

Working with Traumatized Children

Impact on Helpers

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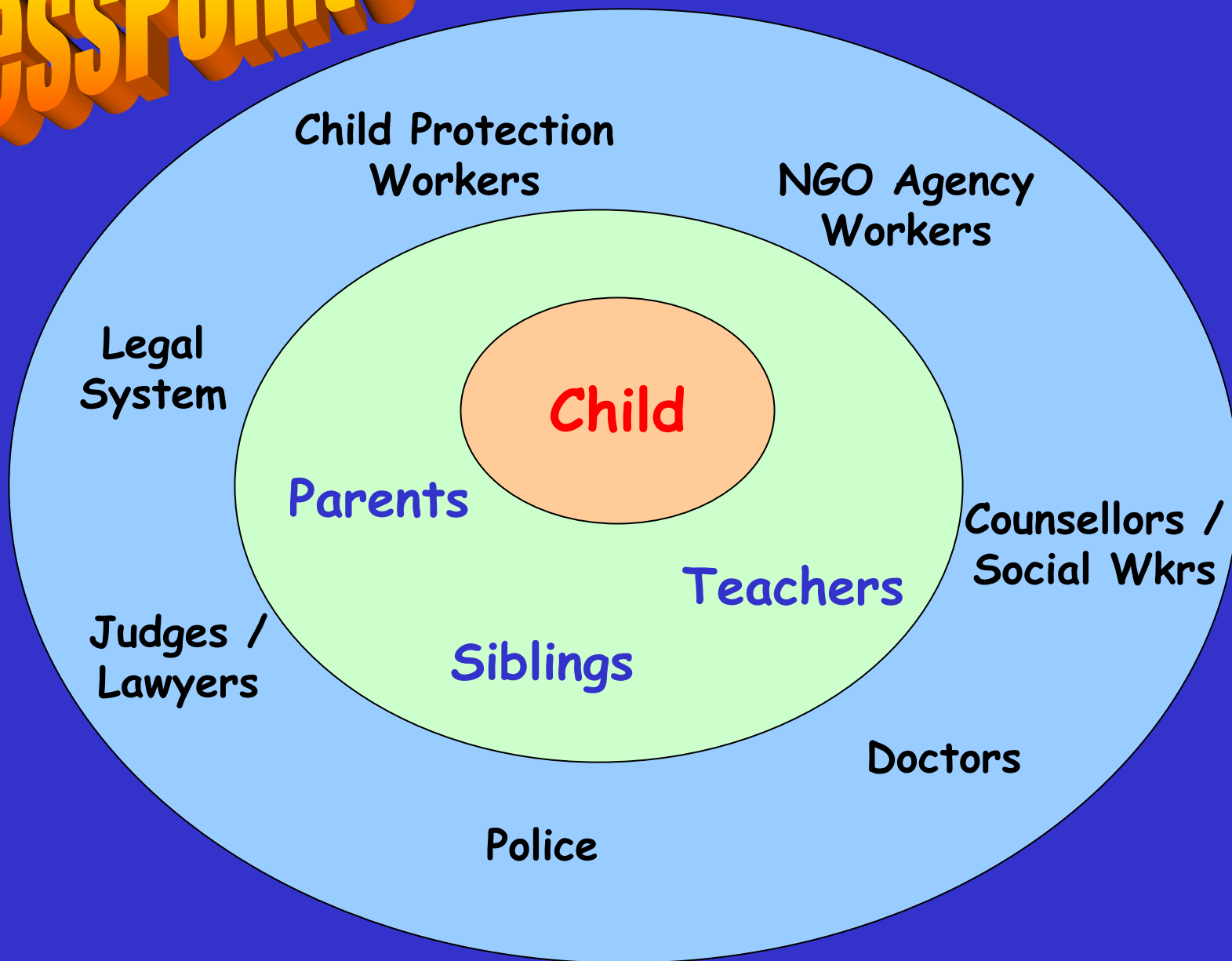




Overview

- Stresses in work with traumatized children
- Impact on the worker / therapist
- Indicators of Vicarious Traumatization
- Coping & Self Care

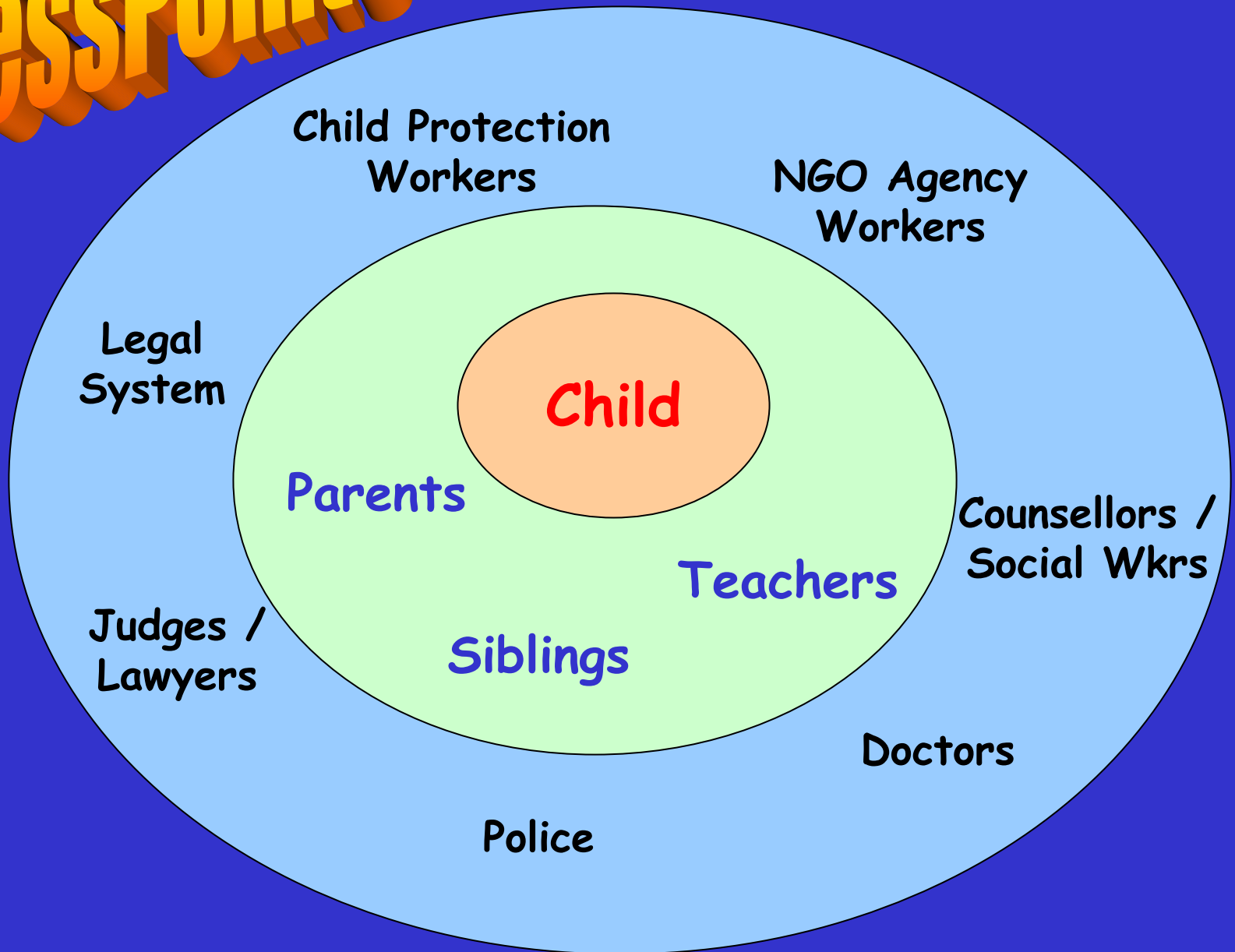
StressPoints



StressPoint 1: Trauma Disclosures

- Traumatized Children
 - trauma & abuse disclosures (esp sexual abuse)
 - vulnerabilities

StressPoints



StressPoint 2:

Realities of the System

- Often an imperfect system
- Lack of resources, services to act on recommendations
- Decisions about welfare of the children often out of the hands of the individual worker
- Different views between different professionals (e.g. doctor, police, social worker, psychologist)

Impact on the Helper / Therapist

Emotional Impact

- Sadness
- Disgust
- Frustration
- Anger
- Futility
- Helplessness
- Hopelessness

Impact on Beliefs / Schemas

Safety

- Anxieties of own safety
- Hypervigilance
- Expectation of victimization, violence
- Trauma workers who are parents
 - worries about the safety of own children

Impact on Beliefs

Identity

- Identity as a therapist / counsellor / social worker / professional
- What it means to be a man / woman / parent
- Sexuality & intimacy

Impact on Beliefs

Worldview

Is every client a survivor of sexual abuse?

How can people be so cruel?

Parents are dangerous!

- Overly Suspicious, Anxious
- Cynical, Desensitized
- Lose hope, optimism, confidence

Vicarious Traumatization (VT)

- Unique to anyone who engages emphatically with trauma survivors
- Takes place over time, across clients & therapeutic relationships
- Affects our Beliefs & Schemas

(Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995)

Indicators of VT

- Distressing emotions
- Intrusive images
- Numbing or avoidance of work / related material
- Physical complaints
- Addictive or compulsive behaviours
- Impaired work / personal functioning

COPING & SELF-CARE

Support & Supervision

- Supportive colleagues, boss, organization
- Ventilate feelings, debrief
- Get constructive feedback



Communication & Teamwork

- Seek to understand
- Communicate
- Build good work relationships / network
- Exchange information, narrow the gaps



Balance Work & Leisure

Take better care of yourself at **WORK**

- Avoid mental replaying of cases
- Set boundaries with time
- Set limits with clients/colleagues
- Learn to say “no”
- Take breaks at work
- Diversify workload

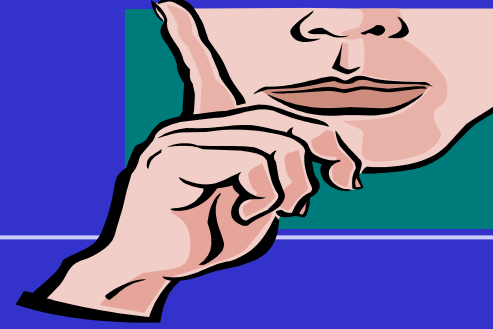


Balance Work & Leisure

Take better care of yourself at **HOME**

- Eat right
- Sleep, rest
- Exercise regularly
- Do healthy & fun activities
- Spend time with friends & family
- Spend time with emotionally healthy children

Self-Reflection



When overwhelmed with work...

What really matters?

When ruminating about the “shoulds” & “coulds”...

*Have I done the best I can
under the circumstances?*

When unable to let go of clients' needs, problems...

*Do I have realistic expectations
of myself & others?*

Focus on a Positive
View of

The World
Your Life
People



Thank You

