

**Moderator:**  
Jason Adams

**Featured Host:**  
Trace Fleming-Trice



## Understanding the Connections Between Workplace Bullying and Burnout Among Victim Advocates

March 22, 2023

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# Poll

## Where are you located?



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# Featured Host



**Trace Fleming-Trice  
(she/her)**

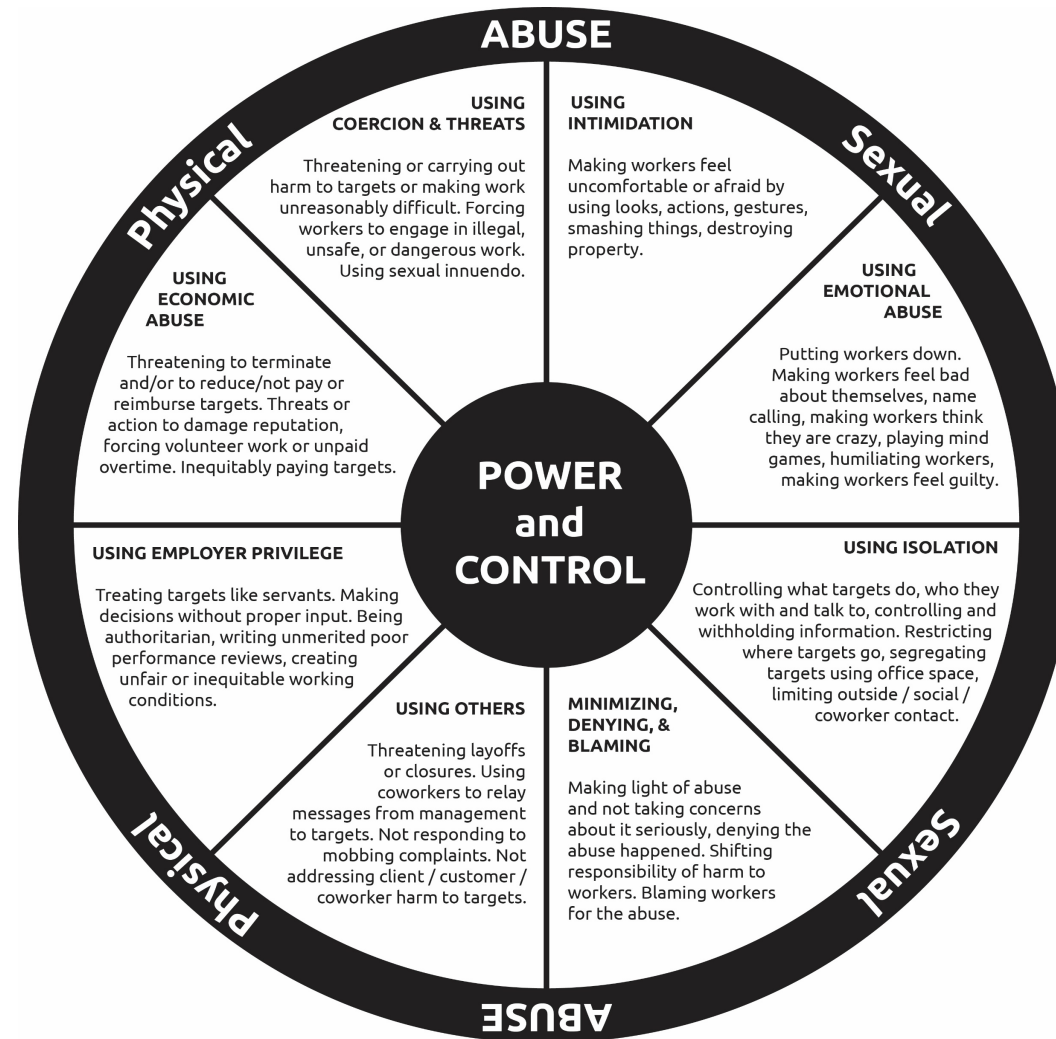
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# Q&A

What is a good and/or legal definition of workplace bullying?

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# Q&A (continued)



Scott, H.S. (2018). Extending the Duluth model to workplace bullying: A modification and adaptation of the workplace power-control wheel. *Workplace Health & Safety*, 66(9), 444-452. doi:10.1177/2165079917750934.

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## Q&A (continued)

How common is bullying in victim advocacy organizations?

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# Q&A (continued)

## The Reality of What Advocates Are Experiencing

The following was shared by domestic and sexual violence victim advocates in the United States in 2022-2023.

"If a client told me the things I'm telling you about what happens at my program, I'd tell them that they weren't safe and that they should consider leaving."

**IN ORDER TO REPORT THE HARASSMENT, I'D HAVE TO SIGN MY NAME. THAT FELT SO UNSAFE.**

**The mission is worth it.  
We stay because it's worth it.  
But advocates don't deserve to be treated this way.**

**I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS HAPPENING TO ME.  
I HAD SO MUCH SHAME ABOUT BEING BURNT OUT.  
I DIDN'T WANT ANYONE TO KNOW.**



**I TOLD MY SUPERVISOR THAT I FELT UNSAFE AT WORK BECAUSE THE WORK PLACE BULLYING WAS SO BAD. SHE SAID: "OUR CLIENTS ARE UNSAFE. YOU ARE UNCOMFORTABLE. YOU DON'T NEED TO SAY YOU ARE UNSAFE AT WORK." BUT I \*WAS\* UNSAFE.**

**There was a quote in the movie Remember the Titans—"Attitude reflects leadership." This is so true. When your leader is a non-confrontational bully, it creates division among the staff. It makes you question why you even bother. The clients keep me going. They deserve an advocate who cares. I've learned to seek validation in other avenues of my life. I know I've done my best for the clients regardless of leadership.**

**My Executive Director is an abusive to us in the office.  
I'm against abuse.**

**The domestic violence movement should be too.**

**All day, every we day, we tell people that abuse isn't their fault and to talk about it. I did talk about- with my coalition, with the organization's board. No one was willing to stop her. They all said they knew she was in wrong. I had to leave the movement. I just couldn't do it any more.**

**I still think about the advocate who worked on my team that often considered going back to her abuser because our dual dv/sv organization didn't pay us very well and did not offer health insurance benefits. It was so horribly ironic.**

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## Q&A (continued)

Are there any statistics on workplace burnout for advocates?

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## Q&A (continued)

How can you help veteran and rookie advocates see eye-to-eye when facing burnout?

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## Q&A (continued)

# Can workplace bullying be caused by the bully's own burnout?

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## Q&A (continued)

How can you tell who is bullied and who is doing the bullying?

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## Q&A (continued)

Can you share some not-so-obvious ways that people bully others in the workplace?

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## Q&A (continued)

Is using offensive communication considered workplace bullying (e.g., making fun of someone or laughing at them and saying it was only a joke)?

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## Q&A (continued)

Do you think implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices will help reduce workplace bullying?

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## Q&A (continued)

What is the responsibility of leadership to identify these issues?

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## Q&A (continued)

Can this issue contribute to an employee's overall outlook, such as framing how they speak about situations/clients?

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## Q&A (continued)

How can employees report to their supervisor that they are dealing with burnout without feeling like their job is at risk?

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## Q&A (continued)

How can one address workplace bullying when company policy suggests going to your supervisor, but the supervisor is the problem?

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## Q&A (continued)

How would you handle a situation where higher-ups are dismissive of your concerns about abuse and bullying?

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## Q&A (continued)

How can one handle improper advice from a supervisor when bullying is reported?

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## Q&A (continued)

My supervisor yells at me for asking questions. How can I address this when they tell me it's "all in my head"?

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## Q&A (continued)

Our organization has lost several advocates due to bullying, yet we're only told it's "not a crime to be a bad boss." Can you talk about different types of leadership?

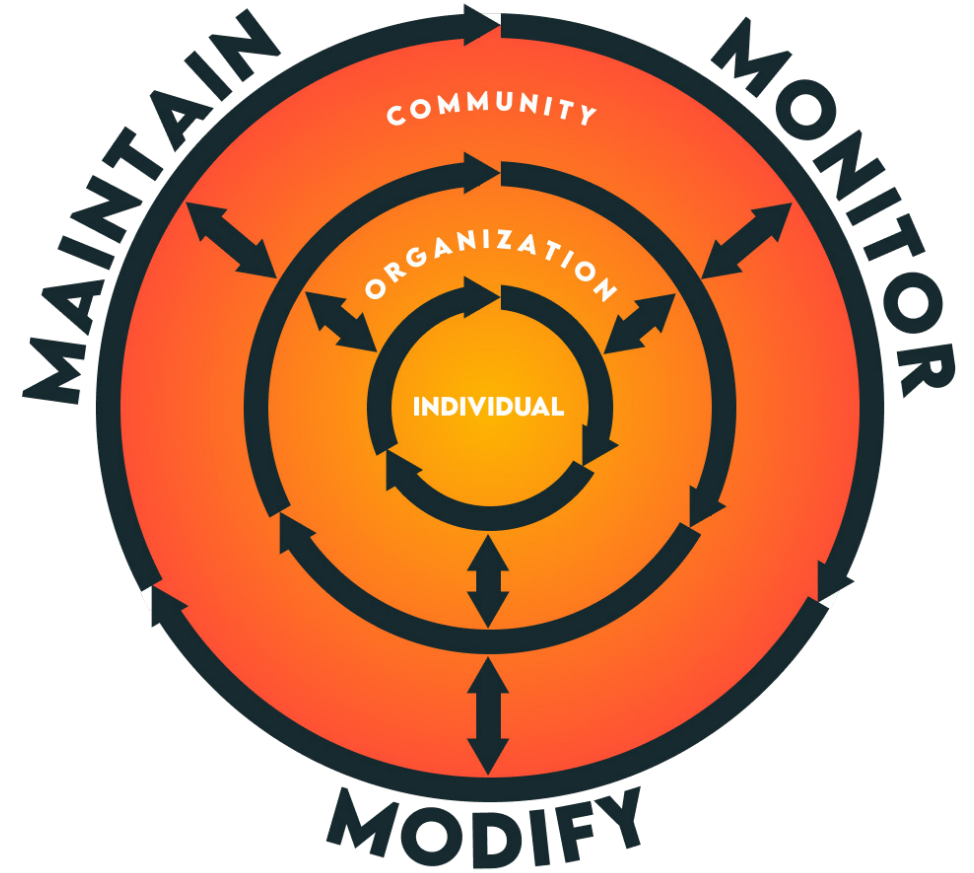
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## Q&A (continued)

Do you have any suggestions or tips for re-engaging employees?

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# Q&A (continued)



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# Resources

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## Resources (continued)

- [Workplace Bullying Power Control Wheel](#)
- [Workplace Bullying Institute YouTube Channel](#)
- [Organizational Trauma and Healing](#)
- [When It's More Than “Just a Job” TED Talk](#)
- [OVC Vicarious Trauma Toolkit](#)
- [Self-Care For Advocates Facebook Group](#)

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## Resources (continued)



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more resources:  
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## Next Expert Q&A

**Topic:** Clergy Response to Domestic Violence Survivors: How To Engage and Train Faith Leaders

**Date:** Wednesday, May 31, 2023

**Featured Host:** Dr. Y. Joon Choi

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Thank You!

Download a certificate of attendance for today's session via the link posted in the Chat.

If your question was not addressed in this session, you can send your question to our host or request additional information by email:

Trace Fleming-Trice: [trace@selfcareforadvocates.org](mailto:trace@selfcareforadvocates.org)

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