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Sound Animal Representation: Navigating Legal Ethics & Compassion Fatigue

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Introduction & Context

- Why This Session Exists
 - ...for Attorneys
 - ...at This Conference
- Compassion Fatigue
 - Common Symptoms
 - Impacts
- vs 'Burnout'
- Relevance to Russ Mead's Ethics Presentation



A Brief Self-Assessment

1. What are the top 3 signs or signals that I'm emotionally exhausted due to what is demanded of me professionally? (In other words, what would others notice of me? What would I notice of myself?).
2. About _____ % of the time, I feel that the work I do for my animals makes a difference (in the world).
3. I have trouble feeling a good work/life balance _____ % of the time (looking over the past year).



A Brief Self-Assessment

When you have time on your own....these get at identifying compassion fatigue...(and are in your handout)....

- I know when I'm feeling dissatisfied with my job or work roles because I tend to _____ when I feel this way.
- Here is what my friends and family members observe of me when I feel overwhelmed and powerless at work:

- My beliefs about the world and about people has shifted since being in my line of work.
 - I used to believe: _____
 - I now believe: _____
- _____ % of the time, I feel good about the work I do for my animals.
- I feel that colleagues value the work I do for animals.



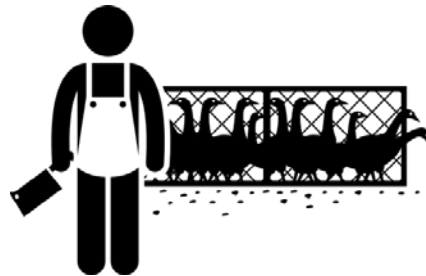
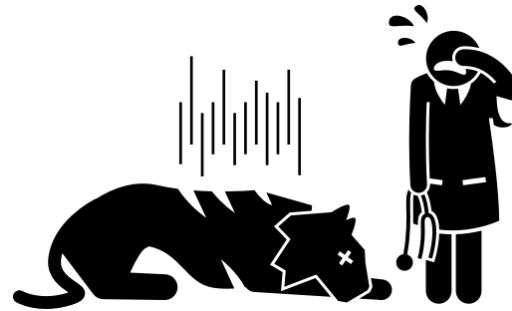
Compassion Fatigue & The Animal Lawyer

- Not Unique to *Animal Lawyers* (or Lawyers)

- Vicarious Trauma
- Helping Professions
- Attorney Intervention Points
- Legal Paradigms & Lawyer's Mask
 - (De-)Valuation of Emotional Response

- But! Some Particular Challenges...

- Outside Normative Paradigm
- 'Movement Lawyering'
- Our Clients Cannot Say 'Thank You'



Some Strategies to Cope & Prevent Compassion Fatigue

- 1) Self-Care: seek balance between work & life; optimal exercise, food, sleep, relaxation
- 2) Team/Peer Support: talk with colleagues when you have difficult cases; seek support from others
- 3) Set boundaries with work and electronic media related to work
- 4) Gain more self-awareness: what is your sign to turn for help?
- 5) Get hobbies!! Do things outside of work, have friends outside of work
- 6) Keep a journal to process your emotions and to cultivate self-awareness
- 7) Influence your work culture—take breaks, relaxation areas?
- 8) Seek professional help: Attorney Assistance Programs, get a therapist...



https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/

<https://oaap.org/> (Oregon Attorney Assistance Program... for those of you in Oregon)

