

Vicarious Trauma and Court Reporters

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Pandemic Purple Hair

*(impulse purchase
hair color at CVS)*



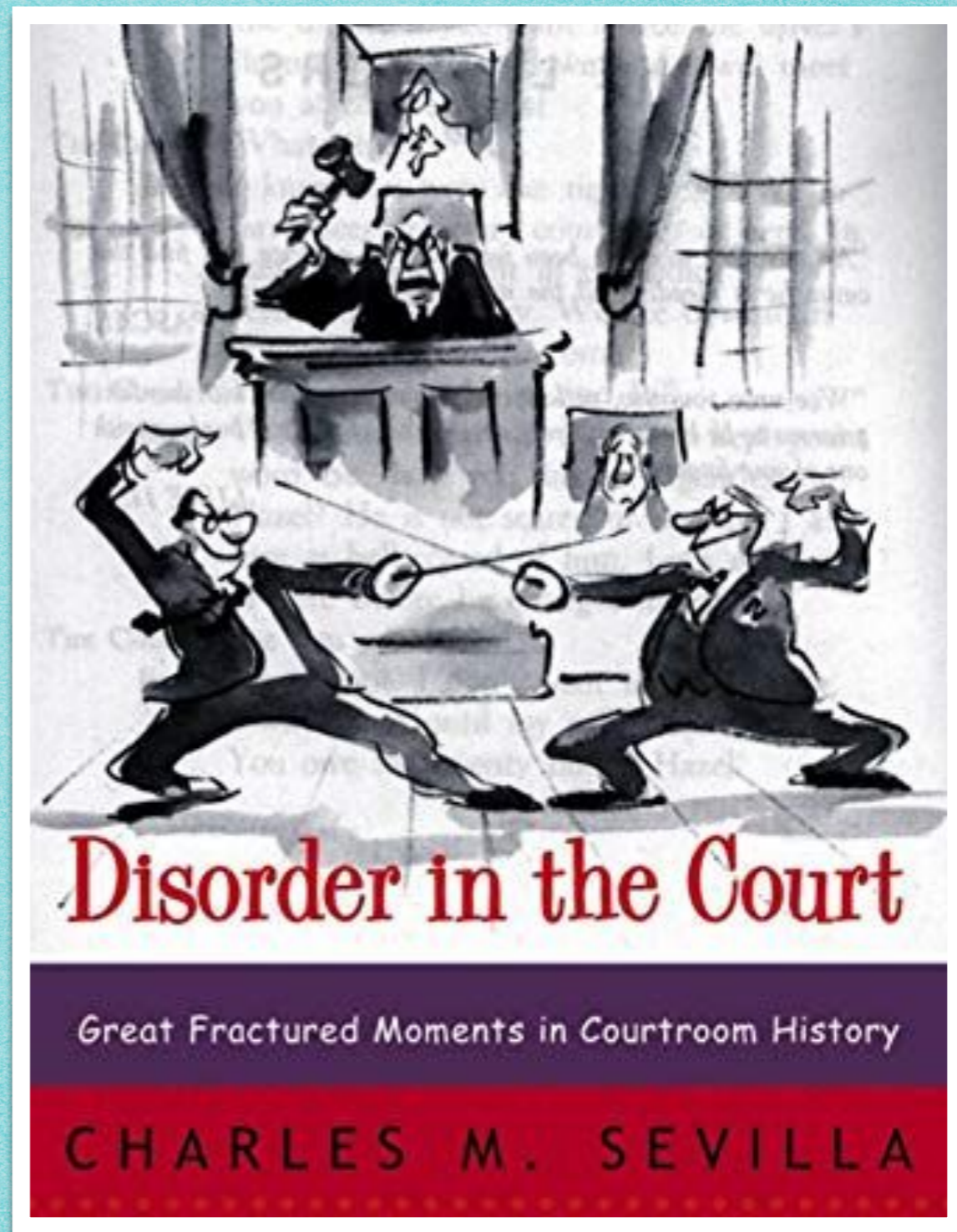
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What is Vicarious Trauma?

- ▶ Vicarious trauma is the repeated or extreme exposure to details of traumatic events.
- ▶ In 2003, 105 judges completed surveys on trauma. 63% reported symptoms of work-related vicarious trauma.

*Court reporters
silently bear
witness.*



Vicarious Trauma

*It is real.
It is not your fault.
There is a solution.*



What are the symptoms of vicarious trauma?

- ▶ Trauma
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Drug and alcohol abuse
- ▶ Other addictions such as eating disorders, compulsive gambling, compulsive debting

*Hopelessness is a
symptom
of depression,
not a prediction
of the future.*



The Solution

- ▶ Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, and stress.
- ▶ Resilience can also involve profound personal growth.



Breathing for Stress Reduction

- ▶ Empty the lungs of air
- ▶ Breathe in quietly through the nose for 4 seconds
- ▶ Hold the breath for a count of 7 seconds
- ▶ Exhale forcefully through the mouth, pursing the lips, and making a “whoosh” sound for 8 seconds

Learn Your ABCs

- ▶ A is for Awareness
- ▶ B is for Balance
- ▶ C is for Connection

Awareness

- ▶ Understand the signs and symptoms of vicarious trauma in yourself and your colleagues
- ▶ Recognize that these types of reactions to trauma are normal.
- ▶ It is part of being human. It is not a weakness.

Balance

- ▶ Personal and professional lives
- ▶ Caring for yourself and caring for others
- ▶ Eating, sleeping, exercising
- ▶ Calming your limbic system with meditation, mindfulness, relaxation

Connection

- ▶ Connect with yourself and others, including family and friends
- ▶ Trauma creates disconnection and isolation
- ▶ Social connection promotes resilience
- ▶ Develop a culture of support in your community

Be mindful of your stress level



The 5 Senses

Calming the Limbic System

▶ Vision

▶ Sound

▶ Taste

▶ Touch

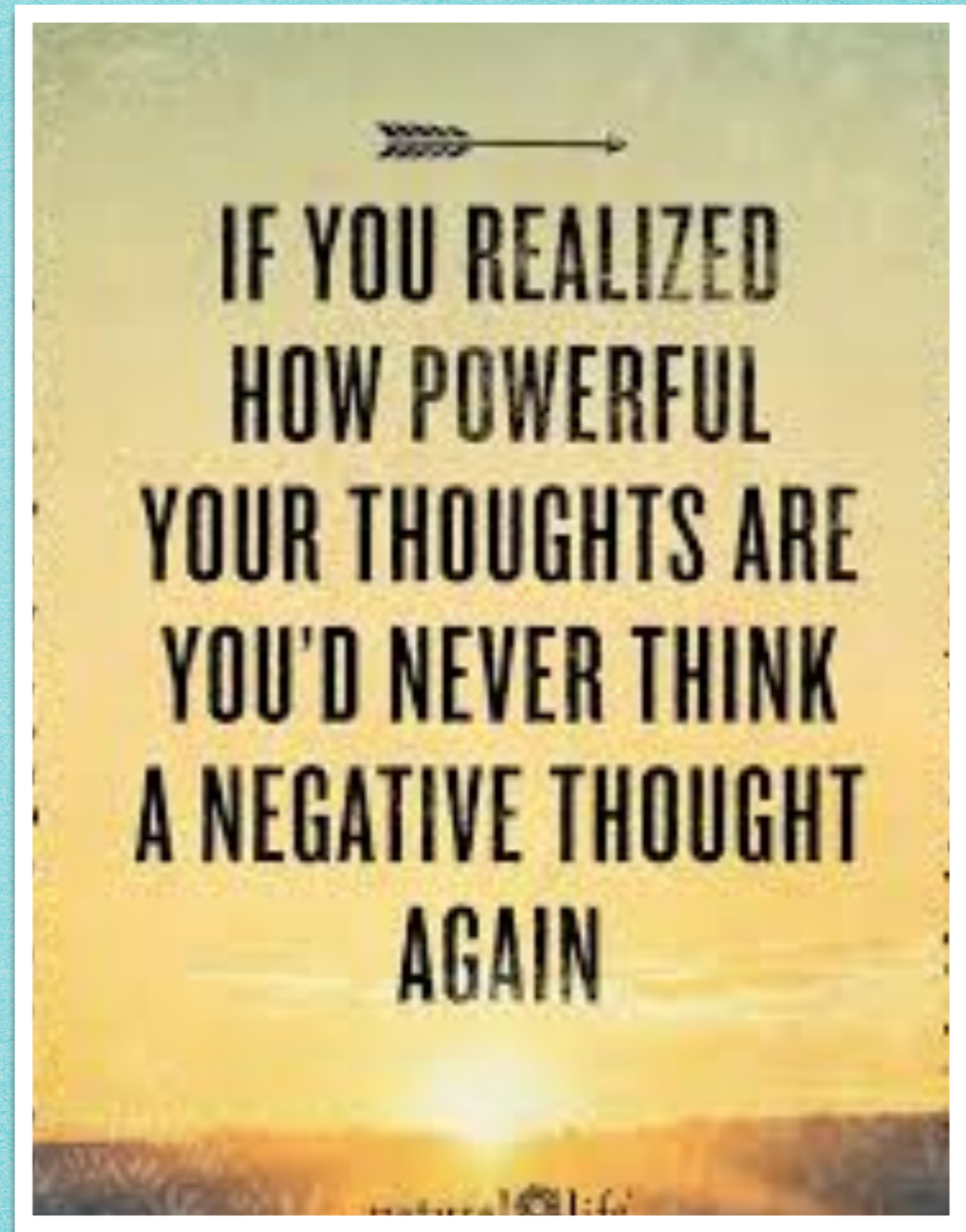
▶ Smell

In Court Solutions

- ▶ See: magazines, kitten videos, pictures of babies or dogs
- ▶ Hear: soothing music, Headspace, Calm, A Soft Murmur app, meditation, Bob Ross painting videos
- ▶ Taste: gum, hard candy, tea, water
- ▶ Touch: polished stones, metal balls, crystals
- ▶ Smell: eucalyptus, lavender, or peppermint lotion on your hands, breathe in the scent
- ▶ Body: stretch, fingers, toes, jaw, head, neck, swing arms side to side, sway in figure 8s
- ▶ Breathing exercises: 4-7-8 technique

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

*Don't believe
everything that
you think.*



*Quash the
Stigma of
Mental Illness*



Professional Help

- ▶ Therapy involves talking to a trained counselor about your stressors to accomplish your goals
- ▶ Medication is scientifically proven to help depression and anxiety, the most common symptoms of vicarious trauma.
- ▶ EMDR and Brainspotting are non-medication techniques for rewiring the traumatic memory pathway in the brain.

Resources

- ▶ Employee Assistance Programs
- ▶ Maryland's Helpline: Dial 2-1-1 and press 1 for information, referral and crisis intervention, www.211md.org for mental health services
- ▶ National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Helpline for Peer Support (800-950-6264)
- ▶ National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255)
- ▶ 911

