

Symptoms of Secondary Traumatic Stress

Intrusive Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thoughts and images associated with client's traumatic experiences• Obsessive and compulsive desire to help certain clients• Client/work issues encroaching upon personal time• Inability to "let go" of work-related matters• Perception of survivors as fragile and needing the assistance of caregiver ("savior")• Thoughts and feelings of inadequacy as a caregiver• Sense of entitlement or special-ness• Perception of the world in terms of victims and perpetrators• Personal activities interrupted by work-related issues
Avoidance Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Silencing Response (avoiding hearing/witnessing client's traumatic material)• Loss of enjoyment in activities/cessation of self care activities• Loss of energy• Loss of hope/sense of dread working with certain clients• Loss of sense of competence/potency• Isolation• Secretive self-medication/addiction (alcohol, drugs, work, sex, food, spending, etc)• Relational dysfunction
Arousal Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased anxiety• Impulsivity/reactivity• Increased perception of demand/threat (in both job and environment)• Increased frustration/anger• Sleep disturbance• Difficulty concentrating• Change in weight/appetite• Somatic symptoms