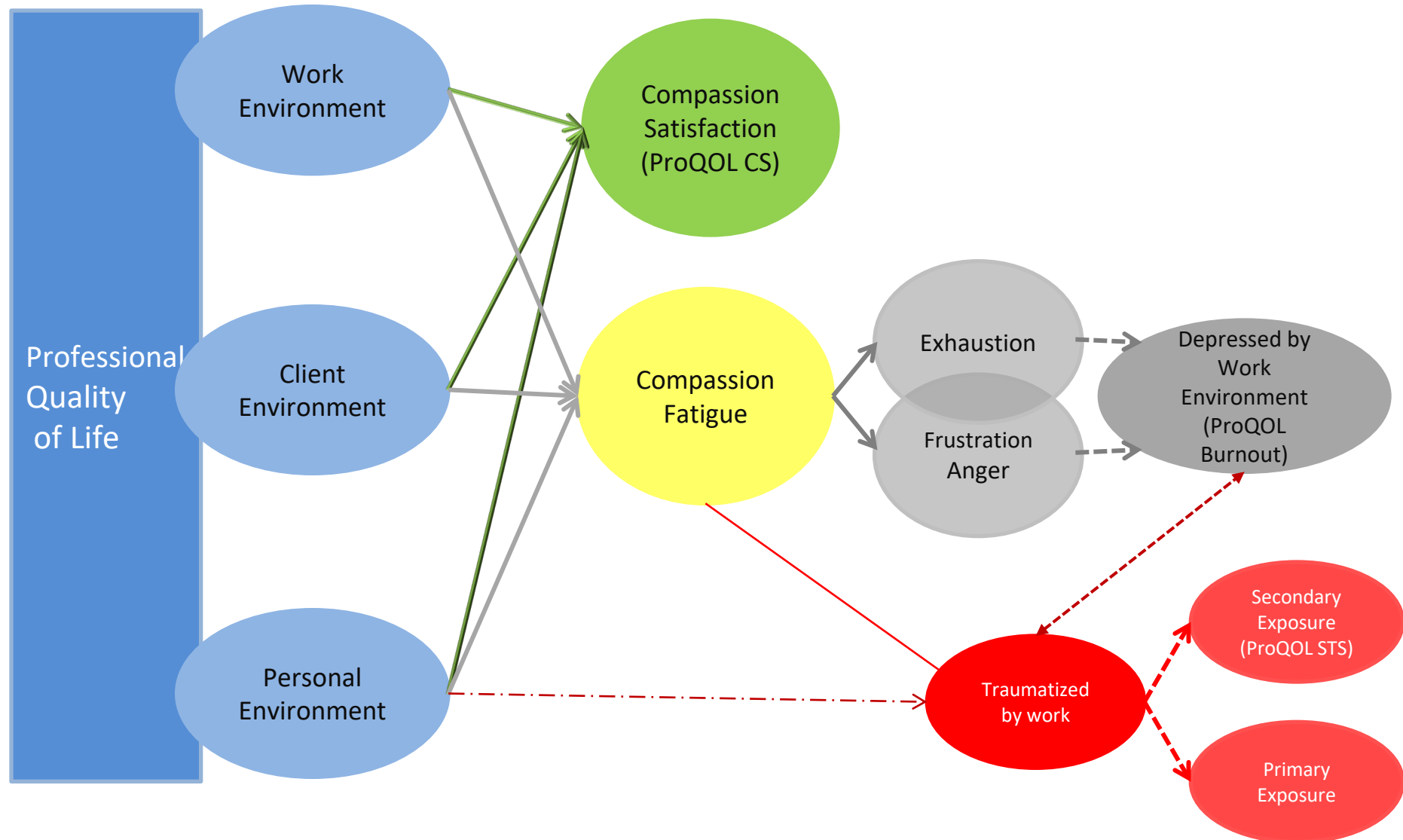
- Burnout
  - Work-related hopelessness and feelings of inefficacy
- STS
  - Work-related secondary exposure to extremely or traumatically stressful events
- Both share negative affect
  - Burnout is about being worn out
  - STS is about being afraid



# Relationships Are Complex

- Multiple spheres
  - Work environment
  - “People helped” environment
  - Personal environment
- Positive (CS) & negative (CF)
- Altruism CS can override CF
- Compassion Fatigue two parts
  - Worn out (Burn Out ) common
  - Frightened (triggered), traumatized (STS) rarer but powerful

# Complex Relationships



# Measuring CS & CF: The *Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)*

- The ProQOL is free
- A 30 item self report measure of the positive and negative aspects of caring
- The ProQOL measures Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue
- Compassion Fatigue has two subscales
  - Burnout
  - Secondary Trauma

# Well Established

- The ProQOL is the most widely used measure of the positive and negative aspects of helping in the world
- The ProQOL has proven to be a valid measure of compassion satisfaction and fatigue
- It has been used for over 15 years
- The measure was developed with data from over 3000 people

# Easy to Use

- The ProQOL is easy to use
- It can be given individually or in groups
- It can be given online or at an individual computer

# Easy to Score

- Full scoring
  - More detailed and specific information but takes longer
  - Better for research or administration
- The simplified scoring
  - Less specific but can be completed quickly and can be intuitively understood
  - Good for training situations

# Not a Medical Test

- Helps understand the positive and negative aspects of helping
- Not a “psychological test”
- Not a “medical test”
- Can be viewed as a screening for stress-related health problems



# People Bring Themselves

- People bring a past and a present to anything they do
  - Their schemas and beliefs
  - Their stigma beliefs
  - Their social support systems
    - Positive support
    - Negative support
  - Their history of trauma and illness
  - Their families and close others
  - Their economic situation

# Interpreting Scores

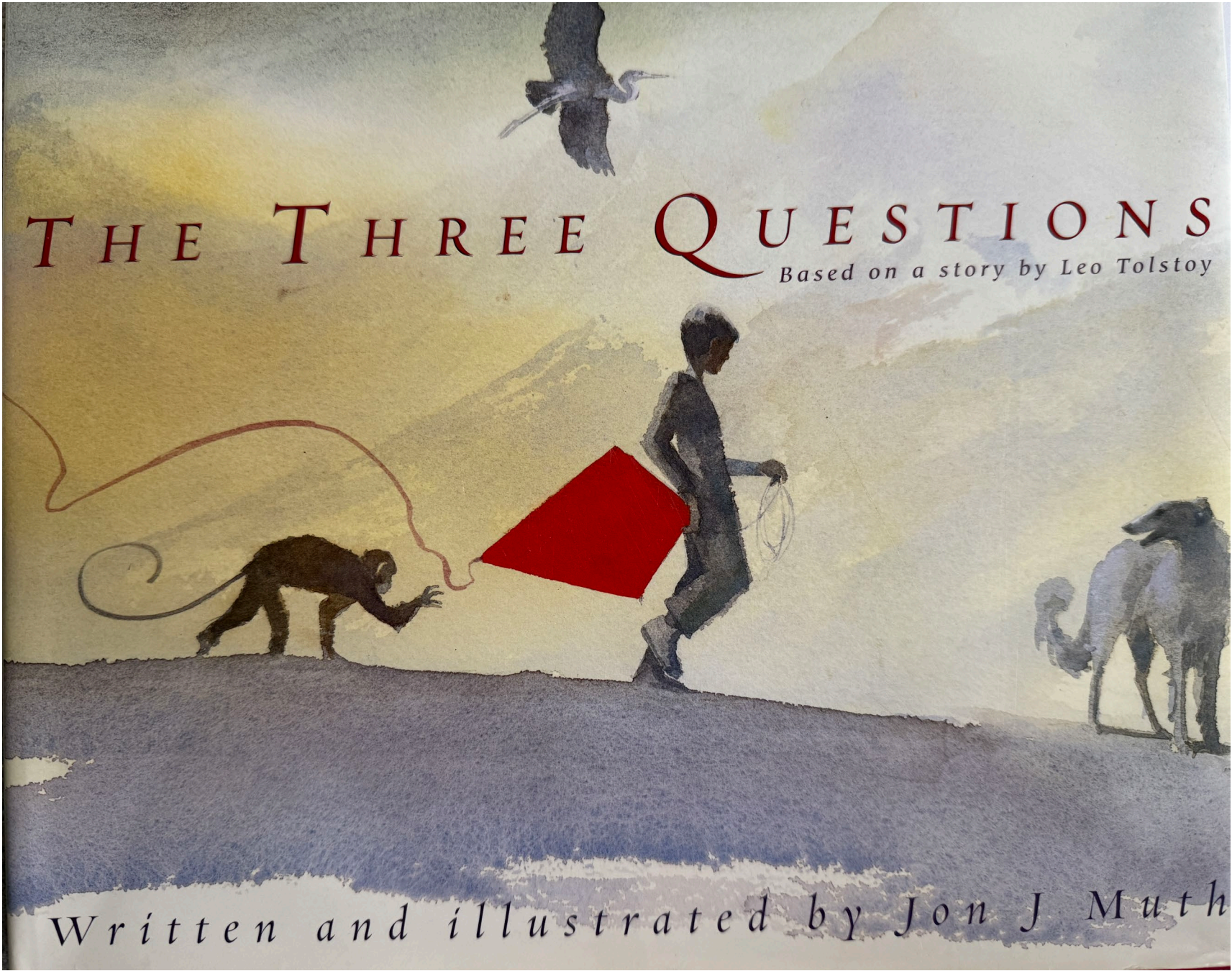
- Scores on individual scales tell us about a person's responses on each of the constructs
- Viewing the combination of scores helps us “paint a picture” of what the person is telling us
- Can be used to track an individual's CS and CF

# Resiliency Planning

- Individual, personally
  - The ProQOL can help you plan where to put your energy to increase our resilience
- Organizational planning
  - Can help organizations find ways to maximize the positive aspects and reduce the negative aspects of helping
- Supportive Supervision
  - The ProQOL can be used as information for discussions

# Discussion

- What did you notice
- What stands out

The illustration is a watercolor painting. In the center, a boy in a dark tunic and shorts walks towards the right, carrying a large, bright red kite. To his left, a dark monkey is on all fours, reaching out towards the kite's tail. To the right of the boy, a greyhound-like dog stands looking on. The ground is a dark, textured blue-grey. The sky is a mix of yellow, orange, and pale blue, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. A large bird, possibly a heron, is in flight at the top center. The title 'THE THREE QUESTIONS' is written in a serif font, with 'THE THREE' in red and 'QUESTIONS' in a larger, dark red font. Below the title, the text 'Based on a story by Leo Tolstoy' is written in a smaller, italicized font. At the bottom, the text 'Written and illustrated by Jon J Muth' is written in a cursive script.

# THE THREE QUESTIONS

*Based on a story by Leo Tolstoy*

*Written and illustrated by Jon J Muth*

# Discussion

# Strategies for Coping

- See ProQOL Website - <https://proqol.org/self-care-tools-1>
- Self reflection/self awareness
- Practice Presence
  - Grounding techniques
  - Embodied/Physical practices
- Gabor Mate ["On being a healer in a traumatized world"](#)



Reach Out





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### For Families:

- Birth Trauma Recovery and Prevention
- Lactation Education and Support (IBCLC)
- Research and Advocacy for families (SUD, trauma)



### For Professionals:

- Health Care Team Training and Consultation
  - Trauma-Informed Care, Care for Families Affected by Substance Use, Birth trauma recovery, prevention, awareness and education

