

PSYCHOLOGY • COUNSELING

"Trauma is both universal and deeply personal. Traumatic experiences shatter safety and threaten the body, the mind, and the soul. The outward signs may be similar, but each person and each community responds in profoundly particular ways. This invaluable book transcends conventional thinking and engages traumatized individuals and communities in the creation of sustaining new meanings that help them heal and grow. It is an essential resource."

—**ALICIA LIEBERMAN**, professor, University of California San Francisco

Integrated Care for the Traumatized presents a model for the future of behavioral health focused on health care integration and the importance of the Whole-Person Approach (WPA) in guiding the integration. This book applies the WPA integration to the traumatized that enables the reader to learn from experienced trauma practitioners about how to assess and treat trauma as humanely and compassionately as possible. This approach of expanding the possibilities of behavioral health by centering upon the whole person is an old idea that is reemerging as a modern solution to over-specialized practices. The WPA, completed with spirituality, psychology, medicine, social work, and psychiatry, can help students, families, and seasoned professionals to improve and expand their practice with the traumatized in both the individual and community contexts.

ILENE A. SERLIN, PhD, is a psychologist and registered dance/movement therapist in San Francisco, past president of San Francisco Psychological Association, fellow of American Psychological Association, past president of Division of Humanistic Psychology, and the editor of *Whole Person Healthcare*. She is the recipient of numerous awards including the Rollo May award from the Society for Humanistic Studies of American Psychological Association and the Distinguished Humanitarian Contribution Award from California Psychological Association.

STANLEY KRIPPNER, PhD, is a professor of psychology at Saybrook University and co-author of *PTSD: Biography of a Disease* and *Haunted by Combat*. He is also a fellow of the Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence and the Association for Psychological Science and a 2002 recipient of The American Psychological Association Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Advancement of International Psychology.

KIRWAN ROCKEFELLER, PhD, teaches in both the College of Integrative Medicine and Health Sciences and College of Social Sciences at Saybrook University. He is the co-editor of *Spirituality and Healthcare*, volume 2 of the three-volume *Whole Person Healthcare* (2007) and is the author of *Visualize Confidence: How to Use Guided Imagery to Overcome Self-Doubt* (2007).

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SERLIN, KRIPPNER,
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INTEGRATED CARE FOR THE TRAUMATIZED

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INTEGRATED CARE FOR THE TRAUMATIZED

A WHOLE-PERSON APPROACH

Edited by **ILENE A. SERLIN, STANLEY KRIPPNER,
KIRWAN ROCKEFELLER**

IV

**Future of Integrative Care for
the Traumatized**

Chapter Twelve

Promoting Caregiver Satisfaction and Regeneration

Eleanor Pardess

This chapter presents a multimodal model for preventing compassion fatigue and promoting caregiver satisfaction and regeneration. Initially developed by the Israel Crisis Management SELAH (a Hebrew word meaning “a rock to lean upon”), this model integrates various modalities, including nature-based activities, mindfulness practices, and intermodal expressive arts. Rather than focusing exclusively on stress management, the model aims to provide a secure base for exploration and growth. It uses metaphors to open space for reflection and to convey ideas and feelings that often cannot easily be put into words (Kopp, 1995).

The focus of the chapter is on the potential of nature-based workshops, one of the components of the SELAH model. The workshops are combined with mindfulness practices and expressive modalities, as part of a whole-person approach (Serlin, 2007; Serlin & Cannon, 2004; Serlin & Hansen, 2015). They are integrated into the training and support programs for caregivers that provide emergency first aid and long-term support in the aftermath of trauma. The illustrations and research findings highlight the potential power of these programs to prevent burnout and promote compassion satisfaction and regeneration.

UNDERSTANDING COMPASSION FATIGUE

Caregiver burnout and compassion fatigue are currently receiving significant attention from health care practitioners (Cocker & Joss, 2016). *Compassion fatigue* refers to the emotional impact of working with people involved in traumatizing life events, for example, terrorist attacks, war, torture, family

violence, criminal assault, or sexual violation. The demanding nature of this work and the intense exposure to human suffering can lead to what has been called secondary or vicarious traumatization. Caregivers are subject to risks ranging from emotional exhaustion, heightened anxiety, and nightmares and other sleep disturbances, to secondary traumatization marked by the full range of PTSD (Figley, 1995, 2002).

Compassion fatigue, which is a combination of burnout and traumatization, engenders significant costs for trauma workers and the quality of care they provide (Figley, 2002; McCann & Pearlman, 1990). The profound impact on personal well-being and professional function can manifest itself across psychological, cognitive, and interpersonal domains. Symptoms of compassion fatigue are similar to the three classic features of PTSD: 1) hyperarousal, disturbed sleep, irritability, and hypervigilance; 2) intrusive thoughts and worries, and 3) avoidance, as in “not wanting to go there again” and the desire to avoid thoughts, feelings, and conversations associated with the care recipient’s pain and suffering (Figley, 2002; Rothschild, 2006).

The effects of compassion fatigue may worsen throughout time, compromising caregivers’ ability to interact in positive and helpful ways with traumatized individuals and their families (Craig & Sprang, 2010). Caregivers who do not receive adequate support may soon find their emotional resources depleted (Figley, 2002; Vachon, 2015).

The multifaceted nature of the caregiver experience calls for an integrative perspective. Caregivers, who navigate situations of severe distress, do this challenging work while confronting the intense emotions of the traumatized and their families. To reduce this risk of compassion fatigue, ongoing support is imperative to conserve and strengthen the caregivers’ inner resources to meet the demands they face (Pardess, 2005; Pearlman & Caringi, 2009; Sodeke-Gregson, Holttum, & Billings, 2013).

The whole-person approach is a particularly relevant framework for building such resourcefulness due to its integration of cutting-edge practices in a bio–psycho–spiritual model supporting resilience and growth. It represents a paradigm shift from an illness model to a growth-oriented model. Extensive research has been conducted on programs for “helping the helper,” but the current literature has focused almost exclusively on the negative consequences of caregiving (Pardess, 2005) at the expense of exploring the entire spectrum of the caregiving experience (Linley & Joseph, 2007). Witnessing suffering and struggling with adversity, according to the SELAH strength-based model described in this chapter, may lead to the discovery of strengths and the enhancement of life’s meaning. This model calls for widening the circles of compassionate care through cultivating presence, emotional regulation, and openness to experience.

One of the unique contributions of this model is the integration of nature-based experiential activities with mindfulness and compassionate mind train-

ing. The incorporation of both verbal and nonverbal creative modalities creates a wide spectrum of opportunities for self-expression, enabling caregivers to find their own voice and expand strategies for regaining calm in the face of turbulence. This integrative approach adds a new dimension to conventional “helping the helper” programs by “giving voice” and fostering a sense of belonging among caregivers.

AN INTEGRATIVE MODEL

SELAH, the Israel Crisis Management Center, is a nonprofit organization supporting immigrants coping with traumatic loss due to terrorist attacks and other disasters. The multidisciplinary teams provide immediate on-site emergency practical assistance and emotional support to the bereaved, as well as the wounded and their families, from the initial hours after tragedy strikes, followed by long-term individual and group support.

SELAH’s two- and three-day seminars are an integral part of this comprehensive support program. The seminars, which are held in different locations in Israel, are tailored to meet the needs of different target groups, including bereaved parents, widows/widowers, grandparents raising orphaned grandchildren, and children and adolescents coping with the sudden death or severe wounding of a family member. Each of these groups deals with specific themes, but the programs share the common goal of strengthening secure connections, cultivating meaning, and creating a safe space for sharing and bearing witness.

Since isolation is a crucial risk factor in the aftermath of trauma (Neuschul & Page, 2018), breaking through isolation is one of the goals of the SELAH programs. Support from the multidisciplinary teams, in addition to the mutual support of others in the group, is woven together, step by step, to create a “safety net”—a caring community. The caregivers themselves attend the seminars, in addition to having individual and group supervision, and taking part in training programs and workshops (Pardess, 2005).

Measures That May Help Prevent Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet” (Remen, 1996). What can caregivers do to protect themselves from the stress that “comes with the territory” of trauma work? The following are a number of suggestions that have been offered by caregivers as strategies for mitigating compassion fatigue and promoting regeneration:

- Engage in such self-care behaviors as getting adequate sleep, balanced nutrition, and regular exercise.
- Practice mindfulness, breathing, and visual imagery.
- Engage regularly in pleasurable activities to rejuvenate and restore energy and joy.
- Maintain a good balance between work and family, and developing supportive relationships with family and friends outside of work.
- Find and allow for adequate personal time to grieve losses and process difficult experiences that are evoked in encounters with the traumatized.
- Develop a philosophy of care that cultivates a sense of meaning and purpose.

Professional Development Strategies

- Allow yourself to be moved and challenged by the people you meet and their physical, emotional, and spiritual problems without making them your own; view the encounters with people who you find most difficult as a growth-promoting experience and an opportunity to transcend your boundaries and deepen compassion.
- Recognize that you are not alone in facing the stresses of working with the traumatized.
- Be clear and consistent with yourself and others about your boundaries and personal limit-setting (including taking vacations, learning to say “no,” and asking for what you need).
- Connect often with a respectful team that meets regularly and shares a common goal or mission.

Traditionally, self-care strategies have emphasized the value of “good professional boundaries” and effective self-care strategies outside the workplace. These alone, however, can lead to emotional detachment by the caregiver. Over-reliance on strategies of avoidance can result in diminished compassion satisfaction (Pardess et al., 2009). By blending the expressive arts with nature-based activities, the SELAH model offers caregivers tools for the regulation of levels of arousal and validation of their own experience. This expands their ability to take care of personal, familial, and emotional needs, while attending to the needs of care recipients. One of the key messages in the program is, “If your compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete” (Kornfield, 1994, p. 28).

THE NATURE-BASED WORKSHOPS

Since many of the SELAH caregivers are immigrants from diverse backgrounds, group excursions were planned in the first programs initiated more than 20 years ago, as an opportunity for them to get to know the country. These outings, which were called “Walking the Bible,” included visits to places of historical significance. The trips were designed to promote a sense of belonging and provide a wider context and perspective for personal trauma and loss. The more practical applications, based on metaphors from nature, compassionate imagery, and mindfulness practices, were incorporated at a later stage of the development of the program. The nature-based workshops remain one of the components of the caregiver seminars.

The following sequence of experiential activities in each of these workshops was designed to enable a gradual entry and engagement of participants in the process, which unfolds as it goes along. The following is the structure of a typical workshop:

1. **Grounding:** Grounding is the first step in establishing a safe and secure atmosphere for identifying natural resources.
2. **Cultivating presence:** Participants are invited to slow down and notice mindfully what bodily sensations come up as they become more present in the “here and now.” (For example, “We need to slow down to be present with ourselves and others, and curious enough about what is happening within ourselves.”)
3. **Mindful walking in nature and guided imagery:** The walk takes place along a route preplanned by the staff on the basis of the workshop topic and its participants. While walking, participants are invited to allow their senses to open up to the surroundings—to look, listen, touch, and smell. The experiential activities at the various stations along the way are adjusted to the composition and needs of the specific groups of caregivers, while including a great deal of space for reflection and spontaneous development of topics raised by the participants.
4. **Multimodal creative activity:** After returning to an indoor setting, participants are invited to follow the lead of the items spread around the room (including materials from nature, newspaper clippings, old calendars, and coloring materials).
5. **Reconnecting:** In the final phase, participants are invited to share their creations and reflect on the process they experienced during the different parts of the workshop. What did they encounter on the walk that was meaningful for them? To what were their eyes drawn? Discussions may focus on identifying resources that may be taken from the different parts of the workshop and mobilized in challenging encoun-

ters. The workshop closes with a poem composed by the group facilitator, constructed of phrases or sentences selected from the participants' expressions and elaborating on the metaphors offered during the workshop.

The following section describes the use of metaphors and how the nature-based activities are tailored to cultivate mindful presence and nurture the capacity of caregivers to balance between caring for others and caring for themselves.

Harnessing the Power of Metaphors from Nature

The word *metaphor* is Greek in origin, stemming from *meta* (change) and *pherein* (to bear, or to carry). The word *amphora*, which has the same root, refers to an ancient Greek vessel for carrying and storing precious liquids. Metaphors can carry ideas and feelings that cannot be put into words (Kopp, 1995). Using metaphors from nature in group work, combined with mindfulness practices and expressive modalities as part of a whole-person approach, can open up new possibilities for balancing caring for self and others, and building bridges between the past, present, and future.

Understanding natural processes of regeneration and the interconnectedness of the web of life offers a wider perspective that may open new meanings in the encounter with suffering. Awareness of the multiple ways in which life unfolds and interacts with both death and the regenerative processes in nature can help caretakers feel more rooted in humility. Compassion is connected to our willingness to acknowledge the ways in which we are both powerful and vulnerable, and to understand how we are interdependent on one another.

In the immediate aftermath of traumatizing events, caregivers often desperately need support; however, too much exposure can be overwhelming. That is why a nonintrusive, indirect approach, for instance, the use of imagery, is so crucial. Caregivers are invited to share their own unique ways of grounding themselves and engaging inner balance.

For example, in one workshop we discuss the various mechanisms trees use to protect themselves in a fire or the "survival mode" of desert plants. Upon reflecting on such protective strategies as "closing down" or going into "safe mode," caregivers often describe feeling numb as a result of being flooded by overwhelming stress. "It is as if you are a sponge that is completely saturated and has never been wrung out" (Lipsky, 2009, p. 104). Such metaphors are explored and expanded on by group participants, for example, "I would like to cover myself with a layer of wax to protect myself," in the words of a caregiver in one of the seminars held after a difficult period of multiple terrorist attacks.

Caregivers have their own ways of coping, but it is important to help them identify and use them to the best of their ability. Sharing perspectives in a validating atmosphere demonstrates the value of diversity and respect for individual differences. The experiential activities in the workshops offer participants opportunities for resourcing, as well as finding new ways to approach the challenges they face in a proactive, rather than a reactive, way.

The Wounded Healer

The term *wounded healer* was used by Jung (1951), drawing on the image of Chiron, the archetypal wounded healer in Greek mythology. Chiron, who was the wisest of the Centaurs, was wounded in battle by an arrow and became very ill. The resultant anguish set him on a journey of discovery in search of his own cure. Along the way, he discovered his healing powers and ability to alleviate suffering. By helping others, he found a safe haven of healing for himself. Chiron's courage to be in touch with his wound was the key to his special healing powers (Rice, 2011).

Some of the former participants have become SELAH volunteers. Drawing on their personal experience, they offer valuable insights into transforming pain and posttraumatic growth. One of these is Nadia Ganzman of Nazareth Elite, who immigrated to Israel from Belarus in 1991, and then lost her only son, Valery, in Lebanon in 1996. "I felt all alone in Israel," she said.

My husband and I came to this country because of Valery, because of his love of Israel. I didn't understand how it was possible to go on living—to enjoy life. But then four months after my son fell, a woman came to see me whose only son had fallen three years before. She showed me that I was not alone. She helped me to meet others overcoming the same loss. I realized that I could go on. And little by little, I began living again. I decided I wanted to give back what I received. So now I reach out to bereaved families and bring them the message that they are not alone. I wanted to do so before the training program, but I had no idea how to do so. Everything seemed so futile before the seminar. I felt so blocked that I could not even imagine myself being around people. It is still hard, really hard, for me to make these visits, but I also feel a deeper connection to other people and feel more in touch with myself. It keeps me going.

Anna Krakovich of Haifa, a former English teacher, is an example of a survivor of a terrorist attack who has become a SELAH volunteer. More than 70% of her body was burned in a car bomb explosion in 1994, two years after she immigrated to Israel with her young daughter. She was not expected to live. Said Anna,

When I opened my eyes in the hospital, I saw a strange woman sitting by me. I was in so much pain that I spent nearly a year there, talking with the wounded.

I could see that they were glad I didn't have the strength to ask what was uppermost in my mind—where was my daughter Irene? I couldn't remember what had happened, or if Irene had been with me. Without my asking, Ruth Bar-On from SELAH said to me, "Don't worry, Irene is safe." She knew instinctively what my primary concern would be.

Krakovich spent 11 months in the burn unit. A SELAH volunteer visited her every day during the entire period. Not long after her release, another terrorist attack occurred. Many of the young soldiers were badly burned. Krakovich felt the need to reach out and help, to give back a part of what she had received from SELAH. Two years later, she described the process of transformation she experienced as a metamorphosis, relating, "After the caregiver seminar I went back to the same ward from which I had just come. The nurses pointed to me and said, 'Look how Anna is recovering.' I knew it was not only recovery. I had changed, like the trees we saw along the way."

The analogy of trees on a hilltop facing strong winds is an illustration of a useful metaphor from the caregiver seminars. This analogy was originally presented by Stephen Lepore and Tracey Revenson (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 1998), and has been elaborated by Stephan Joseph (2011). Some trees stand firm and unbending, while others may be snapped in half. Trees that bend to accommodate the wind may or may not recover and resume their original position. Other trees change shape and are permanently changed. "Lashed by the winds the tree will never be the same again, it grows around its injuries, and new leaves and branches sprout from the trunk of the tree where it had been severed. Scars, gnarls, and misshapen limbs give the tree its unique character. It is no less of a tree than it was, but it is different" (Joseph, 2011, p. 68).

Some trees may seem lifeless at first, yet still have the capacity for regeneration and nourishing new growth. Like the tree buffeted by the wind, people who grow following trauma might still remain emotionally affected, but their views on life, and their behaviors, will have changed in meaningful ways in light of their experiences.

A single mother, whose only daughter was killed in a suicide bombing, collected dry crumbling leaves and pieces of bark from the ground as she prepared a collage of scattered fragments loosely held together with a piece of rope. She placed a fig in the middle. She said, "Until yesterday, I felt that everything was dead within me, empty, like the dry bark. Everything was falling apart. Here you can see the shattered, scattered pieces. . . . This green fig is a sign of hope. Maybe."

Later she said that she was glad she had come, in spite of her initial reluctance, and told us how important it had been to her to reconnect to herself and her inner resources. She was proud of the work she prepared. "I am the eyes through which my daughter can look at the world," she said. "It

is only through facing my own brokenness that I can help others reconnect to themselves and to life."

The language of metaphors crosses culture and language barriers. The use of metaphors facilitates the process of sharing experience by creating a communal language with which one can translate oneself to oneself and others. The group work provides caregivers with opportunities to tap into both individual and collective resources, and to identify the factors that can hinder their natural coping capacities, setting them up for burnout and compassion fatigue. Participants are encouraged to learn from one another and reflect on ways the practices shared in the seminars could expand their "toolboxes" by becoming fine-tuned, well-adapted, or simply more readily available to be applied when needed.

Figure 12.1 is a powerful picture and illustration of metaphors from nature.

Nature provides endless opportunities to learn about the cycles of change, life and death, as well as about processes of regeneration.

After the fire on the Carmel, in 2010, I gave a workshop in which participants had the opportunity to discuss burnout and regeneration. Resonating with the burned and cracked tree next to which the group was sitting, one of the volunteers, himself a bereaved parent whose son was killed in a terrorist



Figure 12.1. Rising from Ashes: Growth through adversity after the Carmel forest fire in December 2010. Eleanor Pardess

attack, talked about his experience of burnout—not only burning out, but also burning in (inside). Later on, he quoted Leonard Cohen, who he had met at a concert (the earnings from which went to the bereaved parents) when Cohen visited Israel in 2009. He resonated with the lines speaking about the deep crack within, and the struggle to connect. He felt a need to reach out to offer support the newly bereaved others (“We are all broken”). He added that he was not sure at first that he had anything to offer. “After my son was killed, I was surrounded by complete darkness. There was no meaning left, no reason to continue living. In the company of others, I learned to tie my tongue, to ‘keep up a front.’ I wanted to go on smiling, as I did before. However, I wasn’t able to.”

“All I could do was to just try and stretch my mouth into something that might pass as a smile. When I am alone, I feel that there is a black hole, an open vacuum in the place of my heart. Here in SELAH I don’t have to hide my feelings, I can set my tongue free.” The use of art enabled him to give sorrow shape.

He was worried that setting his tongue free would have devastating effect on other volunteers and that his own aching void would scare others, but discovered over time that “other bereaved parents understood what I was going through but following “perfect offering, but a ‘good enough.’ I was surprised to discover the power of the group and actually found some comfort knowing others could understand what I was going through. We gain our strength from being together by sharing our stories and being part of a greater whole. They also seemed so strong on the outside like the burned tree on the way, but felt hollow and weak like I was.” We had discussed good enough caregiving in the group.

He then sang the lines about how the light shines in the cracks of something that is broken. In other words, when something goes wrong, there is always a chance for transformation.

The group member could identify with the lines speaking about the deep crack within and the struggle to connect with and reach out to support the newly bereaved and help others. He felt that the training workshops, and the mutual support and understanding of others in the group, had helped him gather the strength to face his own wounded condition and darkness of suffering. Seeing the rays of light through the leaves of that olive tree reminded him of the cracks in his sense of self and home. Stepping out of his own personal isolated experience and connecting to nature and others in the group had a transformative effect for him, like seeing light through the cracks. He felt that he was part of a great human chain.

He then sang several lines of the song “Anthem” by Leonard Cohen.

The Experience of Being Uprooted

“We don’t always have an opportunity to discover what goes on beneath the surface.” With these words, the group stopped by a tree, the underground roots of which had been exposed and were intertwining by the side of the path. This workshop was held in a forest in the northern part of Israel. One of the participants, a single mother who had lost her only son in a suicide bombing, was particularly attracted to the severed root, which only she noticed. She bent over and gently stroked the root with emotion, remarking, “Just like my heart—broken in two.” Later on, she drew a picture of the same tree with severed roots. She said, “I found myself identifying with the severed roots we saw on the way, split into two. On these roots there were green sprouts pushing their way out. Mine are now like those on the paper, only black. Yet, who knows? Maybe there will be growth in the future.”

Another participant, who had noticed the way the roots of a tree grew around obstacles, commented, “People do not understand that we do not ‘get over’ a loss; rather, it becomes a part of us. It is with us all the time.”

Keeping Roots Alive

Plants that have been uprooted, transplanted, and forced to adjust to new surroundings seem to have an inner knowledge of how to survive their relocation. At first, they invest all their energy in settling down and developing roots. During this stage they do not grow leaves or produce fruit, as that would be a waste of energy. The plant may seem to be “sick” or even “dead” on the outside, but the real story is what is going on under the surface. Underneath, roots are gradually developing and spreading out. It may be difficult to accept these periods in which there is no visible growth; however, it is important to know that this is not a waste of time but part of the process of rooting and grounding. Acclimatization takes time.

In a support group meeting for bereaved parents, a mother, whose 14-year-old daughter had been killed in a terrorist attack shortly after the family immigrated to Israel, told the group about the circumstances leading her to reach out and provide hope to others. Following her daughter’s death, she tried to plant a cherry tree in Israel, using a sapling sent by her mother from the Ukraine—a tree like the one they had in their garden there. She reflected,

It looked very sick and so sad here. We waited and waited. Not one leaf, not one flower. It was so dry. We thought it had already perished. One day my husband saw this tiny shoot pushing its way out. He is usually quite reserved, yet he was so excited, and even shouted in Hebrew (it was the first time he spoke a word of Hebrew at home), “Yesh, Yesh!”

The struggle of the tree resonated with the participants. “We also need care and nourishment, just like the plants,” one of them commented. “And so much patience,” said another. “I hate the word *savlanut* [patience in Hebrew], but I know deep inside that we have to be patient with all that is unresolved in ourselves.”

The meaning of connecting to one’s roots was elaborated on by group members. Some of them also commented on the different functions of roots that are essential for our nutrition and for firm anchorage. This discussion helped the caregivers maintain their own emotional equilibrium and weather the storms of life.

Trauma catapults people into the unknown. Anyone who has gone through trauma has asked themselves such searching questions as, Why me? What happened? What does it all mean? What do I do? Who am I? The answers do not always come easily, but when they do, they are potentially life-transforming. The combination of nature-based group experiences and the expressive arts opens new possibilities and creative ways for struggling with these questions and building bridges between the past, present, and future. Another key factor that fosters openness to emotion in promoting resilience and growth in these programs is the use of shared humor. The mindfulness practices foster emotional awareness and develop emotional tolerance.

Many caregivers find it practically impossible to attend to their own needs and well-being while caring for others. To provide validation and bear witness to pain, one has to be open to experiencing painful emotions; however, fears of emotional intensity may inhibit this ability. The experiential workshops can support the caregiver’s tolerance of intense emotions by 1) making room for examining fears that emotions will be overwhelming and last indefinitely; 2) using mindful observation of emotions—that is, observing an emotion when it arises and not attempting to suppress or control it; and 3) providing caregivers with an opportunity to learn that their emotions not only “make sense,” but also are a valuable source of information, and that stress can be an engine to growth (Joseph, 2011).

Long-term follow-ups and qualitative research have provided empiric support for the model. Caregivers report that following these workshops they do the following:

- Continue to reflect on these experiences and discover new strengths (“I feel that I’ve learned to ride the waves and discovered strengths I didn’t know that existed”).
- Respond to others in need with more awareness, rather than being on reactive “auto-pilot,” and use that awareness to take whatever action will move them toward balance—as expressed in the comment, “This experi-

ence has enabled me to separate between my own feeling and that of others.”

- Experience a sense of renewed commitment and compassion for themselves and others—as in the comment, “I used to be constantly worried that I am not doing enough, wondering if it is okay to feel so much pain and confusion. I feel more accepting toward myself now.”

Resilience in the face of trauma exposure is not a static characteristic, but rather an individual’s process of engagement with protective factors in the interaction between the self and the interpersonal environment. By enhancing intrapersonal and interpersonal self-awareness, caregivers can become more attentive to the presence of stress and their own personal capacity to find sources of nourishment and renewal.

The model developed in SELAH adds an additional dimension to current programs of cultivating growth and resilience by harnessing the power of metaphors from nature with the expressive arts and mindfulness practices. Moreover, this model converges with a whole-person approach by shifting away from conventional deficit-based models of trauma treatment and pathologizing discourses, and toward a comprehensive approach that promotes a view of our shared humanity, connectedness, resilience, and growth.

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