

January 9, 2017

Ashley Sutton  
152 Frelinghuysen Road  
Piscataway NJ 08854

**P.I. Name:** Sutton  
**Protocol #:** 17-343M

Dear Ashley Sutton:

✓  
**Initial                  Amendment                  Continuation                  Continuation w/ Amend                  Adverse Event**

Protocol Title: "Factors Affecting Psychology Trainees' Vulnerability to Indirect Trauma"

This is to advise you that the above-referenced study has been presented to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, and the following action was taken subject to the conditions and explanations provided below:

<b>Approval Date:</b>	12/20/2016	<b>Expiration Date:</b>	12/19/2017	<b>Expedited Category(s):</b>	7
<b>Approved # of Subject(s):</b>	100	<b>Currently Enrolled:</b>	0		

This approval is based on the assumption that the materials you submitted to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) contain a complete and accurate description of the ways in which human subjects are involved in your research. The following conditions apply:

- **This Approval**-The research will be conducted according to the most recent version of the protocol that was submitted. **This approval is valid ONLY for the dates listed above;**
- **Reporting**-ORSP must be immediately informed of any injuries to subjects that occur and/or problems that arise, in the course of your research;
- **Modifications**-Any proposed changes **MUST** be submitted to the IRB as an amendment for review and approval prior to implementation;
- **Consent Form(s)**-Each person who signs a consent document will be given a copy of that document, if you are using such documents in your research. The Principal Investigator must retain all signed documents for at least three years after the conclusion of the research;
- **Continuing Review**-You should receive a courtesy e-mail renewal notice for a Request for Continuing Review before the expiration of this project's approval. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that an application for continuing review has been submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to the expiration date to extend the approval period;

<b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Expedited Approval per 45 CFR 46.110.</li></ul>
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**Failure to comply with these conditions will result in withdrawal of this approval.**

Please note that the IRB has the authority to observe, or have a third party observe, the consent process or the research itself. The Federal-wide Assurance (FWA) number for the Rutgers University IRB is FWA00003913; this number may be requested on funding applications or by collaborators.

Respectfully yours,



Acting For--  
Beverly Tepper, Ph.D.  
Professor, Department of Food Science  
IRB Chair, Arts and Sciences Institutional Review Board  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

cc: Monica Indart (MW:hb)

## Attachment 4: Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Ashley Sutton, Psy.M., a doctoral candidate in the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology at Rutgers University. The purpose of this research is to determine personal, training and supervision, and exposure-related factors associated with psychology trainees' vulnerability to indirect trauma.

This research is anonymous; no information will be recorded that could identify you. **In order to maintain anonymity, please refrain from mentioning yourself or your training program by name in free response sections.** There will be no linkage between your identity and your response in the research, meaning your name, address, phone number, date of birth, etc. will not be recorded. If you agree to take part in the study, there will be no way to link your responses back to you.

The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept for three years, after which it will be destroyed.

### Risks:

The survey explores your experiences working with clients with trauma histories. The types of questions asked are consistent with those that you may face in the normal course of training, supervision, and self-reflection. However, recalling some experiences may be unpleasant for you and you may experience some discomfort when answering questions. If you experience emotional distress related to the study, please contact the researcher and discuss this with her, so that she can assist you and help provide you with referrals as necessary. You may additionally contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National Helpline for free, confidential, 24/7 information and referral services at 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

### Benefits:

Participation in this study may be beneficial in that it could increase self-awareness of personal, training and supervision, and exposure related factors that may influence vulnerability to indirect trauma. The debriefing may will provide you with psychoeducation about the forms of indirect trauma, suggestions for further reading, and referral resources.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact myself at:

Ashley Sutton, Psy.M.  
Principal Investigator  
Rutgers University, GSAPP  
152 Frelinghuysen Road  
Piscataway, NJ 08854-8085

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*For IRB Use Only. This Section Must be Included on the Consent Form and Cannot Be Altered Except For Updates to the Version Date.*

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Telephone: (732) 788-6145.  
Email: [ashley.sutton@rutgers.edu](mailto:ashley.sutton@rutgers.edu)

You can also contact my faculty advisor:  
Monica Indart, Psy.D.  
Faculty Advisor  
Rutgers University GSAPP  
152 Frelinghuysen Road  
Piscataway, NJ 08854-8085  
Telephone: (973) 762-6878.  
Email: [monica.indart@gmail.com](mailto:monica.indart@gmail.com)

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact an IRB Administrator at the Rutgers University, Arts and Sciences IRB:

Institutional Review Board  
Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey  
Liberty Plaza / Suite 3200  
335 George Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
Phone: 732-235-9806  
Email: [humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu](mailto:humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu)

Please retain a copy of this form for your records. By participating in the above stated procedures, then you agree to participation in this study.

If you are 18 years of age or older, understand the statements above, and will consent to participate in the study, click on the "I Agree" button to begin the survey/experiment. If not, please click on the "I Do Not Agree" button which you will exit this program.

I Agree

I Do Not Agree

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**Attachment 3: Advertisement for Recruitment Notice**

Dear Training Director, faculty, and students,

My name is Ashley Sutton and I am a fourth year Psy.D. candidate in Clinical Psychology at Rutgers Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology. I am reaching out in the hope that you may be able to assist with my IRB-approved doctoral dissertation project, *Factors Affecting Psychology Trainees Vulnerability to Indirect Trauma*.

For this study I am seeking graduate students in clinical and counseling psychology doctoral programs in their fourth year and above, including students currently on internship. I would very much appreciate your assistance with the distribution of this email to graduate students at your program, including the subject title, text, and survey link.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at [ashley.sutton@rutgers.edu](mailto:ashley.sutton@rutgers.edu) or (732)-788-6145. You may also contact my research chair, Dr. Monica Indart, at [monica.indart@gmail.com](mailto:monica.indart@gmail.com).

Dear Potential Participants,

Hello, I hope this email finds you well! My name is Ashley Sutton and I am a fourth year Psy.D. candidate in Clinical Psychology at Rutgers Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology. I am in the process of collecting data for my doctoral dissertation project that investigates the impact of different personal, training and supervision, and exposure related factors on the experience of indirect trauma in psychology trainees. The study is an anonymous, online survey that will take about sixty minutes.

I am seeking clinical and counseling Psy.D. and Ph.D. students in their fourth year or higher, including students currently on internship. The aim of my study is to explore the impact of your experiences working with clients who have disclosed a history of trauma. Psychology doctoral students have been assessed very minimally in this regard, and I hope to shed light on the phenomenon of indirect trauma in this population.

I would greatly appreciate your participation in this study, as well as the distribution of this message to any other parties who may meet criteria. Please feel free to reach out with any questions you may have. Thank you for your time and your consideration!

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Best,

Ashley Sutton, Psy.M.  
Clinical Psychology Doctoral Candidate  
Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

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Attachment 9: Debriefing Statement

Thank you for participating in our study. The survey assessed various personal, training and supervision, and exposure related factors as they relate to reactions of indirect trauma. Indirect trauma includes the separate but related constructs of secondary traumatic stress, vicarious traumatization, and compassion fatigue. Indirect trauma has been framed as a normal and common occupational hazard of working in a helping profession. The current body of literature on indirect trauma is limited by issues of conceptual clarity due to the equation of separate constructs. Further, psychotherapist trainee populations have been minimally investigated in this regard, and psychology trainees, that is, graduate students in clinical psychology programs, even less so.

Psychotherapists face more than just the typical work-related stress when treating individuals for trauma and post-traumatic stress; working with the details of a client's traumatic event may negatively impact the mental health of the therapist, as well. Therapist exposure to the details of a client's traumatic event, or "indirect trauma" may result in symptoms of PTSD, or "secondary traumatic stress" (Figley, 1995), negative changes in work-related behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions (Figley, 1995). "Secondary traumatic stress" refers to reactions of indirect trauma that mimic symptoms of PTSD. Figley (1995) conceptualized secondary traumatic stress as symptoms of avoidance, reexperiencing, and hyperarousal that stem from exposure to the details of the trauma of another person while in working in a professional role.

"Compassion fatigue" consists of both the standard symptoms of secondary traumatic stress that mimic those of PTSD and include changes in behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions that are often work-related (Figley, 1995). As a result, "compassion fatigue" is sometimes referred to as a construct that comprises the symptoms of both secondary traumatic stress and burnout. McCann and Pearlman (1990) framed "vicarious traumatization" as a process of disruptions to a person's sense of safety, control, trust, and/or intimacy. Vicarious traumatization stems from McCann and Pearlman's (1990) Constructivist Self-Development theory of trauma, which suggests that individuals construct their own realities via various schemas, or core beliefs, about the self, others, and world. The therapist's unique history and salient schemas determines his/her experience of and adaptation to indirect trauma. Such schemas affected by trauma often include topics such as safety/trust, power, independence, and intimacy (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995).

Psychotherapists in training are vulnerable to reactions to indirect trauma (Adams & Riggs, 2008; Baker, 2012; Beaumont, Hollins Martin, & Carson, 2016), even to degrees higher than those of their supervisors (Knight, 2010). A number of researchers in the field of indirect trauma have stressed the importance of adequate training in trauma psychotherapy, including education concerning the impact of indirect trauma (Adams & Riggs, 2008; Knight, 2013; Baker, 2012; Beaumont et al., 2016, Courtois & Gold, 2009). The goal of the present study is to shed light on the lived experiences of psychology trainees working with trauma clients and examine the relationships among a personal, training and supervision, and practice-related factors and indirect trauma.

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If your participation in this study has caused you distress and you wish to debrief by phone, please feel free to contact the researcher, Ashley Sutton, Psy.M., at (732) 788-6145, or the faculty advisor, Monica Indart, Psy.D., at (973) 762-6878. If you have interest in a referral for psychotherapy, you may additionally contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National Helpline for free, confidential, 24/7 information and referral services at 1-800-662-HELP (4357), or online at <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>.

References and Further Reading

- Adams, S. A., & Riggs, S. A. (2008). An exploratory study of vicarious trauma among therapist trainees. *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health*, 10(1), 70-72. <http://doi.org/10.1037/19313918.2.1.26>
- Baker, A. (2012). Training the resilient psychotherapist: What graduate students need to know about vicarious traumatization. *Journal of Social, Behavioral, and Health Sciences*, 6(1), 1-12.
- Beaumont, E., Durkin, M., Hollins Martin, C. J., & Carson, J. (2016). Measuring relationships between self-compassion, compassion fatigue, burnout and well-being in student counsellors and student cognitive behavioural psychotherapists: A quantitative survey. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 16(1), 15-23.

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- Courtois, C. a., & Gold, S. N. (2009). The need for inclusion of psychological trauma in the professional curriculum: A call to action. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 1(1), 3–23. doi:10.1037/a0015224
- Figley, C. R. (Ed.). (1995). *Compassion fatigue: Coping with secondary traumatic stress disorder in those who treat the traumatized*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Knight, C. (2010). Indirect trauma in the field practicum: Secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue among social work students and their field instructors. *Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work*, 15(1), 31-52.
- McCann, I., & Pearlman, L. (1990). Vicarious traumatization: A framework for understanding the psychological effects of working with victims. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 3(1). Retrieved from <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/BF00975140>
- Pearlman, L. A., & Saakvitne, K. W. (1995). *Trauma and the therapist: Counter-transference and vicarious traumatization in psychotherapy with incest survivors*. New York: Norton.

If you have any questions about this study, feel free to contact the researcher, Ashley Sutton, Psy.M., (732) 788-6145, [ashley.sutton@rutgers.edu](mailto:ashley.sutton@rutgers.edu).

**[ALL STUDENTS MUST INCLUDE THIS SECTION, not the above]:** If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact myself at Ashley Sutton, Psy.M., (732) 788-6145, [ashley.sutton@rutgers.edu](mailto:ashley.sutton@rutgers.edu). You may also contact my faculty advisor, Monica Indart, Psy.D., (973) 762-6878, [monica.indart@gmail.com](mailto:monica.indart@gmail.com).

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact an IRB Administrator at the Arts and Sciences Institutional Review Board, Rutgers University by phone: 732-235-9806 or by email: [humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu](mailto:humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu).

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