



Domestic Abuse and Covid-19

Claudia Megele



Learning from SCRs & DHRs

- Is the person experiencing abuse *visible*? Do agencies *see* him/her? Do they *acknowledge* the abuse in helpful ways?
 - Is the professional response *a trauma informed response*? To diminish fight, flight and freeze responses.
 - Do agencies talk to each other to *understand and triangulate the lived experience*? Multi-agency chronologies are powerful tools.
 - *Empathy* promotes relationship based practice and promotes *connection*.
 - Too many agencies can *overwhelm the person experiencing abuse*. The person experiencing abuse can become lost within a tangled net of agencies, voice is silenced due to fragmentation of narrative and exhaustion sets in due to constant telling and re-telling of experiences/life narrative.
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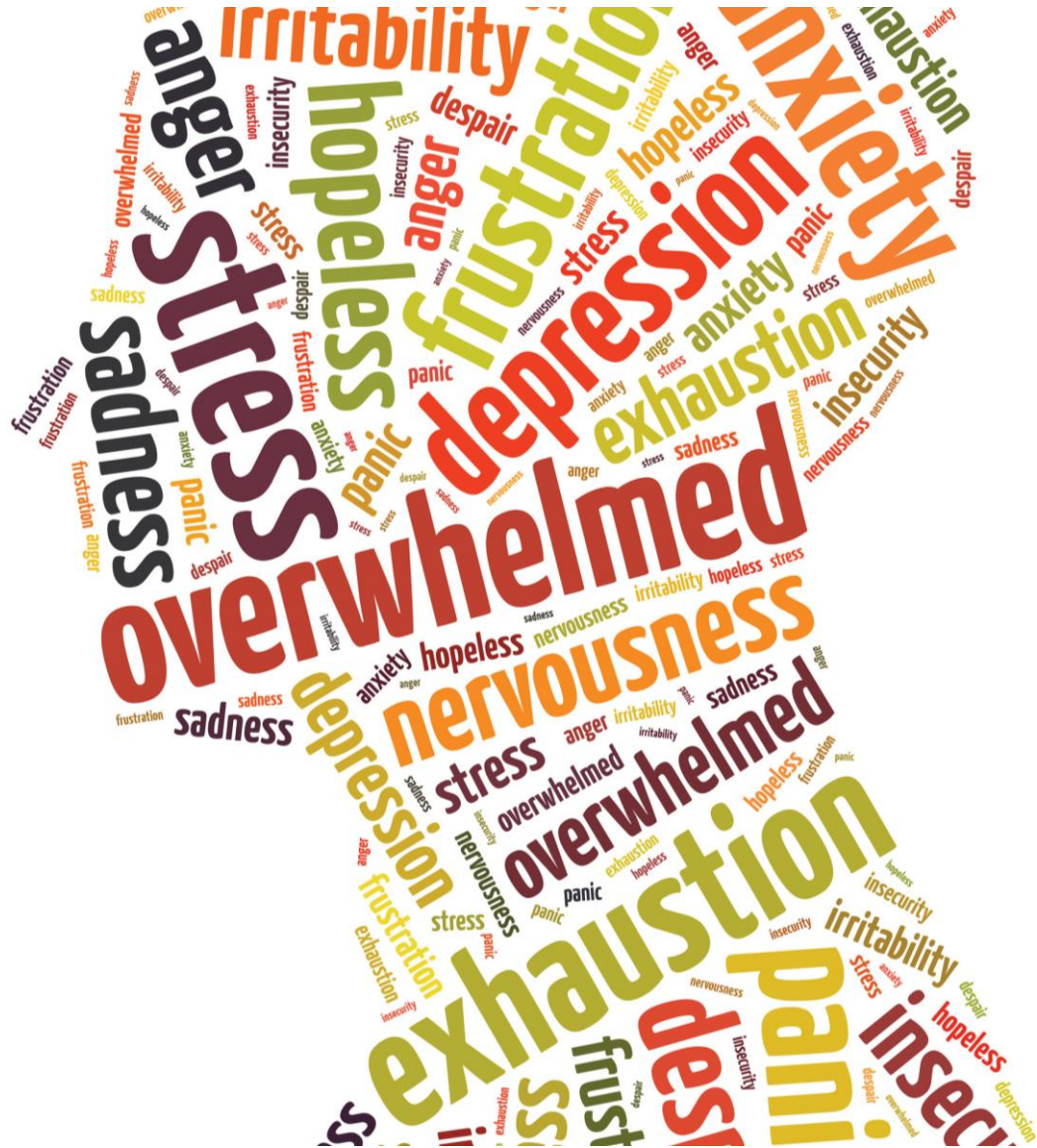
What your direct work needs to achieve

- Connection and understanding. (*created through active listening & empathy*)
 - Realistic and purposeful multi-agency plans that support and keep children, young people and adults experiencing abuse safe. (*purposeful and focused agency engagement*)
 - Multi-agency work that disrupts the perpetrator. (*created through the use of multi-agency risk assessments; identifying and understanding patterns of abuse; analysis of abuse and co-occurring abuse*)
 - Multi-agency work that supports the person experiencing abuse. (*putting practical and emotional support in place; for example services that support MH, food poverty etc.*)
 - Working with the family to identify and create support networks. (*family connection and links*)
 - Practical solutions: using code words, alarms and panic buttons (*consideration for immediate safety*).
 - Important for all agencies to undertake contingency planning.
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Emotional
Response
(Service User)





Emotional Response (Practitioner)





Emotional Response (Children)



Multi-Agency Approaches

- *Social Workers undertake home visits, using a hybrid model of visiting.*
- *School liaison officers contacting schools for regular updates on presentation and attendance.*
- *Health Visitors using hybrid models of visiting.*
- *LA and other orgs. providing meals for families experiencing food poverty. As appropriate to share any concerns/information.*
- *Virtual MARAC Process, to support risk assessment multi-agency action plans.*
- *Domestic abuse court cases need to have a fast track approach because when court dates are extended DA survivor less likely to give evidence.*

Multi-Agency Approaches

- In some instances where there aren't *refuge spaces*, make arrangements with hotels for them to offer accommodation for DA survivors.
- The National Centre for Domestic Violence has *urged victims to set up court-protected safe zones in their own homes* —injunctions called Non-Molestation Orders (NMOs) to mark out an area that abusive partners are not allowed to enter. *There are issues with this approach which was highlighted nationally.*
- Working with housing officers and community support officers within housing estates.
- E-interventions: Children's centres are providing parenting courses online, they can provide support and information. Mental health services continue to provide counselling online.
- *Extending restraining orders and police to actively monitor known dangerous men and women and children known to be at risk of harm from them.*

Questions for Discussion

1. How do I talk to the person experiencing abuse if the perpetrator is always at home or at her side when I undertake a visit?
2. What approaches can we undertake to make children, and young people more visible?
3. Many interventions from agencies are virtual, views regarding this is mixed, is there any evidence on what works?
4. The digital divide, means that the family can only talk to me on the phone and don't want me to visit because they are shielding. What should I do?