

Signs of Compassion Fatigue

Written by the Benefit Experts at eni



Compassion Fatigue symptoms are normal displays of stress resulting from the care giving work you perform on a regular basis. CF is experienced by health care providers, clergy, teachers, disaster relief workers and those who provide continuous care for a loved one. While the symptoms are often disruptive, depressive, and irritating, an awareness of the symptoms and their negative effect on your life can lead to positive change, personal transformation, and a new resiliency. Reaching a point where you have control over your own life choices will take time and hard work. There is no magic involved. There is only a commitment to make your life the best it can be. If you have any of the signs listed here you are in danger of Burnout which is the most extreme form of compassion fatigue.

Physical

- Sweating
- Rapid heartbeat
- Difficulty breathing
- Dizziness
- Increased physical maladies
- Impaired immune system
- Other somatic complaints

Work Performance

- Low morale
- Low motivation
- Avoiding tasks
- Obsession about details
- Apathy
- Lack of feeling appreciated
- Detachment from work/patients
- Worker conflicts
- Withdraw from colleagues
- Thoughts of leaving the profession

Cognitive

- Lower Concentration
- Decreased Self Esteem
- Apathy
- Rigidity
- Disorientation
- Preoccupation with cases
- Thoughts of self harm

Emotional

- Powerlessness
- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Anger/rage
- Survivor guilt
- Shutdown
- Negativity
- Fear
- Depressed
- Depleted
- Emotion roller coaster

Behavioral

- Impatient
- Irritable
- Withdrawn

Relational

- Withdrawn
- Decrease desire for intimacy
- Mistrust
- Isolation from others
- Over protective as a parent
- Anger/blame projection
- Intolerance
- Feeling of loneliness
- Increased interpersonal conflict

Spiritual

- Questioning meaning of life
- Loss of purpose
- Anger at God
- Questioning prior religious beliefs
- Loss of faith in higher power

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