

Drivers of Compassion Fatigue

Section 4



INTRODUCTION

As we have discovered in the previous sections of the toolkit, the goal of compassion resilience can be reached with the application of personal skills and perspectives combined with regular connections with individuals and organizations that operate from a base of compassion. In this section we will focus on the factors that can negatively impact our compassion resilience and explore our response and potential role in making positive change.

Our families are imperfect systems made up of imperfect people. When we look outside of our own family to those that we rely on to provide for our health and wellbeing, we find more imperfection. The first step in lessening the negative impact of the systems we rely on is naming what it is about the systems that contributes to our compassion fatigue. The second step is to discover which items on that list we can change, which ones can those who support us address, and which ones we would best be served by letting go. This section will guide us through these questions together.



INFORMATION

[Distribute this document to all participants to explore prior to this session.](#)



APPLICATIONS

Circle Agenda

[Circle Agenda for Section 4, In-Person](#)

Use this agenda if you are leading your group in a session in-person.

[Circle Agenda for Section 4, Virtual](#)

Use this agenda if you are leading your group in a session virtually.

Handouts to Support Content Covered in Circle Agenda

[Buckets Handout](#)

This is a fillable PDF that you can either send to participant to complete on an electronic device or print and distribute as a hard copy.

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Our families are imperfect systems made up of imperfect people. When we look outside of our own family to those that we rely on to provide for our health and wellbeing, we find more imperfection. The first step in lessening the negative impact of the systems we rely on is naming what it is about the systems that contributes to our compassion fatigue. The second step is to discover which items on that list we can change, which ones can those who support us address, and which ones we would best be served by letting go. This section will guide us through these questions together.

SELF-CARE



STRATEGIES

Humor and Resistance vs Letting Go

A few videos of parents trying to let it go...

[Mom at home on day off school](#)

[Mom parody of Let It Go](#)

[Dad sick of Let It Go](#)



WHAT'S NEXT

Expectations from Self and Others

Developed in partnership with:

ROGERS
Behavioral Health

wise END
STIGMA
TOGETHER
one story at a time

compassionresiliencetoolkit.org

Parent & Caregiver





Circle Agenda

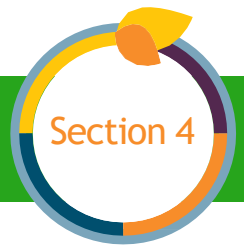
Circle Topic	CR Section 4: What Drives our Compassion Fatigue?
<p>Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Send out pre-read for Section 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare materials for Session 4
<p>Purpose of Circle</p>	<p>Today you will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore what drives compassion fatigue. 2. The role that our sense of control has on fatigue. 3. How resistance and letting go impacts our compassion satisfaction.
<p>Time/Materials/Preparation</p>	<p>Time: 90 minutes</p> <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Group agreements <input type="checkbox"/> Group values and family goals <input type="checkbox"/> Centerpiece <input type="checkbox"/> Talking piece <input type="checkbox"/> Fidgets <input type="checkbox"/> Flipchart paper with compassion resilience definition <input type="checkbox"/> Markers <input type="checkbox"/> Flipchart <input type="checkbox"/> Name tags <input type="checkbox"/> Handout: Buckets visual <p>Preparation: Arrange chairs in a circle without furniture in the middle. Hang compassion resilience definition on the wall.</p>



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Section 4

Circle Topic	CR Section 4: What Drives our Compassion Fatigue?
<p>Opening and Check-in (20 minutes)</p>	<p>Share</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome back! I invite everyone to get into a comfortable position with your eyes closed or looking towards the ground. We are going to take a moment to pause. Take a few slow breaths. <i>(Pause)</i> Name in your mind what you want to let go of to be present in this circle and your personal reason for being here. <i>(Pause for 10 seconds)</i> I invite you to bring your attention back to the circle. <p>Ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• (Go-around) Give your first name and an image that makes you feel hopeful. <p>Share</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As a reminder, we have our group agreements in the center of our circle to guide our time together as a group.• Last session we discussed the cycle of compassion fatigue, how we have seen ourselves in the cycle, and introduced a tool to help us monitor our wellbeing. Building off our conversation about the cycle of compassion fatigue, we're going to spend time today exploring what things put us in that cycle.
<p>Guiding Questions (35 minutes)</p>  	<p>Ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• (Go-around) Share two things in your life that drive your feelings of exhaustion? Let circle participants know that you will be writing these on the flipchart. <p>Write responses on a flipchart for all to see as people share.</p> <p><i>Facilitator Tip: If you have a small group, after everyone has shared ask the group if there is anything else anyone would like to add to the list.</i></p> <p>Ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• (Go-around) Share two things in your life that fills you up and brings you energy? Let circle participants know that you will be writing these on the flipchart. <p>Write responses on a flipchart for all to see as people share.</p> <p><i>Facilitator Tip: Again, if you have a small group, after everyone has shared ask the group if there is anything else anyone would like to add to the list.</i></p> <p>Hand out Buckets Handout.</p>

Drivers of Compassion Fatigue



Circle Topic	CR Section 4: What Drives our Compassion Fatigue?
<p>Guiding Questions (35 minutes) <i>continued</i></p>  	<p>Share</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are now going to look at where our individual sense of control falls with the items listed using this handout. • Please put those things from the list that you do feel you have a sense of control over in one bucket and those you lack a sense of control over in the other bucket. • If you have an item you feel you have control over some times and other times not, feel free to put those in the middle, between the two buckets. • And if there are items on our brainstormed list that don't apply to you, feel free to not put them on your page. <p>Ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Open mic) What do you notice about the two buckets/lists? • (Open mic) Can I have a volunteer tell us one item they have in their do not control bucket and briefly tell us why you placed it there? • After someone has shared ask - does anyone else in the room have that item in a different bucket, and if so why? <p><i>Facilitator Tip: These last two questions can serve as an opportunity for members of the group to shift their perspective on what they do not have control over. Feel free to ask the two questions above a couple of times to allow people the opportunity to learn from each other's perspective on the same driver of fatigue/resilience.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Open mic) Where would you like to grow your sense of control, with support? • (Open mic) What might you not be able to control in the next few years and how could shifting your perspective help that item be less fatiguing? <p><i>Facilitator Tip: An example for a parent of a small child may be their lack of regular sleep.</i></p>

<p>Check for Understanding and Self-Care (20 minutes)</p>	<p>Share</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One big source of fatigue is putting energy into something that for now we cannot control. We have been working together to identify areas of our parenting that might increase our sense of control and areas that we might benefit from letting go of a need/desire to control - for now. • Once we realize what we cannot control for now, there is the opportunity to let go of it. • Resistance is when we wish that our current reality is different than it is. The truth is that often what we resist, persists. For example, fighting sleeplessness can lead to insomnia or fighting anxiety can lead to panic attacks. When we are up at night unable to sleep, do we become frustrated and focused on the impact our lack of sleep is going to have on the day ahead? Or do we practice a sense of acceptance, while I'm not resting as deeply as I'd like, I am at rest? I am giving my body the opportunity to rest. Rather than resist, we aim to accept who we are and what is happening in this very moment, as much as we can.
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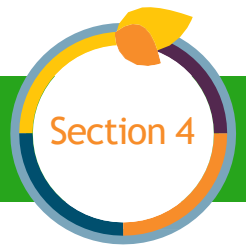
Drivers of Compassion Fatigue



Section 4

Circle Topic	CR Section 4: What Drives our Compassion Fatigue?
Check for Understanding and Self-Care (20 minutes) <i>continued</i>	Ask <ul style="list-style-type: none">• (Go-around) When you look at the brainstorm list of what drives fatigue for this group, what is one thing you'd like to acknowledge having already found a way to let go of? What did letting go look like and what helped you let go?
Closing (15 minutes)	Share <ul style="list-style-type: none">• After today, we are halfway through our parent and caregiver group. We've discussed our family goals, compassion resilience, steps to compassionate action, self-compassion, stages of compassion fatigue, things that contribute to our fatigue, gratitude, and the practice of letting go. Ask <ul style="list-style-type: none">• (Go-around) What is one concept you'd like to focus on between now and our next session? Share <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thank you for being here today. We look forward to seeing you (<i>insert next meeting day/time here</i>).

Drivers of Compassion Fatigue



Parent & Caregiver

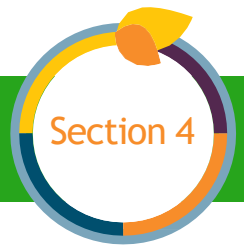


Virtual Circle Agenda



Circle Topic	CR Section 4: What drives our Compassion Fatigue?
Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Send out pre-read for Section 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare materials for Session 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Share handouts from Session 3
Purpose of Circle	Today you will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore what drives compassion fatigue. 2. The role that our sense of control has on fatigue. 3. How resistance and letting go impacts our compassion satisfaction.
Time/Materials/Preparation	Time: 90 minutes Documents to Share During Session: <input type="checkbox"/> Buckets visual Items to Place in Chat During Session: <input type="checkbox"/> Group Agreements <input type="checkbox"/> Family Goals

Opening and Check-in (20 minutes)	Share <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome back! I invite everyone to get into a comfortable position with your eyes closed or looking towards the ground. We are going to take a moment to pause. Take a few slow breaths. <i>(Pause)</i> Name in your mind what you want to let go of to be present in this group and your personal reason for being here. <i>(Pause for 10 seconds)</i> I invite you to bring your attention back to the group.
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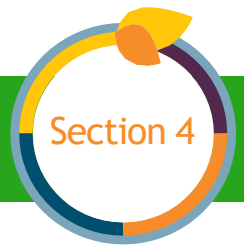
Drivers of Compassion Fatigue





Circle Topic	CR Section 4: What drives our Compassion Fatigue?
<p>Opening and Check-in (20 minutes) <i>continued</i></p>	<p>Ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Go-around) Give your first name and an image that makes you feel hopeful. <p>Share</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a reminder, we have our group agreements and family goals in the chat box to guide our time together as a group. Last session we discussed the cycle of compassion fatigue, how we have seen ourselves in the cycle, and introduced a tool to help us monitor our wellbeing. Building off our conversation about the cycle of compassion fatigue, we're going to spend time today exploring what things put us in that cycle.

<p>Guiding Questions (35 minutes)</p>  	<p>Ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Go-around) Share two things in your life that drive your feelings of exhaustion? <i>Let circle participants know that you will be writing these on a space that can be viewed by all participants (for example, a virtual whiteboard, shared PowerPoint slide, or chat box) .</i> <p>Write responses on the shared virtual space for all to see as people share.</p> <p>Facilitator Tip: <i>If you have a small group, after everyone has shared ask the group if there is anything else anyone would like to add to the list.</i></p> <p>Ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Go-around) Share two things in your life that fill you up and bring you energy? <i>Let circle participants know that you will be writing these on the shared virtual space.</i> <p>Write responses on the shared virtual space for all to see as people share.</p> <p>Facilitator Tip: <i>Again, if you have a small group, after everyone has shared ask the group if there is anything else anyone would like to add to the list.</i></p> <p>Share the Buckets Handout so everyone can see the visual for reference. Also place a link to the document in the chat box so participants can download the document and complete it on their own device. If participants are unable to download the document, ask them to use a piece of paper to complete the next set of directions.</p>
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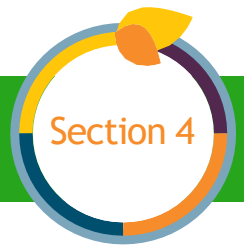
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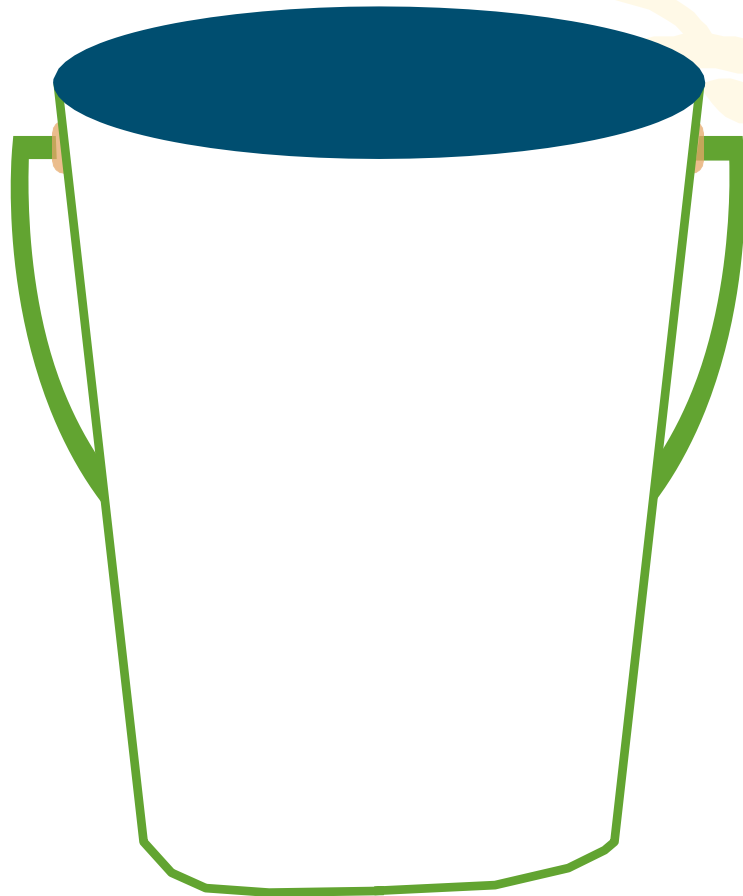
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Sense
of Control



Lack Sense
of Control

