**🎤 Slide 1: What is Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)?**

**Speaker Notes:**

* Let’s start by defining what we mean by Secondary Traumatic Stress, or STS.
* STS is a condition that mirrors PTSD, but it stems from indirect exposure to trauma — often by supporting or witnessing someone else's trauma over time.
* It’s well-documented among service professionals — therapists, first responders — and yes, teachers too.
* The key symptoms fall into three categories:
  + **Intrusion** — like re-living someone else’s trauma
  + **Avoidance** — emotionally distancing or shutting down
  + **Arousal** — being on edge, irritable, or having trouble sleeping
* It’s not just a “mental” issue — STS can impact our emotional and physical health as well.
* So, while this may be a new term for some, the experience is likely familiar.

**🎤 Slide 2: STS and Teachers**

**Speaker Notes:**

* So, why is STS particularly relevant to teachers?
* Teachers are exposed to trauma **both directly and indirectly**:
  + **Directly**, through things like school violence, lockdowns, or student aggression.
  + **Indirectly**, when students share stories of abuse, neglect, or instability at home.
* If you work in a high-needs or Title I school, the exposure can be more frequent and intense.
* And research tells us that teacher well-being is deeply tied to the school environment and stress levels.
* It’s easy to focus on the academic side of teaching, but this slide is a reminder of the emotional weight many educators carry — often silently.

**🎤 Slide 3: STS, Burnout, and Attrition**

**Speaker Notes:**

* One of the reasons STS matters so much is its connection to burnout — and ultimately, to attrition.
* When stress is chronic and unaddressed, it leads to **burnout**, which includes:
  + Emotional exhaustion
  + Cynicism or detachment
  + A sense of inefficacy — like you're no longer making a difference
* Burnout doesn’t just happen in the classroom. It can be **personal**, **work-related**, or **student-related** — and for teachers, all three often overlap.
* Unsurprisingly, these stressors contribute to high turnover in the profession.
* That’s why building awareness of STS is important — it’s a **predictor**, not just a symptom.

**🎤 Slide 4: STS Measurement & Relevance**

**Speaker Notes:**

* So how do we actually measure STS?
* The **Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale** — or STSS — is a validated tool made up of 17 items that measure symptoms across three key subscales: intrusion, avoidance, and arousal.
* Today, you’ll take this as a **self-assessment**. This is not a test — it’s a tool to build awareness.
* As mentors, you’re not just supporting your own well-being — you’re modeling healthy responses for your residents, too.
* Your own reflection can shape how you notice and respond to similar signs in others.
* By learning to spot it in yourself, you're better equipped to support a new teacher who may be struggling silently.

**🎤 Slide 5: STSS Self-Assessment**

**Speaker Notes:**

* Now that we've covered the concept and impact of STS, we're going to pause for a self-assessment using the **Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale (STSS)**.
* This tool is intended to help you reflect on how your own work with students — especially those who’ve experienced trauma — may be affecting you emotionally, mentally, or physically.
* The assessment includes **17 items**, and you'll be asked to rate how often you’ve experienced each symptom **in the past week**.
* I want to emphasize: **this is not a test**, and you won’t be asked to share your score. This is for **your own reflection**.
* Some of the questions may stir up strong emotions. If at any point you feel uncomfortable or need to pause, please feel free to opt out or take a break.
* Take your time — you'll have about **5 to 7 minutes** to complete it.

**🎤 Slide 6: STSS Self-Reflection**

**Speaker Notes:**

* Now that you've had a chance to complete the assessment, take a moment to reflect on your results.
* Again, this is **not diagnostic** — but it can offer important insight into how stress is showing up for you.
* Here are some prompts to consider as you reflect:
  + Were there certain items or subscales — intrusion, avoidance, or arousal — that were higher than others?
  + Did anything surprise you about your responses?
  + How might your experience of stress differ from that of a resident teacher — especially someone newer to managing these emotional demands?
  + What have you learned about your own coping strategies — are they working?
  + Finally, think back to when **you** were a new teacher. What kind of support would have made a difference back then?
* Take about **2–3 minutes** to jot down your thoughts before we continue.

**🎤 Slide 7: Visualizing Risk – STSS Total Score**

**Speaker Notes:**

* This next slide shows a visual representation of the relationship between a teacher's **total STSS score** and their **predicted probability of attrition** — that is, their likelihood of leaving the profession.
* The line represents the increase in risk as STSS scores go up — and as you can see, there's a clear upward trend.
* The background color zones represent different risk levels based on total STSS scores:
  + **Green** = Low risk (scores 0–28)
  + **Yellow** = Medium risk (scores 29–56)
  + **Red** = High risk (scores 57–85)
* Residents who score in the higher range may be experiencing intense emotional impact — they might say things like, *"I’m not sure I can keep doing this,"* or *"This job is just too much."*
* This tool helps us identify where support may be needed — and earlier than we might otherwise realize.

**🎤 Slide 8: Visualizing Risk – Intrusion Subscale**

**Speaker Notes:**

* Now let’s break down the **Intrusion** subscale on its own.
* Intrusion symptoms include things like **recurrent thoughts**, **flashbacks**, or emotionally reliving a student’s trauma — even outside of work.
* Again, we see a strong correlation: as Intrusion scores go up, so does the predicted risk of attrition.
* The score zones work the same way — green for low, yellow for moderate, red for high.
* A resident showing high intrusion might frequently bring up disturbing stories, or say things like, *"I just can’t stop thinking about what that student said."*
* It’s not just emotional — it’s **physiological**. These teachers are carrying the weight of their students' pain into their own lives.

**🎤 Slide 9: Visualizing Risk – Avoidance Subscale**

**Speaker Notes:**

* This graph shows the **Avoidance** subscale.
* Avoidance is when a teacher begins to **emotionally shut down**, **withdraw**, or avoid topics, students, or settings that trigger distress.
* This can sometimes look like "just being tired" or "needing space," but over time, it can erode connection and responsiveness — two things new teachers need the most.
* A resident with high avoidance may stop engaging during debriefs, seem emotionally flat, or avoid certain student interactions altogether.
* While avoidance may seem like a protective strategy, it often signals **emotional overload** — and can be a strong predictor of burnout or leaving the field.
* Recognizing these signs in ourselves — and in those we mentor — can make a big difference in how we intervene and support.

**🎤 Slide 10: Visualizing Risk – Arousal Subscale**

**Speaker Notes:**

* This final subscale we're looking at is **Arousal** — which refers to the physical and emotional activation that can result from stress.
* Higher arousal scores are associated with symptoms like **irritability**, **trouble sleeping**, **difficulty concentrating**, or feeling constantly “on edge.”
* As with the previous subscales, you can see that the predicted probability of leaving the profession increases as scores in this category rise.
* Someone with elevated arousal might seem reactive or overwhelmed by small disruptions — or they might say things like, *“I can't ever fully relax,”* or *“I'm constantly bracing for something to go wrong.”*
* These patterns are exhausting — and without intervention, they often lead to burnout.
* As mentors, recognizing this helps us **respond with empathy** rather than frustration or criticism.

**🎤 Slide 11: Implications for Mentors**

**Speaker Notes:**

* So, what does all of this mean for you in your role as a mentor?
* First, recognize that **many residents may be experiencing STS** without having a name for it — or without realizing how deeply it’s affecting them.
* Elevated stress doesn’t just impact wellness — it’s **predictive of intention to leave** the profession.
* That means your ability to **notice early signs**, **open up supportive conversations**, and **model healthy strategies** can be a *protective factor*.
* Even small, consistent actions from mentors — like check-ins or normalizing vulnerability — can help residents feel less alone and more capable of navigating stress.
* You don’t have to be a therapist. You just have to be a **compassionate, attuned presence**.

**🎤 Slide 12: Gallery Walk Instructions**

**Speaker Notes:**

* We're now going to shift into a more interactive part of our session — a **gallery walk**.
* Around the room are **9 stations**, each with a different question related to STS, mentorship, and your own experiences.
* You’ll partner up or form a small group of 2–3 people. Together, you’ll rotate through each station.
* You’ll have about **2.5 to 3 minutes per station**, so pace yourselves accordingly.
* Use the sticky notes or chart paper to write your group’s responses.
* As you reflect, think about how each question connects to your **role as a mentor** — and what your resident teachers might be facing.
* After the rotations, we’ll regroup to **share key insights** and discuss practical strategies.

**🎤 Slide 13: Debrief – What Did You Notice**

**Speaker Notes:**

* “Alright everyone, now that you’ve completed the gallery walk, let’s take a few minutes to debrief.
* I’d like each group to share 1 or 2 highlights from one of the stations where you left your responses. Think about what stood out most to your group — maybe a question that sparked meaningful discussion or an insight that really resonated.
* As you listen to other groups, notice any common patterns or surprising points. Consider how these ideas connect to your own role as a mentor.
* This sharing will help us reflect together before we move on to practical strategies in the next part of our session.
* Who wants to start?”

**🎤 Slide 14: Key Takeaways for Mentors**

**Speaker Notes:**

* To wrap up, here are some **practical strategies** you can take with you — things you can start doing immediately to support residents who may be struggling with STS.
* On the left, you’ll see **what to watch for** — signs like emotional exhaustion, disengagement, or even increased self-criticism. These are often subtle at first, but they’re important clues.
* Underneath are ways to **open conversations** — using language that is supportive, not intrusive.
  + For example: *“I’ve noticed you seem a bit withdrawn — how are you holding up?”*
  + Just naming what you see — without judgment — can open the door to real dialogue.
* On the right are **supportive actions** you can take:
  + Model your own boundaries and coping — say things like *“I’m blocking time for a walk today.”*
  + Make reflection and emotional check-ins a normal part of your mentorship rhythm.
* And finally, remember the **SEE Framework**:
  + **Spot** signs of stress
  + **Empathize** without judgment
  + **Encourage** reflection, help-seeking, or rest
* These small but powerful practices can **change the trajectory** for a struggling resident.

**"STS is a real and common phenomenon mentors and residents may encounter."**  
Keep this in mind: your awareness and support *can be the difference between burnout and breakthrough* for someone just entering the profession.