

Understanding Compassion Fatigue

Compassion fatigue is emotional and physical exhaustion from caring for others or witnessing their pain. It can reduce empathy, cause burnout-like symptoms, lower job satisfaction, strain relationships, and diminish care quality. Common among healthcare workers, counselors, and caregivers, it can affect anyone in a supportive role.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

To gauge your levels of compassion fatigue, try this quick checklist. Answer "yes" or "no" to each statement:

- I often feel emotionally drained after helping others.
- I struggle to find joy or satisfaction in my caregiving role.
- I experience physical symptoms, like headaches or fatigue, without a clear cause.
- I feel detached or distant from the people I'm supporting.
- I frequently feel overwhelmed by others' pain or problems.

If you answered **"yes"** to **two or more** statements, you may be experiencing compassion fatigue.

QUICK TECHNIQUES FOR SELF-CARE & BOUNDARIES

1. Breathing Exercise: When you feel overwhelmed, take a few minutes to focus on deep breathing.
2. Setting Boundaries: It's essential to protect your emotional energy.
3. Build resilience through self-compassion: "Self-care is an act of service to you and others."
4. Create a Long-Term Action Plan Begin by identifying your triggers and thinking through practical solutions for each. Set achievable, short-term goals, such as taking a 5-minute mindfulness break after emotionally challenging encounters. For added support, consider partnering with an accountability buddy or seeking professional guidance to help you stay committed to your self-care journey.

