

## Compassion Fatigue Self Test

This self-test is not intended to provide medical advice or diagnosis. Consult a physician or mental health professional if you think you might be suffering from Compassion Fatigue.

Consider each of the following characteristics about you and your current situation. Write in the number for the best response. Use one of the following answers.

- 1= Rarely/Never
- 2= At Times
- 3= Not Sure
- 4= Often
- 5= Very Often

1. \_\_\_ I force myself to avoid certain thoughts or feelings that remind me of a frightening experience.
2. \_\_\_ I find myself avoiding certain activities or situations because they remind me of a frightening experience.
3. \_\_\_ I have gaps in my memory about frightening events.
4. \_\_\_ I feel estranged from others.
5. \_\_\_ I have difficulty falling asleep.
6. \_\_\_ I have outbursts of anger or irritability with little provocation.
7. \_\_\_ I startle easily.
8. \_\_\_ While working with a victim I thought about violence against the person or persons who victimized.
9. \_\_\_ I am a sensitive person.
10. \_\_\_ I have had flashbacks connected to my clients and families.
11. \_\_\_ I have had first-hand experience with traumatic events in my adult life.
12. \_\_\_ I have had first-hand experience with traumatic events in my childhood.

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13. \_\_\_ I have thought that I need to “work-through” a traumatic experience in my life.
14. \_\_\_ I have thought that I need more close friends.
15. \_\_\_ I have thought that there is no one to talk with about highly stressful experiences.
16. \_\_\_ I have concluded that I work too hard for my own good.

**Items about your clients and their families:**

17. \_\_\_ I am frightened of things traumatized people and their family have said or done to me.
18. \_\_\_ I experience troubling dreams similar to a client of mine and their family.
19. \_\_\_ I have experiences intrusive thoughts of sessions with especially difficult clients and their families.
20. \_\_\_ I have suddenly and involuntarily recalled a frightening experience while working with a client or their family.
21. \_\_\_ I am preoccupied with more than one client and their family.
22. \_\_\_ I am losing sleep over a client and their family’s traumatic experiences.
23. \_\_\_ I have thought that I might have been “infected” by the traumatic stress of my clients and their families.
24. \_\_\_ I remind myself to be less concerned about the well-being of my clients and their families.
25. \_\_\_ I have felt trapped by my work as a helper.
26. \_\_\_ I have felt a sense of hopelessness associated with working with clients and their families.
27. \_\_\_ I have felt “on edge” about various things and I attribute this to working with certain clients and their families.
28. \_\_\_ I have wished that I could avoid working with some clients and their families.
29. \_\_\_ I have been in danger working with some clients and their families.
30. \_\_\_ I have felt that some of my clients dislike me personally.

**Items about being a helper and your work environment:**

31. \_\_\_ I have felt weak, tired, rundown as a result of my work as a helper.
32. \_\_\_ I have felt depressed as a result of my work as a helper.
33. \_\_\_ I am successful at separating work from personal life.
34. \_\_\_ I feel little compassion toward most of my co-workers.
35. \_\_\_ I feel I am working more for the money than for personal fulfillment.
36. \_\_\_ I find it difficult separating my personal life from my work life.
37. \_\_\_ I have a sense of worthlessness/disillusionment/resentment associated with my work.
38. \_\_\_ I have thoughts that I am a “failure” as a helper.
39. \_\_\_ I have thoughts that I am not succeeding at achieving my life goals.
40. \_\_\_ I have to deal with bureaucratic, unimportant tasks in my work life.

**SCORING INSTRUCTIONS**

Make sure you have responded to ALL questions.

Next, circle the following 23 items: 1-8, 10-13, 17-26 and number 29.

Now ADD the numbers you wrote next to the items circled.

Note your **Compassion Fatigue**

26 or LESS = Extremely LOW risk

27 to 30 = LOW risk

31 to 35 = Moderate risk

36 to 40 = HIGH risk

41 or more = Extremely HIGH risk

To determine your risk of **Burnout**, ADD the numbers you wrote next to the items NOT circled . Note your risk of **Burnout**.

19 or less = Extremely LOW risk

20 to 24 = LOW risk

25 to 29 = Moderate risk

30 to 42 = HIGH risk

43 OR MORE = Extremely HIGH risk

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# Stress Checklist

Stress is a natural part of everyday life. Left unchecked, however, stress can cause physical, emotional, and behavioral disorders that can affect your health, vitality, peace-of-mind, and personal and professional relationships.

Everyone handles stress differently, some better than others. If you think you have too much stress in your life it may be helpful to talk with a doctor, clergy member, or other caring professional. They may suggest that you consult with a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, or other qualified counselor because reactions to stress can be a factor in depression, anxiety and other mental and emotional disorders.

Here is a check list of negative reactions to stress and tension:

- Do minor problems and disappointments upset you excessively?
- Do the small pleasures of life fail to satisfy you?
- Are you unable to stop worrying?
- Do you feel inadequate or suffer from self-doubt?
- Are you constantly tired?
- Do you experience flashes of anger over minor problems?
- Have you noticed a change in sleep or eating patterns?
- Do you suffer from chronic pain, headaches, or back aches?

If you answered “yes” to most of these questions, consider the following suggestions for reducing or controlling stress:

- Be realistic. If you feel overwhelmed by some activities, learn to say NO!
- Shed the “Superman/woman” urge. No one is perfect, so don’t expect perfection from yourself or others.
- Meditate for ten to twenty minutes.
- Visualize how you can manage a stressful situation more successfully.
- Take one thing at a time. Prioritize your tasks and tackle each one separately.
- Find a hobby that will give you a break from your worries.
- Live a healthy lifestyle with good nutrition, adequate rest, regular exercise, limit caffeine and alcohol, and balance work and play.
- Share your feelings with family and friends. Don’t try to cope alone.
- Give in occasionally. Be flexible.
- Go easy with criticism. You may be expecting too much.

Source: Mental Health Association of Minnesota @ (800) 862-1799