

Fatigue in all its Flavors

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Outline



Moral Distress

Decision Fatigue

Compassion Fatigue

Combating Caretaker Fatigue

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Moral Distress

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Moral Distress - Definitions

Ethical Dilemma - A situation in which there is conflict between one or more of the following: one's moral values, obligations to the patient, other animals, one's workplace and colleagues, or society at large (public health & safety).

Moral Conflict - "Occurs when a professional is aware of their own morally correct path but is unable to follow it satisfactorily due to internal or external constraints" *

Moral Distress - A psychological state of anguish that occurs when an individual is unable to resolve a moral conflict and experiences "a violation of one's professional integrity and obligations" *

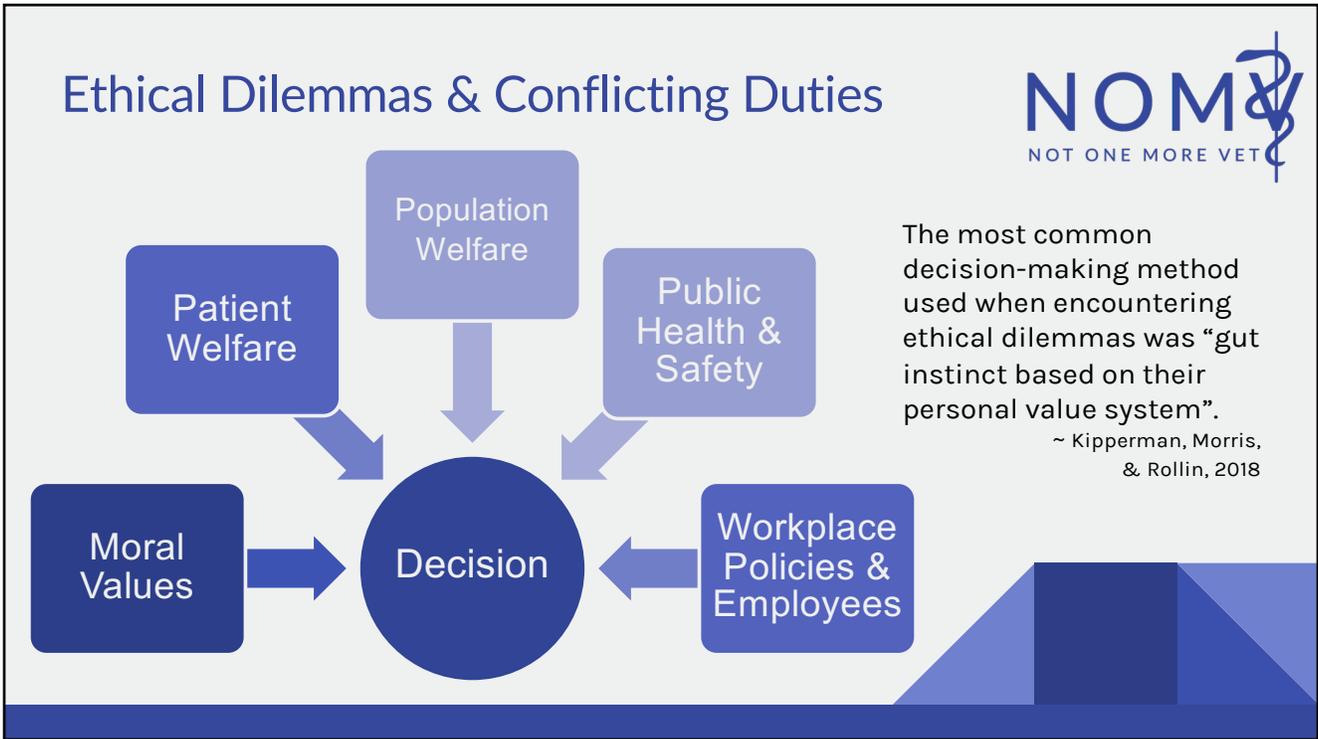
Moral Competency - "The ability to understand morally conflicting situations and use good judgement, intention, and behavior when responding to these" *

Moral Integrity - "Adherence to moral values affecting the sense of dignity and self-respect" *

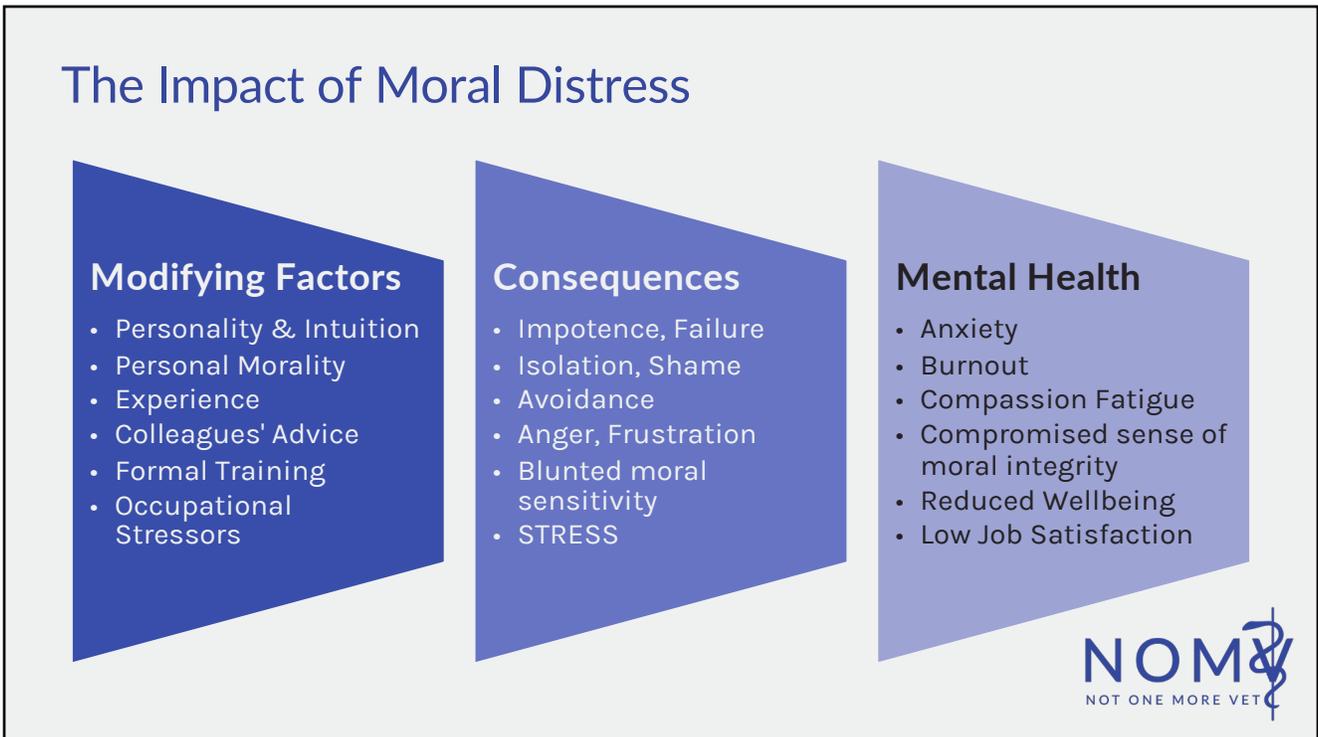
*Arbe et al, 2019



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Decision Fatigue

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Decision Fatigue - Definitions



- **Important Note** – There is a generalized lack of conceptual clarity for decision fatigue. What we have is largely derived from human healthcare.
- **Decision Fatigue** – “describes the impaired ability to make decisions and control behavior as a consequence of repeated acts of decision making”*
- **Ego Depletion** – conceptualized as a depleted state of two key internal resources (executive function & emotional regulation)
- **Executive function** – “describes a set of cognitive processes and mental skills that help an individual plan, monitor, and successfully execute their goals.”**
 - Attentional control, working memory, inhibition, and problem-solving
- **Emotional regulation** – “the ability to exert control over one’s own emotional state”**

*Pignatiello, Martin, &
Hickman, 2020
**Psychology Today

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Decision Fatigue Precursors

Decisional

- Being subjected to a sequence of decisions can be a predisposing factor for decision fatigue
- Degree of decision fatigue increases with decision complexity or difficulty

Self-Regulatory

- Acts of self-regulation can be predictive of decision fatigue

Situational

- Time of day
- Blood glucose
- Physiologic fatigue

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Attributes of Decision Fatigue



Behavioral Attributes (most common)

- Avoidant behaviors and Procrastination tendencies
- Passive approach to decision-making & Less persistence
- Impulsive behavior in decision-making
- Frustration and Irritation experienced more intensely

Cognitive Attributes

- Inhibits reasoning ability (mental shortcuts)
- Worse performance when quantitative skills required
- Cognitive task performance prolonged

Physiological Attributes

- Deterioration of physical endurance

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Decision Fatigue

Mental Health Consequences

- ❖ Impaired executive functions
- ❖ Lower decision-making self-efficacy
 - Decreased ability to engage with goal identification and/or monitoring
- ❖ Failure to recognize decisional opportunities
- ❖ Susceptibility to decision-making bias
 - Psychological myopia
- ❖ Greater decisional conflict
 - Increased sense of uncertainty
- ❖ Higher rate of decision regret

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Compassion Fatigue

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Compassion Fatigue - Definition

"The term compassion fatigue feels like a phrase in search of a meaning. ... To this day, definitions overlap and wander away from each other like puppies from the nest." ~ Susan P. Cohen

Compassion Fatigue - "Physical and spiritual exhaustion, accompanied by acute emotional pain, that stems from a caregiving position." *

Secondary Traumatic Stress - "A component of compassion fatigue that involves work-related, secondary exposure to extremely stressful events." *

*Ayl, 2013

**Teater & Ludgate, 2014

Compassion fatigue, caregiver stress, secondary traumatization, vicarious traumatization, compassion stress, **caregiver fatigue**, bystander effect, trauma exposure response**



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Compassion Fatigue in Veterinary Medicine

Contributing Factors

- Lack of assertiveness
- People-pleasing
- Poor boundaries
- Perfectionism
- Self-criticism
- Work-related stress
- Exhaustion/Burnout
- Moral Distress

Professional Consequences

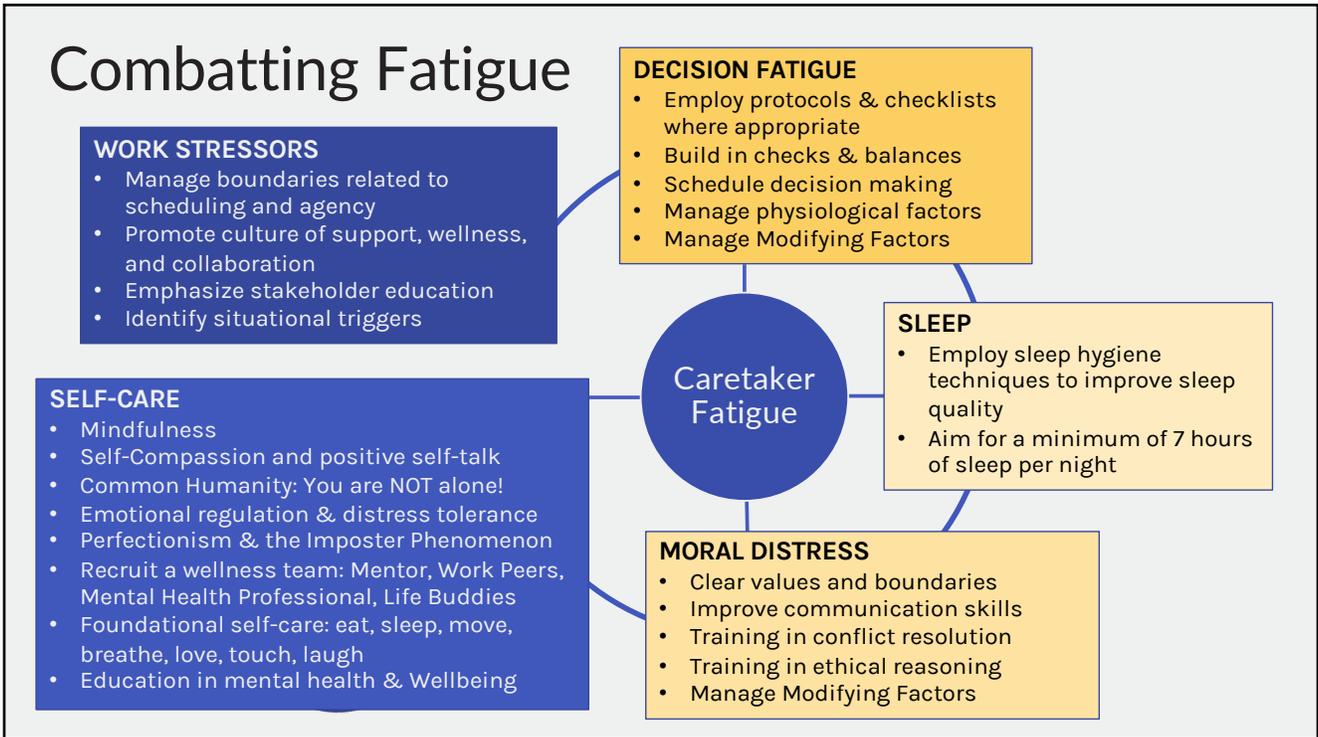
- Poor job performance
- Trouble making decisions
- Decreased empathy
- Interpersonal conflict
- Poor work-life balance
- Over-functioning
- Disengagement

Mental Health Impact

- Irritability, anxiety
- Sadness, apathy
- Detachment, guilt
- Negative self-image
- Headaches/GI distress
- Sleep disturbances
- Substance abuse
- Exhaustion



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Questions?

Lifeboat
by NOMV

10% HAPPIER
MEDITATION FOR FIDGETY SKEPTICS

HEADSPACE
TREAT YOUR HEAD RIGHT

Veterinary Mental Health

Taylor Miller
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NOMV's List

NOMV
NOT ONE MORE VET

Brené Brown
ATLAS OF THE HEART
Mapping Meaningful Connections and the Language of Human Experience

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