



Moral Distress

Colorado Crisis Standards of Care
Hospice Leadership Group
September 17, 2020

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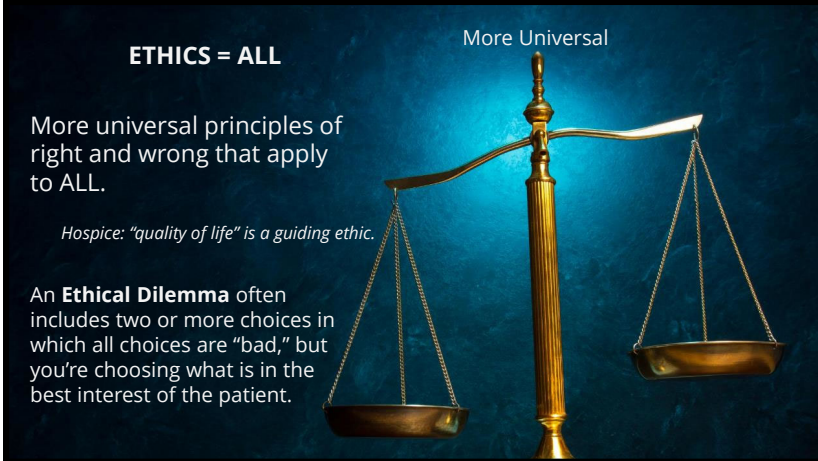
A collage of circular images depicting various scenes related to COVID-19: a healthcare worker in full PPE, a person with a 'WE MATTER' mask, a person in a 'RESTRICTED AREA' sign, and a person in a 'RESTRICTED AREA' sign.

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Ethical Dilemma vs. Moral Distress

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ETHICS = ALL More Universal

More universal principles of right and wrong that apply to ALL.

Hospice: "quality of life" is a guiding ethic.

An **Ethical Dilemma** often includes two or more choices in which all choices are "bad," but you're choosing what is in the best interest of the patient.


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Colorado Crisis Standards of Care: Palliative & Hospice Care

III. "A foundational principle of PC and hospice services during crisis is to **minimize human suffering across the health care system.**"

Appendix A: General Public Health Principles

- Fairness
- Duty to care
- Duty to steward resources
- Transparency
- Consistency
- Proportionality
- Accountability



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More Personal



MORAL = INDIVIDUAL


More individual choices of right and wrong; subjective preference.

Hospice: we value the individual's values, even when different from our own.

Moral Distress is more value-based for the individual. Can easily occur within a team of different disciplines, scopes of practice, opinions of what is right/wrong.

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Moral Dis-tress Can Occur When ...



The ***hospice professional*** is not able to fulfill one's obligations for the patients due to

- intractable value conflicts,
- ineffective communication,
- lack of teamwork, organizational oversights,
- staffing policies, and
- pressures on health care systems"¹

Outcome? It "undermines the integrity and well being of everyone."²


^{1,2} Cynda Rushton, "Moral Distress and Building Resilience, Johns Hopkins Nursing Magazine, February 2017.

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Who—In Your Workforce—Most Likely Feels Moral Distress?


"Moral distress is the suffering experienced **by individuals who feel morally responsible** but are constrained from doing what is right in a specific situation"

- Your best, most conscientious?
- Older, wiser workforce?
- Your leadership?
- Your mentors for new staff?
- "Connectors" within your hospice?
- Connected to your community?



Borges, L. M., Barnes, S. M., Farnsworth, J. K., Drescher, K. D., & Walser, R. D. (2020). A contextual behavioral approach for responding to moral dilemmas in the age of COVID-19. *Journal of contextual behavioral science*, 17, 95–101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcbs.2020.06.006>

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Colorado Crisis Standards of Care:
Palliative & Hospice Care


VI. Identified Gaps in PC and Hospice

	Identified Gap	Required Action	CSC Triggers	Actions or Consequences
SUPPORT				
STAFF				
SPACE				
RESOURCES				

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Stress

- Physics, 1648: elasticity to change¹
- Physician, 1936, Selye: the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change¹
- To “stress” the importance.
- Stress can be helpful and good when it motivates people.



¹The American Institute of Stress.
<https://www.stress.org/whatisstress#:~:text=The%20term%20%E2%80%9Cstress%E2%80%9D%2C%20as.to%20any%20demand%20for%20change%E2%80%9D>

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Stress = Elasticity, Change, Important

Key Message

An evidence synthesis on the role and response of hospice and palliative care in epidemics/pandemics to inform response to coronavirus disease 2019. Hospice and palliative care services should **respond rapidly and flexibly**, produce protocols, shift resources to the community, redeploy volunteers, facilitate staff camaraderie, communicate with patients/carers via technology, and standardize data collection.

The Role and Response of Palliative Care and Hospice Services in Epidemics and Pandemics: A Rapid Review to Inform Practice During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Etkind S.N. Bone A.E. Lovell N. Cripps R.L. Harding R. Higginson I.J. Sleeman K.E. (2020) *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*, 60 (1), pp. e31-e40. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0885392420301822>

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Palliative/Hospice Professionals Eustress vs. Distress



The personal meanings that “called” me to palliative and hospice care. I find professional purpose and meaning.



COVID-19 suddenly froze these. Weighs me down. Not just me, but the whole “neighborhood” (and more). I feel stuck.

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EU-stress	DI-stress
Natural End-of-Life Care	Pandemic, NOT Normal
In Person, Physical Presence	Restrictions, Distance, Telehealth
Tending Family Moments	Families Are Isolated!
Interdisciplinary Team Care	Feels Like Mainly Nursing
LTC, Hospitals, Funeral Homes	Hospice IDT Not Allowed

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EU-stress	DI-stress
Feel Confident & Competent, In My Role	Fear I'll Get Infected; Spread to Others
Rites / Rituals of Relationship & Meaning	All Things Related to Dying / Grieving Alone
Healthy Boundaries: Work & Home	Boundaries? Working from Home! Childcare
Trusting I'll Be There for MY Parents/Family	Restrictions: Distancing, Travel, More
Knowing What CAN Be Done!	Hitting What CAN NOT Be Done!

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Mental Health Predictions

COVID-19 will create a **"second pandemic,"** one that includes **mental health consequences** ranging from depression to anxiety to PTSD and other negative outcomes.¹

COVID-19 SECOND WAVE

Borges, L. M., Barnes, S. M., Farnsworth, J. K., Drescher, K. D., & Walser, R. D. (2020). A contextual behavioral approach for responding to moral dilemmas in the age of COVID-19. *Journal of contextual behavioral science*, 17, 95–101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcbs.2020.06.006>

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Psychological & Epidemiological Correlates of COVID-19

Co-Relate = One Affects the Other

- Increased mental health symptoms
- Financial stress
- Objective threats to health
- Adherence (or not) to public health measures to slow the spread of COVID-19
- Quarantine, social isolation, loneliness, elevated anxiety, depressive symptoms, employment loss, increased suicide, especially among the elderly²

Nelson, B. W., Pettitt, A. K., Flannery, J., & Allen, N. B. (2020, April 13). Rapid Assessment of Psychological and Epidemiological Correlates of COVID-19 Concern, Financial Strain, and Health-Related Behavior Change in a Large Online Sample. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/jftze>

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Moral Distress & Ethical Conflicts

More 2020 Correlates: Individual & Universal

- **Risks** to my health, my family
- **Masks**, testing, social distancing
- **Children** to school or at home?
- **Financial** burdens and fears
- **Political** opinions and conflicts
- **Black Lives Matter** and systemic racism: What does your organization communicate and do? More personally, how does this affect your palliative and hospice care work?



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Moral Distress Interventions



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THE ROCK & THE PLAY-DOH

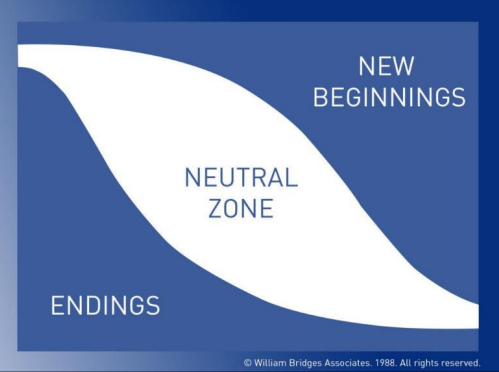
COVID-19: What can you control?

Hospice of Washington County - Hagerstown, MD - <https://hospiceofwc.org/covid-19-support>
Activities for Children - The Rock & Play-Doh – created by Krystal Detering, Special Ed. Teacher



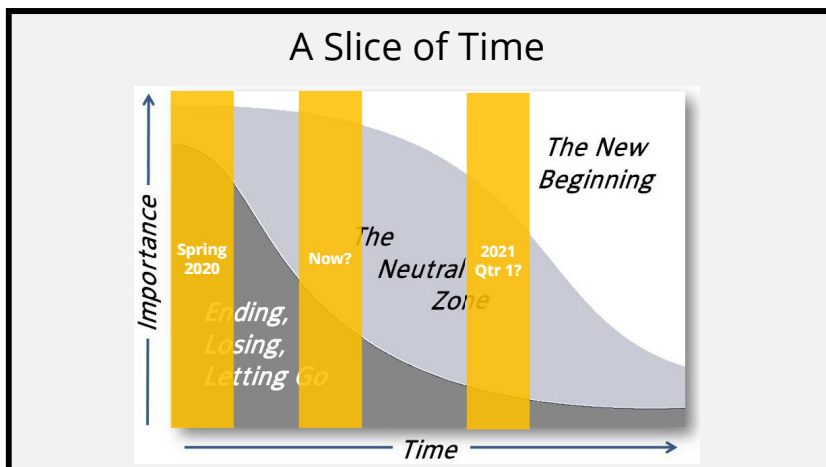
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William Bridges *Transitions Model*
<https://wmbridges.com>



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ACT-MI: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Moral Injury

Opening to moral pain is emphasized instead of challenging the content of that pain

Borges, L. M., Barnes, S. M., Farnsworth, J. K., Drescher, K. D., & Walsler, R. D. (2020). A contextual behavioral approach for responding to moral dilemmas in the age of COVID-19. *Journal of contextual behavioral science*, 17, 95–101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcbs.2020.06.006>

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ProSocial Intervention for Small Groups

1. Shared identity and purpose
2. Equitable distribution of contributions and benefits
3. Fair and inclusive decision making
4. Monitoring agreed behaviors
5. Graduated responding to helpful and unhelpful behavior
6. Fast and fair conflict resolution
7. Authority to self-govern
8. Collaborative relations with other groups

Borges, L. M., Barnes, S. M., Farnsworth, J. K., Drescher, K. D., & Walsler, R. D. (2020). A contextual behavioral approach for responding to moral dilemmas in the age of COVID-19. *Journal of contextual behavioral science*, 17, 95–101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcbs.2020.06.006>

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More Personally ...

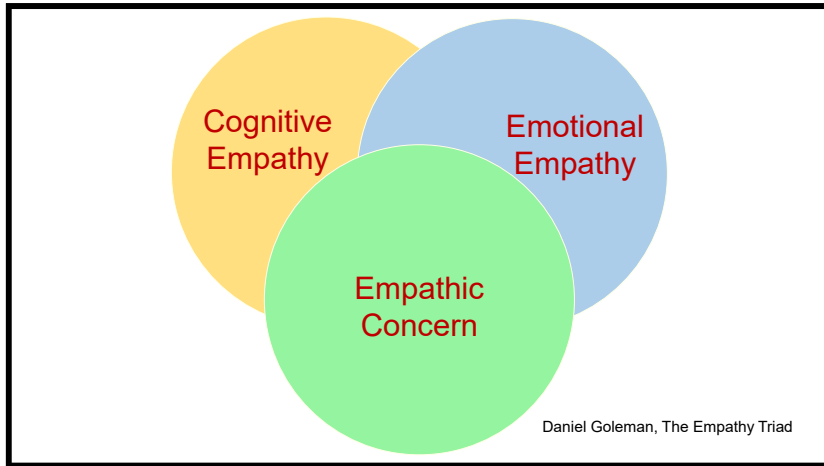
5 Key Stressors Hospice Professionals Face

E-Book, Joy Berger, published by Net Health, July 2020

1. Facing Suffering, Death, Loss
2. Emotional Overload
3. Getting It Done
4. Technology
5. Living One's One Life, Well

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Empathy + Accountability = Pt Care Outcomes

- **Cognitive** Empathy = *Plan*
- **Emotional** Empathy = *Care*
- **Empathic Concern** = *Patient's PLAN of CARE*

A smaller version of the Empathy Triad diagram with three overlapping circles: yellow (Cognitive Empathy), blue (Emotional Empathy), and green (Empathic Concern).

Empathy Triad – Daniel Goleman

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An anatomical illustration of a human figure from the waist up, showing the brain, heart, and major blood vessels in a glowing orange-red color against a dark purple background.

Are you seeing empathy as head & heart & action?

A Venn diagram with three overlapping circles: yellow (Cognitive Empathy), blue (Emotional Empathy), and green (Empathic Concern).

Empathy Triad – Daniel Goleman

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Compassion Fatigue

Usually thought of as **Secondary** Traumatic Stress


A word cloud where the most prominent words are 'fatigue', 'compassion', and 'stress'. Other words include 'trauma', 'traumatic', 'secondary', 'disorder', 'health', 'post-traumatic', 'stressors', 'people', 'others', 'care', 'emotional', 'cognitive', 'empathy', 'concern', 'action', 'heart', 'head', 'heart & action', 'empathy as', 'seeing', 'front-line', 'professionals', 'not just', 'secondary', 'trauma', 'trauma to our own well-being'.

With COVID-19's front-line professionals, it's not just secondary trauma

Much is trauma to our own well-being

For more, http://www.proqol.org/Secondary_Trauma.html

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COVID-19's Loss & Grief

If we consider ourselves experts ...
Scratch the "Stages" – Grief STARTS with "Accepting"

COVID-19: Scratching the Surface


- Anticipatory vs. Sudden Grief
- Disenfranchised Grief for Hospice Families
- The Domino Effect and Delayed Grief
- Post-Traumatic Grief
- Complicated Grief

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Revisit

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Resilience: 3 Key Qualities

1. Staunch acceptance of reality
2. Deep belief that life is meaningful
3. Uncanny ability to improvise

Harvard Business Review Press. *Resilience*. In the HBR Emotional Intelligence Series. (2017). pp. 10-30.

How "hospice" are these?


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It's Been Good to Be With You!


Freely reach out to me with your feedback, insights and ideas.

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... through Serious Illness, Hospice, Grief Care

www.composinglife.com



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Want to Understand Your Grief?
Tending You and Others Experiencing Loss and Grief

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