

# Compassion Fatigue: Connection to Trauma, Stages, and Assessments

## Section 3



In this section of the toolkit we will delve more deeply into the concept of compassion fatigue; how it connects to our understanding of trauma, the stages that one might experience if compassion fatigue is not addressed, and how to assess our levels of secondary trauma, burnout, and compassion satisfaction. In section two we defined compassion fatigue as an umbrella term for both burnout and secondary trauma. As we grow in our understanding of the extent and impact of trauma, including historical trauma and oppression, on the students we teach, their families, and our communities, our ability to take in such pain and maintain an open, compassionate approach can be challenged. Compassion fatigue can develop slowly overtime and go unrecognized. This section gives us insights that can guide us to take proactive measures to prevent its progression.



**Distribute this document to all participants to explore prior to the following application activities.**



### **Key Activity**

#### **Stages of Compassion Fatigue – Cats Cycle**

### **Wellness Practice**

#### **“Just Like Me” Exercise**

### **Circle Agenda**

#### **Staff Circle Agenda, Section Three**

### **Core Content Visual**

#### **Stages of Compassion Fatigue – Cats Cycle – Use this Visual and Display in Staff Break Areas**

Posting this visual in common staff areas will serve as a reminder of content covered to staff and perhaps serve as a future conversation started for deeper reflection among staff members.

### **Supplementary Activities/Handouts**

#### **ProQOL Self-Assessment Tool**

The ProQOL is a 30 question, self-administered, self-scored, free assessment. This is included in the document to distribute for this section. Facilitators should make time for participants to complete the assessment during their time together or ask them to complete ahead of time.

It can be used on a regular basis as a self-check-in, offered in conjunction with supervisory or mentoring consultations, or as a basis for small group discussion. Please note that it is available on the ProQOL site in many languages. We do not recommend ProQOL's are collected after being completed by participants, but rather used as a reflection tool.

Facilitators should be prepared to offer resources to staff whose ProQOL outcomes point to significant levels of burnout or secondary traumatic stress. Each district has employee support protocols and resources. Be sure you know those and remind staff that they exist and how to access them.



**For links specifically for leadership and additional resources, please visit the Toolkit online.**

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INTRODUCTION

In this section of the toolkit we will delve more deeply into the concept of compassion fatigue; how it connects to our understanding of trauma, the stages that one might experience if compassion fatigue is not addressed, and how to assess our levels of secondary trauma, burnout, and compassion satisfaction. In section two we defined compassion fatigue as an umbrella term for both burnout and secondary trauma. As we grow in our understanding of the extent and impact of trauma, including historical trauma and oppression, on the students we teach, their families, and our communities, our ability to take in such pain and maintain an open, compassionate approach can be challenged. Compassion fatigue can develop slowly overtime and go unrecognized. This section gives us insights that can guide us to take proactive measures to prevent its progression.



INFORMATION

We know that being in the field of education can be rewarding and also challenging. Teaching and acquiring knowledge is hard work in and of itself; however, it can be more difficult when students present us with obstacles, such as homelessness, community violence, physical and emotional abuse, and domestic violence in the home environment. These trials often impede the learning process. [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction offers excellent resources](#) to better understand trauma, its impact, and how to create trauma sensitive schools.

Staff that work with students who experience traumatic events are often deeply affected. This includes witnessing a student experiencing discrimination or knowledge of the impact of oppression on a family or even a whole community. This is especially true for staff who have had their own experiences of trauma. While no one can truly understand each unique experience of oppression, the ongoing witnessing of an unjust world through the experiences of youth and families with whom the staff have a connection, can lead to secondary trauma. While it is uncommon, some helpers experience some of the same symptoms of trauma as if the experience had happened to them. It is best to seek professional help to be able to offer support for those living the events and manage one's own reactions.

Ross Greene, clinical child psychologist and respected author and trainer in the education field, refers to compassion fatigue as a decrease in a person's capacity to empathize with those who are suffering. Secondary trauma is one aspect of compassion fatigue. Adding the concept of burnout creates a more inclusive understanding of the many reasons some educators may experience compassion fatigue. Burnout can be the outcome when educators face unrealistic job expectations or do not know how to successfully meet typical expectations. Very few staff come to a job in a school setting knowing fully how to address multiple academic expectations as well as all of the behavioral challenges that are presented to them by their students. These expectations can be overwhelming and can lead to burnout if measures are not taken to build skills, support resilience and alleviate the symptoms.

**What does compassion fatigue look like?** Compassion fatigue can be summed up as *the feelings of depression, sadness, exhaustion, anxiety, and irritation that may be experienced by people who are helpers in their work and/or personal life*. What are the symptoms to look for early on to be able to minimize its impact and create (or return to) a path of resilience? Eric Gentry, PhD, offers a way to understand compassion fatigue in his staged model. Cat pictures were added to Gentry's work by some of the authors of this toolkit to add some fun and assist with memory. Staff at First Stage Milwaukee, created [this helpful video](#), set to the Overture from the musical Cats, to explain the stages.

Developed in partnership with:



[compassionresiliencetoolkit.org](http://compassionresiliencetoolkit.org)

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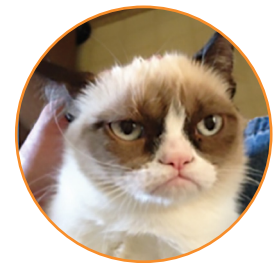
## Section 3

### Compassion Fatigue Cycle *(adapted from work of Eric Gentry, PhD 2012)*



**Zealot/Idealist** – We are committed, involved, and available. We problem solve and are ready to make a difference. We willingly put in extra hours, and our enthusiasm overflows. We volunteer and go the extra mile, often without prompting.

**Irritability** – We begin to see the imperfect nature of the systems and people around us. We distance ourselves from and even belittle our students, coworkers, and friends. As we do so, we talk unfairly about their challenges and denigrate their efforts. The use of humor is sometimes strained, and we often daydream or become distracted when students are speaking with us. Oversights and mistakes begin to occur as we notice our anger, cynicism, diminished creativity, and sadness.



**Withdrawal** – We are unable to embrace the complexity of the problems, and we lose our ability to see students as individuals, instead they become irritants. Complaints may be made about our work, and we might have problems in our personal life. We no longer wish to talk about work and may not even admit to what we do. We feel tired all of the time and thus neglect our family, our coworkers, our students and ourselves. Our shield gets thicker and thicker to block our pain and sadness. We may experience difficulty empathizing and feeling to numb to other's pain.

**Zombie** – Our hopelessness turns to rage, and we begin to detest people. We easily move to anger if our coworkers dare to question us. Others become incompetent or ignorant in our eyes, and we begin to work in a silo. We have no time for humor or fun. We may have a sense that we can't ever do enough, an inflated sense of importance related to our work, hyper-vigilance/sleeplessness, and a sense of persecution.



**Unwell vs. Renewal** – If we have not addressed this cycle earlier, we come to a fork in the road where we either continue deeper into compassion fatigue to a place of illness, fatigue, and overwhelm or we take a turn towards renewal, a place of resiliency, hardiness, and transformation.

The good news is that at any stage in the cycle, one can learn skills and mindsets that change the trajectory towards compassion satisfaction. The goal of this toolkit is for us to learn these mindsets and skills in order to proactively address our ways of being to avoid compassion fatigue and, when it does arise, address it early with confidence and support. It is beneficial to begin by getting a sense of the starting place for ourselves. The ProQOL is a 30 question, self-administered, self-scored, free assessment found [here](#).

# Compassion Fatigue: Connection to Trauma, Stages, and Assessments

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SELF-CARE



STRATEGIES

Throughout the toolkit, we will practice strategies to support compassion resilience from the four sectors of the Wellness Compass.

### HEART: Commonalities Practice to Build Compassion

Try this five-step exercise when you are with a client, colleague, or family member and feelings of compassion seem out of reach. Do it discreetly and try to do all the steps with the same person. You can begin by simply bringing someone to mind. Eventually you can do this when you want to bring yourself out of a place of judgment in a tough interaction with another person. At the root of it all, we are all human beings that crave attention, recognition, affection, and above all, happiness.

With your attention geared to the other person, tell yourself:

Step 1: "Just like me, this person **is seeking happiness** in their life."

Step 2: "Just like me, this person **is trying to avoid suffering** in their life."

Step 3: "Just like me, this person **has known sadness, loneliness and despair.**"

Step 4: "Just like me, this person **is seeking to fill their needs.**"

Step 5: "Just like me, this person **is learning about life.**"

Adapted from [Zen Habits: A Guide to Cultivating Compassion in Your Life, With 7 Practices](#).



WHAT'S NEXT

### System Drivers of Compassion Fatigue

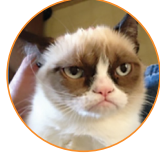
# Compassion Fatigue: Connection to Trauma, Stages, and Assessments

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### Stages of Compassion Fatigue Activity



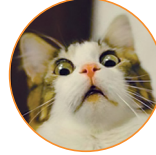
Zealot/Idealist



Irritability



Withdrawal



Zombie



Renewal

#### Activity description

1. Use the guide below to explain the stages of fatigue (hand out the stages visual or share virtually and be sure the participants are reading the descriptors on the handout as you use the explanation in the right column below). Include aspects from the left column as you explain the stages.
2. Use the following questions taken from the circle agenda for this section to lead a discussion. Either go through each stage and ask the questions of that stage with the whole group or divide the group into four smaller groups, assign each one of the stages, and have a report out to the whole group.
  - a. What feelings and experiences might contribute to a person “hanging out” in this stage — even to becoming one’s norm?
  - b. How would that lead to one’s inability to act with compassion during your workday? (Think of any impact on specific compassionate action steps.)
  - c. (If done in small groups, share out in the full group) Share your key insights with the larger group.
  - d. Share a story of renewal or resilience you have witnessed during your time in your career — yourself, colleagues, or family members.
3. Remind participants that the good news is that at any stage in the cycle, one can learn skills and mindsets that change the trajectory towards compassion satisfaction. The goal of this toolkit is for us to learn these mindsets and skills in order to proactively address our ways of being to avoid compassion fatigue and, when it does arise, address it early with confidence and support. It is beneficial to begin by getting a sense of the starting place for ourselves. The ProQOL is a helpful self-assessment that is shared in this section.

#### Description of stage on participant handout



**Zealot/Idealist** – We are committed, involved, and available. We problem solve and are ready to make a difference. We willingly put in extra hours, and our enthusiasm overflows. We volunteer and go the extra mile, often without prompting.

#### Facilitator explanation of each part of the cycle

**Zealot/Idealist** – When we start new jobs, change to new roles, or have a change in our circumstances, we often bring very high levels of energy and enthusiasm. We are hopeful that the work we do will make a positive difference and want to give our all. This is the first stage of compassion fatigue because our work is more like a marathon than a sprint. If we try to run a marathon at the speed of a sprint, we will not be able to maintain it over time. At times, supervisors and coworkers take advantage of others in the zealot stage, seeing our enthusiasm and shifting work of theirs to us, further contributing to our unrealistic expectations in this stage. This experience can be exacerbated if we have experienced discrimination in our lives, we may feel the need to have an overwhelming workload to prove our worth to others.

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### Description of stage on participant handout



**Irritability** – We begin to see the imperfect nature of the systems and people around us. We distance ourselves from and even belittle our students, coworkers, and friends. As we do so, we talk unfairly about their challenges and denigrate their efforts. The use of humor is sometimes strained, and we often daydream or become distracted when students are speaking with us. Oversights and mistakes begin to occur as we notice our anger, cynicism, diminished creativity, and sadness.

### Facilitator explanation of each part of the cycle

**Irritability** – As we settle into our work, we begin seeing the imperfections of the people and systems needed to reach positive outcomes for those we serve. We begin to see all the expectations we set for ourselves (and perhaps others had of us) in the zealot stage are not realistic. This can lead us to becoming frustrated, angry, and cynical. We may begin to back away from the people we serve and our colleagues if they remind us of what is lacking. If we do not see a way to address the imperfections, we can begin to lose hope. Powerlessness may spark feelings from past trauma or experiences of oppression.

Finding ways to work on addressing some of the imperfections and not letting others stop us from the day-to-day work and the joy it can bring are important steps to take to avoid the negative impacts of this stage.



**Withdrawal** – We are unable to embrace the complexity of problems, and we lose our ability to see students as individuals, instead they become irritants. Complaints may be made about our work, and we might have problems in our personal life. We no longer wish to talk about work and may not even admit to what we do. We feel tired all of the time and thus neglect our family, our coworkers, our students and ourselves. Our shield gets thicker and thicker to block our pain and sadness. We may experience difficulty empathizing and feeling to numb to other's pain.



**Withdrawal** – The challenges of the workplace and those our students and families face can be complex and overwhelming at times. To withdraw is a natural human reaction to overwhelm. If we come from and recognize our privilege, we may shield ourselves from seeing the societal gaps that feel too immense to bridge. This escaping from the needs around us makes us less able to meet the expectations of our job. It also disconnects us from the joy we originally felt about the mission of the work.

Leaders can reconnect us to the mission, provide training and support to deal with complex challenges, and share what others are doing to also impact the students and families in our communities. Understanding what “the village” is doing and the resilience of those we serve can help us to let go of the full burden of the challenges.



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Description of stage on participant handout	Facilitator explanation of each part of the cycle
 <p><b>Zombie</b> – Our hopelessness turns to rage, and we begin to detest people. We easily move to anger if our coworkers dare to question us. Others become incompetent or ignorant in our eyes, and we begin to work in a silo. We have no time for humor or fun. We may have a sense that we can't ever do enough, an inflated sense of importance related to our work, hyper-vigilance/sleeplessness, and a sense of persecution.</p>	<p><b>Zombie</b> – If we have not discovered ways to moderate our energy for the long view, how to accept imperfections in people and systems while working for improvements, and ways to focus through complexity, we may move into the zombie stage of compassion fatigue. The key descriptor of this stage is isolation from all others. While not healthy in the long run, it is a survival mechanism very similar to a person with a trauma history. Think back to the <a href="#">Compassionate Action Steps</a> and our need to see beneath the external behavior to empathize with the pain. Colleagues and leaders can offer support through these steps. Systems that have clear boundaries on time spent on work, put money behind low-stress team activities, offer mental health and coaching services, as well as “wellness days” as part of their PTO package are proactively providing support for people who find themselves in this stage. When looking at employee wellbeing, we must ensure that the system and leader supports to prevent and manage the first three stages are in place rather than a total focus on the stop gaps for the zombie stage.</p>
 <p><b>Unwell vs. Renewal</b> – If we have not addressed this cycle earlier, we come to a fork in the road where we either continue deeper into compassion fatigue to a place of illness, fatigue, and overwhelm or we take a turn towards renewal, a place of resiliency, hardiness, and transformation.</p>	<p><b>Unwell vs. Renewal</b> – If we have not addressed this cycle earlier, we come to a fork in the road where we either continue deeper into compassion fatigue to a place of illness, fatigue, and overwhelm or we take a turn towards renewal, a place of resiliency, hardiness, and transformation.</p>

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## HEART: Commonalities Practice to Build Compassion

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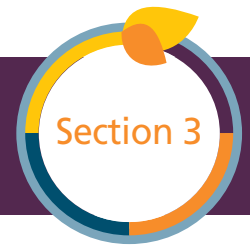
With your attention geared to the other person, tell yourself:

- Step 1: "Just like me, this person is seeking happiness in their life."
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Adapted from [Zen Habits: A Guide to Cultivating Compassion in Your Life, With 7 Practices](#).



# Compassion Fatigue: Connection to Trauma, Stages, and Assessments



## Professional Quality Of Life Scale (PROQOL)

### Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue (PROQOL) Version 5 (2009)

When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you [help] can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the last 30 days.

1=Never	2=Rarely	3=Sometimes	4=Often	5=Very Often	
_____					1. I am happy.
_____					2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].
_____					3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.
_____					4. I feel connected to others.
_____					5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
_____					6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].
_____					7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].
_____					8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].
_____					9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].
_____					10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].
_____					11. Because of my [helping], I have felt "on edge" about various things.
_____					12. I like my work as a [helper].
_____					13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].
_____					14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].
_____					15. I have beliefs that sustain me.
_____					16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.
_____					17. I am the person I always wanted to be.
_____					18. My work makes me feel satisfied.
_____					19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].
_____					20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.
_____					21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.
_____					22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.
_____					23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].
_____					24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].
_____					25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.
_____					26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.
_____					27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a [helper].
_____					28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.
_____					29. I am a very caring person.
_____					30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.

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### Your Scores on the PROQOL: Professional Quality Of Life Screening

Based on your responses, place your personal scores below. If you have any concerns, you should discuss them with a physical or mental health care professional.

#### Compassion Satisfaction \_\_\_\_\_

Compassion satisfaction is about the pleasure you derive from being able to do your work well. For example, you may feel like it is a pleasure to help others through your work. You may feel positively about your colleagues or your ability to contribute to the work setting or even the greater good of society. Higher scores on this scale represent a greater satisfaction related to your ability to be an effective caregiver in your job.

The average score is 50 (SD 10; alpha scale reliability .88). About 25% of people score higher than 57 and about 25% of people score below 43. If you are in the higher range, you probably derive a good deal of professional satisfaction from your position. If your scores are below 40, you may either find problems with your job, or there may be some other reason – for example, you might derive your satisfaction from activities other than your job.

#### Burnout \_\_\_\_\_

Most people have an intuitive idea of what burnout is. From the research perspective, burnout is one of the elements of Compassion Fatigue (CF). It is associated with feelings of hopelessness and difficulties in dealing with work or in doing your job effectively. These negative feelings usually have a gradual onset. They can reflect the feeling that your efforts make no difference, or they can be associated with a very high workload or a non-supportive work environment. Higher scores on this scale mean that you are at higher risk for burnout.

The average score on the burnout scale is 50 (SD 10; alpha scale reliability .75). About 25% of people score above 57 and about 25% of people score below 43. If your score is below 43, this probably reflects positive feelings about your ability to be effective in your work. If you score above 57 you may wish to think about what at work makes you feel like you are not effective in your position. Your score may reflect your mood; perhaps you were having a “bad day” or are in need of some time off. If the high score persists or if it is reflective of other worries, it may be a cause for concern.

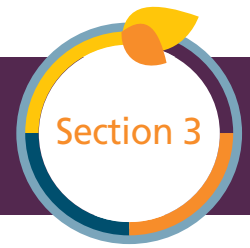
#### Secondary Traumatic Stress \_\_\_\_\_

The second component of Compassion Fatigue (CF) is secondary traumatic stress (STS). It is about your work related, secondary exposure to extremely or traumatically stressful events. Developing problems due to exposure to other’s trauma is somewhat rare but does happen to many people who care for those who have experienced extremely or traumatically stressful events. For example, you may repeatedly hear stories about the traumatic things that happen to other people, commonly called Vicarious Traumatization. If your work puts you directly in the path of danger, for example, field work in a war or area of civil violence, this is not secondary exposure; your exposure is primary. However, if you are exposed to others’ traumatic events as a result of your work, for example, as a therapist or an emergency worker, this is secondary exposure. The symptoms of STS are usually rapid in onset and associated with a particular event. They may include being afraid, having difficulty sleeping, having images of the upsetting event pop into your mind, or avoiding things that remind you of the event.

The average score on this scale is 50 (SD 10; alpha scale reliability .81). About 25% of people score below 43 and about 25% of people score above 57. If your score is above 57, you may want to take some time to think about what at work may be frightening to you or if there is some other reason for the elevated score. While higher scores do not mean that you do have a problem, they are an indication that you may want to examine how you feel about your work and your work environment. You may wish to discuss this with your supervisor, a colleague, or a health care professional.

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## What Is My Score and What Does It Mean?

In this section, you will score your test so you understand the interpretation for you. To find your score on each section, total the questions listed on the left and then find your score in the table on the right of the section.

### Compassion Satisfaction Scale

Copy your rating on each of these questions on to this table and add them up. When you have added them up you can find your score on the table to the right.

- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. \_\_\_\_\_
- 16. \_\_\_\_\_
- 18. \_\_\_\_\_
- 20. \_\_\_\_\_
- 22. \_\_\_\_\_
- 24. \_\_\_\_\_
- 27. \_\_\_\_\_
- 30. \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

The sum of my Compassion Satisfaction questions is	So My Score Equals	And my Compassion Satisfaction level is
22 or less	43 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Around 50	Average
42 or more	57 or more	High

### Burnout Scale

On the burnout scale you will need to take an extra step. Starred items are "reverse scored." If you scored the item 1, write a 5 beside it. The reason we ask you to reverse the scores is because scientifically the measure works better when these questions are asked in a positive way though they can tell us more about their negative form. For example, question 1: "I am happy" tells us more about the effects of helping when you are not happy so you reverse the score.

- \*1. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
- \*4. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_
- \*15. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
- \*17. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
- 19. \_\_\_\_\_
- 21. \_\_\_\_\_
- 26. \_\_\_\_\_
- \*29. \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

The sum of my Burnout questions is	So My Score Equals	And my Burnout level is
22 or less	43 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Around 50	Average
42 or more	57 or more	High

<b>You Wrote</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Change to</b>	5	4	3	2	1

### Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale

Just like you did on Compassion Satisfaction, copy your rating on each of these questions on to this table and add them up. When you have added them up you can find your score on the table to the right.

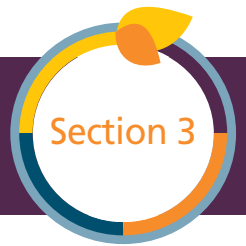
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. \_\_\_\_\_
- 16. \_\_\_\_\_
- 18. \_\_\_\_\_
- 20. \_\_\_\_\_
- 22. \_\_\_\_\_
- 24. \_\_\_\_\_
- 27. \_\_\_\_\_
- 30. \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

The sum of my Compassion Satisfaction questions is	So My Score Equals	And my Compassion Satisfaction level is
22 or less	43 or less	Low
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42 or more	57 or more	High

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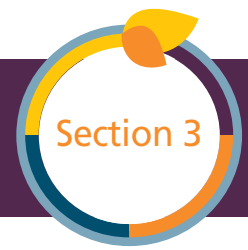
Staff Support



Circle Agenda

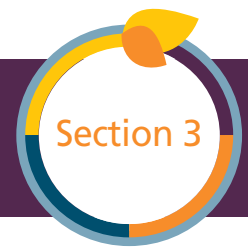
Circle Topic	CR Session 3: Compassion Fatigue
<p><b>Planning</b></p>	<p>Send the <a href="#">introduction document</a> from Section 3 in the online toolkit at least 4 days prior to the circle to all participants. Highlight that there is a link to the Professional Quality of Life Questionnaire. The results are private. This session will help participants to better understand their results. Be sure to let participants know who is available to them if they would like to discuss their results.</p> <p>Hold a meeting with leadership to prepare for this section and invite the leader(s) to consider the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reflect on both your experience of fatigue throughout your career and the impact that your team, your supervisors, and the system you worked within had on your experience of the cycle of fatigue. Be prepared to share your insights with the facilitation team and if invited, with the group.</li> <li>2. What might you and your leadership team do today that would alleviate some of the burden of initial unrealistic self-expectations that new employees have in the Zealot Stage, or recent experiences of imperfections of clients/team/organization/ surrounding systems for those in the Irritability Stage, or the overwhelm employees are experiencing from the complexity of the work for those in the Withdrawal Stage? Example: gather new employees to discuss what is needed to run the marathon of this work (celebrate initial success of “sprint behavior” and invite them to let go of some unrealistic self-expectations). You will get more ideas from the session 4 activity.</li> </ol> <p>For the full leadership preparation document, please visit <a href="#">this page</a>.</p>
<p><b>Purpose of Circle/ Learning Objectives</b></p>	<p>Introduce the cycle of compassion fatigue and use it for reflection on our patterns of fatigue and our resources for avoiding being stuck in the cycle.</p>

# Compassion Fatigue: Connection to Trauma, Stages, and Assessments



Circle Topic	CR Session 3: Compassion Fatigue
<p><b>Materials/ Preparation/Time</b></p>	<p><b>Time:</b> 45-50 minutes</p> <p><b>Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Circle kit</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shared agreements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quote and mindfulness statements on flipchart paper</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cards with “Just like Me” prompts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A few copies of the <a href="#">Compassionate Action Steps visual</a> to place in the center of the circle</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Copies of the following for all participants: <a href="#">Compassion Fatigue Cycle</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Set-up:</b> Up to 15 chairs arranged in a circle without furniture in the middle.</p> <p><b>To consider:</b> <a href="#">Understanding Your Social Location as a Facilitator – Active Bystander Intervention: Training and Facilitation Guide.</a></p>
<p><b>Welcome/Check-In (5 minutes)</b></p>	<p>Welcome group.</p> <p><b>Share:</b> Today, the content we will share about the cycle of compassion fatigue will offer some insights into why offering compassion can be tough.</p> <p>Remind the group of the key circle components: go-around, pass or speak, open mic, centerpiece, and agreements</p> <p><i>“You have dealt with so much, and done the best that you can, take a moment now to appreciate how strong you are.” – Karen Salmansohn</i></p>
<p><b>Grounding/Wellness Practice (5 minutes)</b></p>	<p>Often our compassion resilience relies on our ability to step back from negative encounters. Try this 5-step mindfulness exercise when you are with someone you serve, colleague, or family member and feelings of compassion seem out of reach. Do it discreetly. We will practice by asking you to bring to mind someone who is a little difficult for you to be with at times. Eventually, you can use this to bring yourself out of a place of judgment in a tough interaction with another person. With your attention geared towards the other person, tell yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just like me, this person is seeking happiness in their life.</li> <li>• Just like me, this person is trying to avoid suffering in their life.</li> <li>• Just like me, this person has known sadness, loneliness, and despair.</li> <li>• Just like me, this person is seeking to fill their needs.</li> <li>• Just like me, this person is learning about life.</li> </ul> <p>If you would like to consider a different grounding practice, please review the <a href="#">mindfulness appendix</a> for additional suggestions.</p>

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Circle Topic	CR Session 3: Compassion Fatigue
<p><b>Guiding Questions</b> (25 minutes)</p>	<p>Review the <a href="#">activity write-up</a> for a more complete explanation of the cycle. Handout the <a href="#">Compassion Fatigue Cycle</a> and review how an individual is impacted by their expectations, work environment, and the systems that influence it. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Zealot</b> = early career, desire to change the world</li> <li>• <b>Irritable</b> = realizing the imperfections of the people and systems needed to reach positive outcomes for those they serve</li> <li>• <b>Withdrawn</b> = escaping from the needs and expectations of the work environment</li> <li>• <b>Zombie</b> = isolating from all others in order to survive the realities of the workplace and job requirements</li> </ul> <p>Divide the group into four smaller groups – one per stage of the cycle: Zealot, Irritable, Withdrawn, Zombie</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. (In your group) Discuss:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What feelings and experiences might contribute to a person “hanging out” in this stage – even to becoming one’s norm?</li> <li>b. How would that lead to one’s inability to act with compassion during your workday? (Think of any impact on specific steps of compassionate action.)</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. (Full group) Share your key insights with the larger group.</li> <li>3. (Open mic) Share a story of renewal or resilience you have witnessed during your time in your career – yourself, colleagues, or family members.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Review</b> (5 minutes)</p>	<p>(Go-around) Share one compass area and something you did to be resilient in that area since our last circle.</p>
<p><b>Putting it into Practice</b> (5 minutes)</p>	<p>(Go-around) Pick a stage and picture if a friend or colleague were in that stage, what you would offer to them as a mentor?</p>
<p><b>Closing</b> (5 minutes)</p>	<p>(Go-around) Share a mantra, quote, affirmation, or mindset that has been helpful to you to minimize compassion fatigue.</p> <p><b>Bonus Activity:</b> Share <a href="#">the link</a> with the grounding activity from this session and other helpful practices to develop compassion through mindfulness.</p>



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