# Working with Clients in Trauma: Serving Them, Protecting Yourself

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# Where Are We Going?

- Prevalence of Trauma
- Trauma and the Brain
- Working Effectively with Clients in Trauma
- Discussion

# Prevalence of Trauma

# Trauma on the Rise

Anxiety and depression have tripled in the past year.

53% of Americans believe the pandemic is taking a toll on their mental health. Among African-Americans, it’s 68%.

More than 2 in 5 report struggle with mental health associated with the pandemic, including anxiety, depression, increased substance use, and suicidal thoughts

# Stress of Participants in the Legal System

- 60% of men in prison have symptoms and signs of severe to moderate PTSD (compared with 6% of general population)
- Those who have experienced discrimination are 25% more likely to experience psychological distress, to be diagnosed with a mental illness, or report excessive drug use
- More than 95% of medical malpractice defendants report physical or psychological impact, including grief, anger, lethargy, and depression
- 53% of those who have experienced a workplace injury suffer from PTSD or partial PTSD

# Poverty and Mental Health

- Poverty leads to mental illness and vice versa
- Those who lived in a public housing complex in Chicago had rates of worry 6X national average, and youth there experienced long-term anxiety and worry at 7X national average.

# Trauma and the Brain

# Trauma and the Brain

- Flood of adrenaline
- Suppression of complex thinking and rational decision-making

# Effective Responses to Trauma

# LISTEN

# Build Trust

- Be Transparent
- Be Clear
- Be Consistent
- Offer Choices

# Active Listening

- Open Ended Questions
- Body Language
- Looping
- Clarification

# Controlling Your Response

- Breathe
- Acknowledge your feelings
- Engage the senses
- Take a break

# Special Considerations

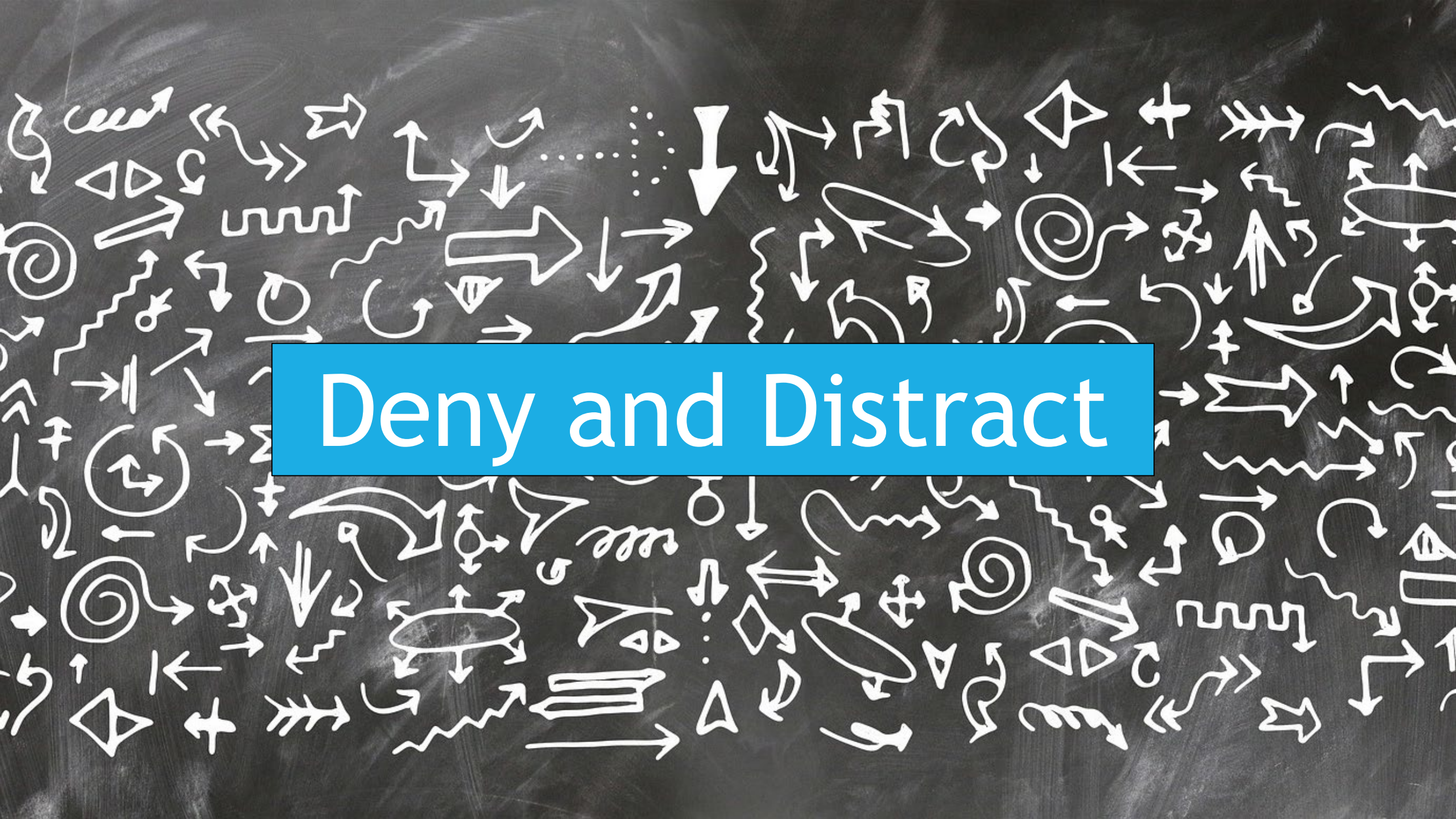
- Spinning
- Emotional Outbursts
- Shutdown
- Self-Harm
  - Text 741741, or call 800-273-8255
- Harm of Others

# ACKNOWLEDGE

“

People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.

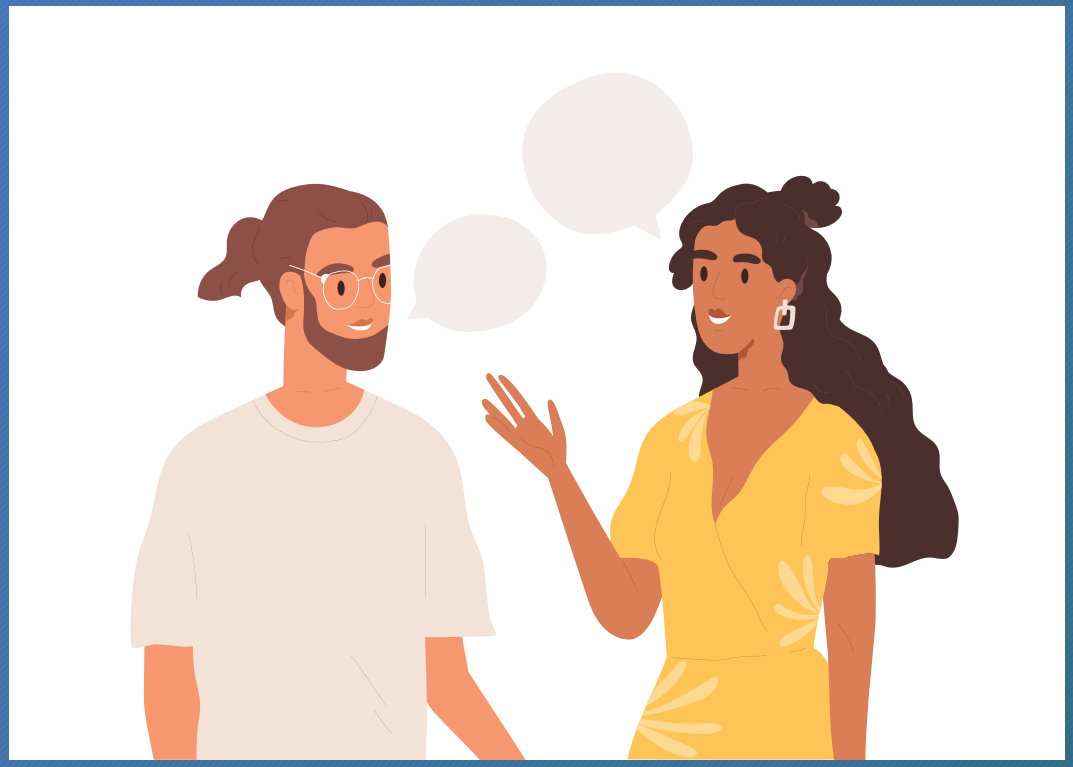
*–Theodore Roosevelt*



# Deny and Distract

SHARE

# How to Share Information



**Be Brief**

Short, Clear Sentences

**Repeat**

Say it 3 times

**Write**

Follow up in writing

# Empower

# Resources to Know

- 911, 311, 211
- Crisis Textline 741741

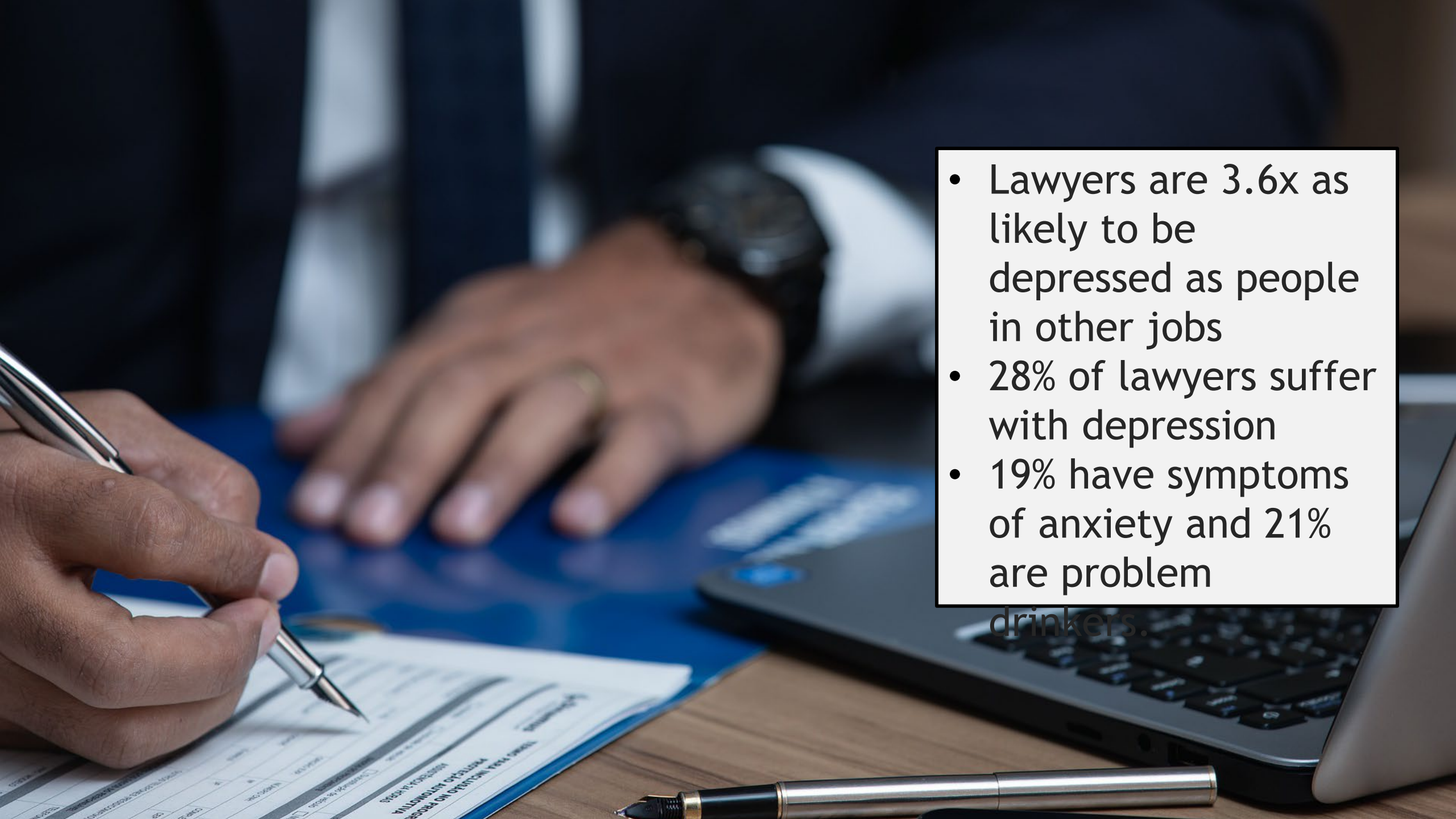
RETURN

# The Importance of Ending Well

# End Gracefully

| | |
|---|---|
| Warn | Let them know you're ending soon |
| Ask | Ask for any last thoughts and acknowledge |
| Remind | Remind of next steps |

Check in Later
Hello



- Lawyers are 3.6x as likely to be depressed as people in other jobs
- 28% of lawyers suffer with depression
- 19% have symptoms of anxiety and 21% are problem drinkers.

# What is Secondary Trauma?

Emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the
firsthand trauma experiences of another

# What is Compassion Fatigue?

Emotional and physical exhaustion leading to a diminished ability to empathize or feel compassion for others

weakened immune system

*sadness*

**anxiety**

rigid thinkin g

apathy or numbness

trouble sleeping

appetite changes

anger

fatigu e

a sense of isolation

hypervigilance

helplessness

**guilt**

# ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct

- Rule 1.1 (Competence): “A lawyer shall provide competent representation to a client. Competent representation requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation.”
- Rule 1.3 (Diligence): “A lawyer shall act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client.”

“

*“To be a good lawyer, one has to be a healthy lawyer.”*

–Report of the National Task Force on Lawyer Wellbeing (2017)

# Make Self-Care Routine

Talk About the Hard Stuff

# Know Your Warning Signs

LISTEN

ACKNOWLEDGE

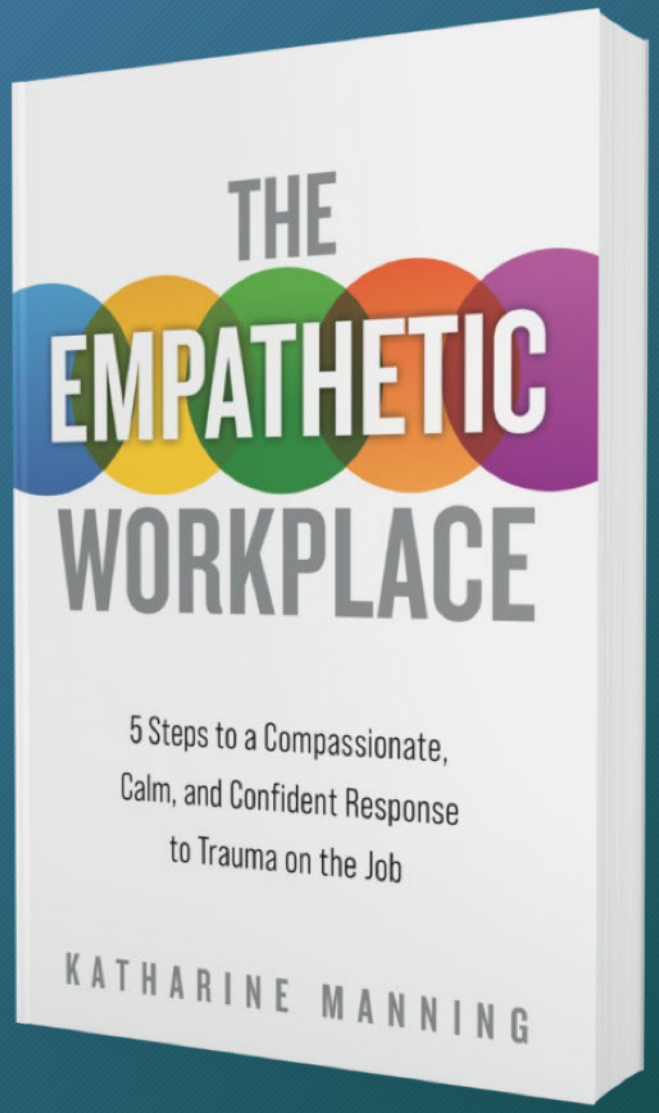
SHARE

EMPOWER

RETURN

# Stay in Touch

- Website: katharinemanning.com
- Twitter: @kl_manning
- FB and IG: @empatheticworkplace
- Course: email with “August course” to kmanning@blackbird-dc.com



# Discussion