

## Workshop Overview

**Purpose:** To educate participants about compassion fatigue, its symptoms and causes, and provide strategies to begin the healing journey.

**Goals:** Provide comprehensive information on the subject  
Provide a safe environment in which to share stories  
Provide resources for continued learning

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## Six Rules of the Day

1. Everything shared is confidential.
2. No one has to speak or take part in exercises if s/he is uncomfortable.
3. The opinions of others are always respected.
4. While there is an agenda, veering off into another direction is acceptable, if it is productive.
5. Questions, comments, a difference of opinion are always welcome, at any time.

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## Mitchel



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## What is Compassion Fatigue?

Compassion Fatigue (Figley, CR, 1995) is the natural consequence of stress resulting from caring and helping traumatized people or animals. The outward signs we experience are displays of stress, possibly a secondary traumatic stress, resulting from providing care to others. Compassion Fatigue is the name that has been attached to these symptoms so that we have a way of identifying it in ourselves and in others. Once identified, we are able to take action to manage the distress this disorder is causing in our lives.

Compassion Fatigue is a set of symptoms, not a disease.

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## What are the Symptoms in the Individual?

- Bottled-up emotions
- Impulse to rescue anyone in need
- Isolation from others
- Sadness, apathy
- Often feels the need to voice excessive complaints about management/colleagues
- Lack of interest in self-care practices
- Recurring nightmares/ flashbacks
- Persistent physical ailments
- Difficulties concentrating/mentally tired
- Prone to accidents

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## What are the Causes?

- Placing the needs of others before our own needs – “other-directedness”
- Unresolved past trauma & pain
- Lack of healthy professional & personal life coping skills
- Overdeveloped Sense of Responsibility
- Giving care to others under stress or with burnout
- Lack of personal boundaries
- Inability to communicate needs

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## Healthy Caregiving vs. Unhealthy Caregiving

### What is Healthy Caregiving?

Being healthy in mind, body and spirit is having the ability to put ourselves in win-win situations. Healthy caregiving puts us in the place of reaping the benefits of our positive, life-affirming thoughts, feelings and actions. In recognizing and honoring our own internal pain, we release its power over us.

This process allows us the space to experience true compassion for others while not taking on their suffering as our own.

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## Healthy Caregiving vs. Unhealthy Caregiving

### What is Unhealthy or Chronic Caregiving?

Unhealthy caregiving puts us in lose-lose situations where everyone ends up hurting. This occurs when the caregiver hasn't reconciled his or her own pain and suffering. When this occurs, our deeply-held hurts attach to the pain and suffering of those in our care.

Unhealthy or chronic caregiving negates the compassionate, loving spirit that allows sustainable healing.

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**"Compassion Satisfaction is the pleasure we derive from being able to do our work well. Higher levels of compassion satisfaction are related to your ability to be an effective caregiver."**

*– Dr. Beth Hudnall-Stamm  
Director, Institute of Rural Health  
Idaho State University*

The best known way to lessen compassion fatigue symptoms is to raise compassion satisfaction levels.

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## Vocabulary

- **Compassion Satisfaction**
  - Positive aspects of working as a helper
- **Compassion Fatigue**
  - Negative aspects of working as a helper
- **Burnout**
  - Inefficacy and feeling overwhelmed
- **Work-related traumatic stress**
  - Primary traumatic stress direct target of event
  - Secondary traumatic exposure to event due to a relationship with the primary person

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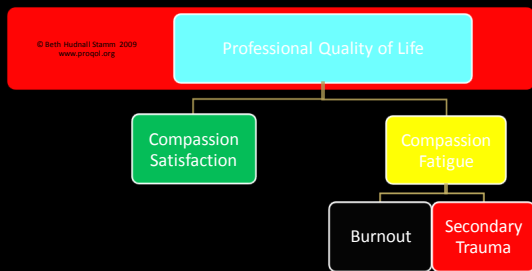
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## CS-CF Model



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## Compassion Satisfaction

- **The positive aspects of helping**
  - Pleasure and satisfaction derived from working in helping, care giving systems
- **May be related to**
  - Providing care
  - To the system
  - Work with colleagues
  - Beliefs about self
  - Altruism

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## Compassion Fatigue

- The negative aspects of helping
- The negative aspects of working in helping systems may be related to
  - Providing care
  - To the system
  - Work with colleagues
  - Beliefs about self
- Burnout
- Work-related trauma

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## Burnout and STS: Co Travelers

- Burnout
  - Work-related hopelessness and feelings of inefficacy
- STS
  - Work-related secondary exposure to extremely or traumatically stressful events
- Both share negative affect
  - Burnout is about being worn out
  - STS is about being afraid

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## Measuring CS & CF: The *Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)*

- The ProQOL is free
- A 30 item self report measure of the positive and negative aspects of caring
- The ProQOL measures Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue
- Compassion Fatigue has two subscales
  - Burnout
  - Secondary Trauma
- Easy to score, easy to use

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## WELL ESTABLISHED

- The ProQOL is the most widely used measure of the positive and negative aspects of helping in the world
- The ProQOL has proven to be a valid measure of compassion satisfaction and fatigue
- It has been used for more than 15 years
- The measure was developed with data from more than 3000 people

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## Creating your Self-Care Plan

- **Get to know YOU**
- **Write a Personal Mission Statement**
- **Write Three Measurable Goals**
- **Promote both Systematic AND Systemic Change**
- **Take the ProQOL Self-Test regularly**

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## What is a Personal Mission Statement?

A personal mission statement is a vision captured in three or four sentences that serves as a roadmap to your desired destination.

**Create your Personal Mission Statement.**

**Stop. Think. Write.**

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## The Eight Laws Governing Healthy Change

1. Take frequent breaks from what you are doing.
2. Learn the word "no." Use it whenever necessary.
3. Share the load with others.
4. There is humor in every situation. Find it and laugh.
5. Recognize when you need help. Ask for it.
6. Give yourself credit when credit is due.
7. Give others credit when credit is due.
8. Breathe deeply as often as possible.

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## Caregiver's Bill of Rights

*As a caregiver I have the right...*  
 ... to be respected for the work I choose to do.  
 ... to take pride in my work and know that I am making a difference.  
 ... to garner appreciation and validation for the care I give others.  
 ... to receive adequate pay for my job as a professional caregiver.  
 ... to discern my personal boundaries and have others respect my choices.  
 ... to seek assistance from others, if and when it is necessary.  
 ... to take time off to re-energize myself.  
 ... to socialize, maintain my interests, and sustain a balanced lifestyle.  
 ... to my own feelings, including negative emotions such as anger, sadness and frustration.  
 ... to express my thoughts and feelings to appropriate people at appropriate times.  
 ... to convey hope to those in my care.  
 ... to believe those in my care will prosper in mind, body and spirit as a result of my caregiving.

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For additional information and materials go to:

[www.compassionfatigue.org](http://www.compassionfatigue.org)

[www.healthycaregiving.com](http://www.healthycaregiving.com)

[www.proqol.org](http://www.proqol.org)

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*"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch,  
a smile, a kind word, an honest compliment or  
the smallest act of caring, all of which have the  
potential to turn a life around."*

– Leo Buscaglia

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Brandy in Walla Walla, WA



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Brandy in Bozeman, MT




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Brandy in Washington DC



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Brandy in San Diego, CA



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Brandy 1998-2010  
Final Resting Place  
Wenatchee, WA



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