



## Episode 92: How to Avoid Becoming the Second Victim

with Dr. Caraline Wright & Dr Lizzie Sweeting

In this episode, Dr Caraline Wright and Dr Lizzie Sweeting join us to share their insights and firsthand experiences with being the second victim.

Caraline discloses her own second victim experience and how it affected her emotional state and sense of self. Meanwhile, Lizzie expounds on the effects of being the second victim and how we can break the stigma surrounding it. Lastly, they share their tips on managing the stress and trauma of being the second victim and what we can do to support second victims properly.

### Podcast links

Free Webinar: [How to Build a Robust Team in Time of Crisis Without Burning Out Yourself](#)

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[Episode 82: Surviving the Process with Drs Jessica Harland, Caroline Walker, and Heidi Mounsey](#)

[Episode 84: Creating a Workplace Where It's OK to Fail with Prof Susan Fairlie and Dr Jane Sturgess](#)

[Episode 86: Gaslighting and Other Ways We're Abused at Work: What's Really Going On? with Dr James Costello](#)

[Episode 87: What Should I do When I Think a Complaint is Unfair? And Other Questions with Drs Sarah Coope, George Wright, Samantha White, and Andrew Tressider](#)





## [Episode 90: What to do About Bitching and Backbiting with Dr Edward Pooley](#)

### Guest links

[Second Victim Support](#)

[Improvement Academy](#)

[Yorkshire Quality and Safety Research Group](#)

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Connect with Lizzie :

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### Quote to remember:

*'Bad things will happen. And we will make mistakes. But it's finding a way to manage that and not let it impact on your sense of self.'*

## What You Will Learn

We invest a significant amount of care and passion into our careers, knowing that what we do makes a difference in other people's lives. But when something unavoidable happens, we tend to beat ourselves up.





This workbook aims to help you properly manage the mental and emotional stresses that come with being a second victim. Whether you have experienced it or not, it's vital to be aware of it and what you can do when you or someone you know goes through it.

## Activity: Being Kinder to Others and Yourself

**Q1** We begin this episode with Lizzie defining the term 'second victim'. How would you explain this idea to someone who doesn't know about it?

**Q2** Stressful events can feel like an everyday occurrence at work. However, those with second victim syndrome may experience stress differently. It's often more severe and may even be accompanied by more intense thoughts and feelings. How would you differentiate second victimhood from the usual work stress?

Second Victim Stress	Usual Work Stress

**Q3** Describe an unavoidable incident or negative situation you experienced. What emotions did you experience at that time? How do you feel now looking back on it? Did you or do you still blame yourself?



**Q4** Write a list of things you should avoid saying to someone who might be experiencing second victimhood. Replace them with thoughts or actions that may help them.

Unhelpful Things to Say to a Second Victim	What I Should Do or Say Instead?

**Q5** Both Lizzie and Caraline emphasise the importance of having a strong and reliable support system that you can rely on when you are going through something. Who could you approach when you need support?



**Q6** In the case of second victims, the stress and trauma are often made worse by our tendency to be too harsh on ourselves.

Below, list the things that are currently causing you stress. Then, in the next column, write something you can do for yourself right now that would help.

What's Causing Me Stress Right Now	What I Need Right Now

Overcoming the second victimhood lies in being kinder to yourself. Self-care is different for everybody and depends on what you need, both in mind and body. What are some other self-care activities you could do?

How could you contribute to normalising and raising awareness of the second victim syndrome?



### CPD time claimed:

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