



Dr. Patricia Comley, A.C.P.C.

Pat's passion and expertise is to help animal care communities move to a new level of resilience and wellness in their work and personal relationships. Her research in this area will hopefully give animal care communities a voice in determining the special skills needed to manage the stressors unique to this workplace. Pat has a sound knowledge base and years of experience in the field. Dr. Comley works extensively with the OSPCA as a trainer, consultant, and trauma counsellor. Her presentations and consulting experience expand from B.C. to Atlantic Canada. A few years ago, Pat worked closely with the OSPCA and the Toronto Humane Society, using her expertise to help the staff emotionally navigate through highly stressful and challenging times. Pat's consulting role includes EQ testing in the training for cruelty investigators, shelter workers, and leaders in the field. Dr. Comley teaches psychology, part time, at Ryerson University, specializing in personal growth and stress management. She is a certified coach, a licensed facilitator in emotional intelligence and is certified in trauma counselling & conflict resolution.

Resiliency can be learned!

A sample of resiliency competencies:

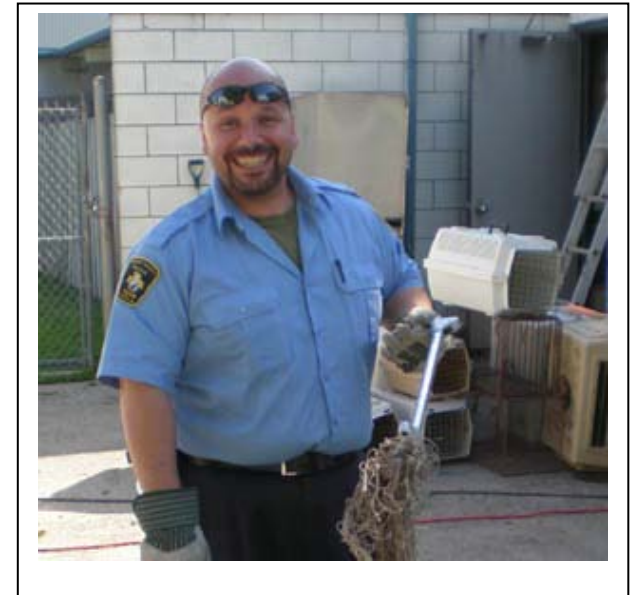
- Trust your intuition!
- Laugh when you can! It changes your body chemistry.
- Accept your limitations & acknowledge your successes. Know your story.
- Work/life balance – Care, but resist becoming over-invested, at the cost of your own well-being.
- Be courageous. When “taking a stand” balance the tension between hope and reality.
- Gain emotional energy by being positive, optimistic & self compassionate.
- Build in Empathy/Forgiveness.
- Know how to unplug from your negative thoughts and counter-productive beliefs.
- Learn how to shift your mindset to get the results you want.
- Understand stress: how to recognize it and transform it.
- Cultivate your personalized Stress Buster Strategies!
- Build a strong support system
- Get professional help when you need it.

The Importance of “Emotional Smarts”

*Learn how the competencies of emotional intelligence influence resiliency! It is an integral part of agent training at the OSPCA.. Discover the value of building on emotional strengths...

Published Article “What a Trooper! What a Dreadful Tale!”

<http://www.theprovince.com/life/What+trooper+What+dreadful+tale/4473351/story.html>



Resilience & Wellness

In Animal Care Organizations

Manage Compassion Fatigue
Prevent Burnout

Dr. Pat Comley, A.C.P.C.

Presenting at the

Ontario SPCA
2011 Conference
Orillia, Ontario

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'paws' - reflect - act®

Pat's Approach to Wellness and Resilience

Pat's "take-action" approach is informative & solution focused.

Through a reflective and experiential process, this presentation captures the essence of the 'resilient factor' & the interplay between compassion fatigue (the cost of caring, over time,) trauma, and burnout. How do these factors impact on animal caregivers? How are these stressors best managed?

Proactive strategies for personal well-being and resiliency can make a huge difference to one's effectiveness and satisfaction at work. Pat's humorous approach helps to lighten a serious topic and to communicate a simple path towards resiliency

General Outline of Workshops

- What's happening? Who is affected? To what degree?
- What do we need to know to understand the issues?
- Explore a framework and process for making changes possible for:
 - Individuals
 - Organizations
 - Animal Welfare Educators



compassion fatigue & stress support
for the animal care community

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1. What does resiliency look like in your job? Share your stories!

At the Ontario SPCA Conference, there will be a **call for volunteers who would like to share their stories and strategies** for resiliency, beating caregiver stress, managing compassion fatigue and avoiding burnout. Who in your organization exemplifies the 'resilient animal caregiver'? Be the first to share your strategies for resiliency! All animal caregivers are invited to participate. We will pool our findings and get back to you! Some of these stories, with the participant's permission will be published in Pat's book and on her website. Be part of the solution!

Pat and her assistant, Lauren, will be interviewing people throughout the conference. Just find Pat or Lauren and we will schedule a short interview at your convenience. You can also sign our list and we will arrange an interview at a later time, on SKYPE or the phone.

2. Where are you NOW? We are gathering information on what is happening in your workplace: We invite you to take a confidential inventory, online, which will give you instant results to ponder.

Go to: <http://beatcaregiverstress.com/limesurvey/index.php>

Each animal care worker, who completes these surveys, will directly help the Canadian Animal Care Communities understand how Resiliency, Compassion Fatigue, Compassion Satisfaction, Trauma, and Burnout play out in the workplace.

Help us collect data (confidentially), pool our results, and strengthen our knowledge on people welfare in the animal welfare world! The first step is to understand what is happening. Armed with the results, we can begin to improve working conditions, on an organizational and individual level, for animal caregivers across Canada.

THANK YOU!



Learning about and acting on workplace stressors can literally change the quality of your life and your work.

- What are the costs for caring? What are the rewards for caring?
- What are the symptoms and signs leading to burnout, secondary trauma, and compassion fatigue?
- What situations/people contribute to burnout and compassion fatigue?
- **Where are you now? (Pause)**
- Take a personal assessment. How stress impacts you and your workplace is the first step.
- **Where do you want to be? (Reflect)**
- Armed with an increase in "self awareness", you can then explore the choices available to enhance wellness and resilience in your work!
- **How are you going to make it happen? (Act)**
- **Set your goal and go for it!**
- **Pat will provide a framework for making it happen.**