



COMPASSION FATIGUE VS. BURNOUT

Presented by

Jackie S. Scarborough, Ph.D., LPC, ACS, BCPC

Director of Mental Health at Bost, Inc.

**Counseling and Relationship Enrichment
Services (C.A.R.E.S.)**



*"I can't worry about that now.
I'm worrying about something else."*

Reprinted from Funny Times / PO Box 18530 / Cleveland Hts. OH 44118
phone: 216.371.8600 / email: ft@funnytimes.com

- When helping others feels more like labor than a labor of love, it is time to take steps to heal the healer.
- Mother Teresa wrote in her plan to her superiors that it was MANDATORY for her nuns to take an entire year off from their duties every 4-5 years to allow them to heal from the effects of their care-giving work.



THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF TIRED...
ONE THAT REQUIRES REST AND ONE THAT
REQUIRES PEACE...



WHO'S VULNERABLE?

- Those of us who have empathy and are exposed to trauma and the traumatized
- Trauma workers (police, fire, emergency workers, therapists, child welfare workers)
- We who have experienced trauma and our trauma remains unresolved
- Those of us who view ourselves as saviors or rescuers
- *Most vulnerable are those who deal with children*



TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF IS
AN ESSENTIAL PART OF TAKING
CARE OF OTHERS. THE
HEALTHIER THE TREE, THE
BETTER THE FRUIT IT CAN
OFFER.



COMPARING COMPASSION FATIGUE & BURNOUT

❖ Compassion Fatigue

- Preoccupation with absorbing trauma and emotional stresses of others
- Symptoms similar to burnout, but onset is faster with better opportunity to recover
- May lead to burnout



❖ Burnout

- Subtle, over time, & leads one to believe he/she is not meant for this type of work
- Feelings of being ineffective, callous, negative, emotional absence, sarcastic, & “stuck”



IS IT BURNOUT OR COMPASSION FATIGUE?

- **The Stages of Burnout have been identified as:**
 - enthusiasm
 - stagnation (quit progressing)
 - frustration
 - apathy
- **Commonalities of Burnout and Compassion Fatigue:**
 - Emotional exhaustion
 - Reduced sense of personal accomplishment or meaning in work
 - Mental exhaustion
 - Decreased interactions with others (isolation)
 - Depersonalization (symptoms disconnected from real causes)
 - Physical exhaustion



CLEAR DIFFERENCE

- Compassion fatigue has a more rapid onset while burnout emerges over time.
- Compassion Fatigue has a faster recovery (less severe, if recognized and managed early).



THE COST OF CARING

- Reduced job performance
- Loss of morale
- Increased sick leave
- Interpersonal relationships suffer
- Deterioration of health
- Irritability and blame
- Shaken belief system
- Out-of-control



PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCREENING (PROQOL)



WARNING SIGNS OF COMPASSION FATIGUE

Although symptoms vary, the following red flags may indicate that you have compassion fatigue:

- Abusing drugs, alcohol or food
- Anger
- Blaming
- Chronic lateness
- Depression
- Diminished sense of personal accomplishment
- Exhaustion (physical or emotional)
- Frequent headaches
- Gastrointestinal complaints
- High self-expectations
- Hopelessness
- Hypertension
- Inability to maintain balance of empathy and objectivity
- Increased irritability
- Less ability to feel joy
- Low self-esteem
- Sleep disturbances
- Workaholism



ORGANIZATIONAL SYMPTOMS OF COMPASSION FATIGUE

- • High absenteeism
- • Constant changes in co-workers relationships
- • Inability for teams to work well together
- • Desire among staff members to break company rules
- • Outbreaks of aggressive behaviors among staff
- • Inability of staff to complete assignments and tasks
- • Inability of staff to respect and meet deadlines
- • Lack of flexibility among staff members
- • Negativism towards management
- • Strong reluctance toward change
- • Inability of staff to believe improvement is possible
- • Lack of a vision for the future



WARNING SIGNS OF BURNOUT

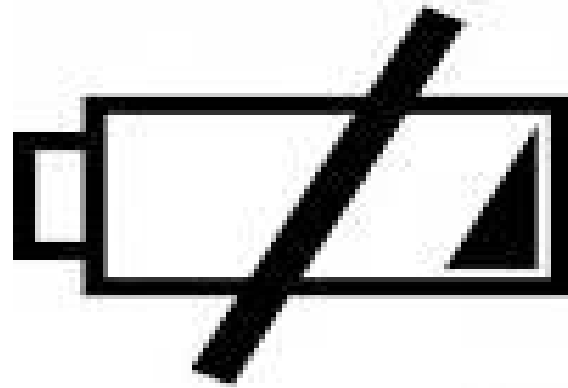
- **Chronic fatigue**
- **Insomnia**
- **Forgetfulness/impaired concentration and attention**
- **Physical symptoms**
- **Increased illness**
- **Loss of appetite**
- **Anxiety**
- **Depression**
- **Anger**



THE PATH TO WELLNESS

- A common and understandable coping mechanism in care giving is to simply stuff the overwhelming emotions that surface repeatedly in your work. How else can you keep going? Eventually, those emotions refuse to be ignored. All too often, psychological and physical crisis occurs.
- With support, insightful information, and authentic self-care, you can begin to understand the complexity of the emotions you've been juggling and, most likely, suppressing.
- Most people never take the time to understand how their jobs affect them emotionally.





YOU WOULDN'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOUR PHONE. DON'T LET IT HAPPEN TO YOU EITHER. SELF CARE IS A PRIORITY. NOT A LUXURY.



SELF-CARE PLAN

Physical

- Sleep well
- Eat well
- Exercise

Spiritual

- Prayer & Meditation
- Study
- Fellowship

Psychological

- Self-reflect
- Pleasure reading
- Say “no”!
- Smile
- Solitude

Workplace

- Take breaks
- Set limits
- Peer support
- Use vacations

Emotional

- Cry
- Laugh
- Congratulate yourself
- Humor



- Your own personal self-care plan.

_____’S SELF-CARE PLAN

Physical

• 1.

• 2.

Spiritual

• 1.

• 2.

Psychological

• 1.

• 2.

Workplace

• 1.

• 2.

Emotional

• 1.

• 2.



Copyright 2005 by Randy Glasbergen. www.glasbergen.com



**"I'm finally learning how to relax.
Unfortunately, relaxation makes me tense."**



- © *B. Hudnall Stamm, 2009-2012. Professional Quality of Life: Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Version 5 (ProQOL). www.proqol.org. This test*
- "What Is Burnout vs. Compassion Fatigue?" *Hospice Management Advisor* (2009): Hospice Management Advisor, Aug 2009. Web.
- "What Is Burnout vs. Compassion Fatigue?" *Internal Medicine Alert* (2009): Internal Medicine Alert, August 1, 2009. Web.

