

# *Vicarious Trauma Informed Practice*

## *Interviewing Potential Employees*

### Sample Questions

- ❖ Ask about their experience with working with trauma survivors
- ❖ If the applicant has no experience, ask about their educational background or lived experience to see if they have been exposed to information about or experiences similar to working with trauma survivors:
  - Have you taken any classes on trauma?
  - What does resilience mean to you?
  - What are your hobbies?
  - What do you do to take care of yourself, physically, emotionally, spiritually?
  - Why is this important in this work?
- ❖ Provide some exposure of day-to-day work such as a case example that highlights trauma exposure in the job, a tour of the facility, and look for reactions and response
- ❖ Inquire about their personal stress management and basic self-care techniques
- ❖ Ask about their expectations of the work culture
- ❖ Explain that secondary traumatic stress (STS) is work-related, secondary exposure to extremely or traumatically stressful events. Ask the applicant:
  - Describe an unexpected/stressful client specific situation you've experienced and how it impacted you. How did you handle this situation and what did you do for self-care?
  - What do you do when dealing with an emotionally stressful client-related situation? How does that work for you? Please describe your way of coping with client-related work stress.

### Remember to Touch Upon These Important Points

In addition to asking questions to learn about the applicant during the application and interview process, there are several points that should be emphasized to set the scene for the organization's supportiveness regarding work-related trauma exposure. Some points to emphasize include:

- ❖ The work is not done alone; emphasize the points of support (e.g., supervisors, peers, team, etc.)
- ❖ Reiterate the realities of the skills needed and duties associated with the job and ask them how they will handle these
- ❖ Convey a culture of affirmation and caring
- ❖ Provide in-depth information regarding supervision/critical debriefing protocols, and supports available like EAP, and wellness plans