

# Compassion Satisfaction/Fatigue Self-Test for Helpers

Adapted with permission from Figley, C.R., (1995). Compassion Fatigue, New York: Brunner/Mazel.  
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Helping others puts you in direct contact with other people's lives. As you probably have experienced, your compassion for those you help has both positive and negative aspects. This self -test helps you estimate your compassion status: This includes your risk of burnout, compassion fatigue and satisfaction with helping others. Consider each of the following characteristics about you and your current situation. Print a copy of this test so that you can fill out the numbers and keep them for your use. Using a pen or pencil, write in the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these characteristics **in the last work week**. Then follow the scoring directions at the end of the self-test.

0 Never	1 Rarely	2 A Few Times	3 Somewhat Often	4 Often	5 Very Often
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## Items About You

- \_\_\_ 1. I am happy.
- \_\_\_ 2. I find my life satisfying.
- \_\_\_ 3. I have beliefs that sustain me.
- \_\_\_ 4. I feel estranged from others.
- \_\_\_ 5. I find that I learn new things from those I care for.
- \_\_\_ 6. I force myself to avoid certain thoughts or feelings that remind me of a frightening experience.
- \_\_\_ 7. I find myself avoiding certain activities or situations because they remind me of a frightening experience.
- \_\_\_ 8. I have gaps in my memory about frightening events.
- \_\_\_ 9. I feel connected to others.
- \_\_\_ 10. I feel calm.
- \_\_\_ 11. I believe that I have a good balance between my work and my free time.
- \_\_\_ 12. I have difficulty falling or staying asleep.
- \_\_\_ 13. I have outburst of anger or irritability with little provocation
- \_\_\_ 14. I am the person I always wanted to be.
- \_\_\_ 15. I startle easily.
- \_\_\_ 16. While working with a victim, I thought about violence against the perpetrator.
- \_\_\_ 17. I am a sensitive person.
- \_\_\_ 18. I have flashbacks connected to those I help.
- \_\_\_ 19. I have good peer support when I need to work through a highly stressful experience.
- \_\_\_ 20. I have had first-hand experience with traumatic events in my adult life.
- \_\_\_ 21. I have had first-hand experience with traumatic events in my childhood.
- \_\_\_ 22. I think that I need to "work through" a traumatic experience in my life.
- \_\_\_ 23. I think that I need more close friends.
- \_\_\_ 24. I think that there is no one to talk with about highly stressful experiences.
- \_\_\_ 25. I have concluded that I work too hard for my own good.
- \_\_\_ 26. Working with those I help brings me a great deal of satisfaction.
- \_\_\_ 27. I feel invigorated after working with those I help.

## Compassion Satisfaction/Fatigue Self-Test for Helpers - CONTINUED

0 Never	1 Rarely	2 A Few Times	3 Somewhat Often	4 Often	5 Very Often
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- \_\_\_ 28. I am frightened of things a person I helped has said or done to me.
- \_\_\_ 29. I experience troubling dreams similar to those I help.
- \_\_\_ 30. I have happy thoughts about those I help and how I could help them.
- \_\_\_ 31. I experienced intrusive thoughts of times with especially difficult people I helped.
- \_\_\_ 32. I have suddenly and involuntarily recalled a frightening experience while working with a person I helped.
- \_\_\_ 33. I am preoccupied with more than one person I help.
- \_\_\_ 34. I am losing sleep over a person I help's traumatic experiences.
- \_\_\_ 35. I have joyful feelings about how I can help the victims I work with.
- \_\_\_ 36. I think that I might have been "infected" by the traumatic stress of those I help.
- \_\_\_ 37. I think that I might be positively "inoculated" by the traumatic stress of those I help.
- \_\_\_ 38. I remind myself to be less concerned about the well being of those I help.
- \_\_\_ 39. I have felt trapped by my work as a helper.
- \_\_\_ 40. I have a sense of hopelessness associated with working with those I help.
- \_\_\_ 41. I have felt "on edge" about various things and I attribute this to working with certain people I help.
- \_\_\_ 42. I wish that I could avoid working with some people I help.
- \_\_\_ 43. Some people I help are particularly enjoyable to work with.
- \_\_\_ 44. I have been in danger working with people I help.
- \_\_\_ 45. I feel that some people I help dislike me personally.

### **Items About Being a Helper and Your Helping Environment**

- \_\_\_ 46. I like my work as a helper.
- \_\_\_ 47. I feel like I have the tools and resources that I need to do my work as a helper.
- \_\_\_ 48. I have felt weak, tired, run down as a result of my work as helper.
- \_\_\_ 49. I have felt depressed as a result of my work as a helper.
- \_\_\_ 50. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a helper.
- \_\_\_ 51. I am unsuccessful at separating helping from personal life.
- \_\_\_ 52. I enjoy my co-workers.
- \_\_\_ 53. I depend on my co-workers to help me when I need it.
- \_\_\_ 54. My co-workers can depend on me for help when they need it.
- \_\_\_ 55. I trust my co-workers.
- \_\_\_ 56. I feel little compassion toward most of my co-workers
- \_\_\_ 57. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with helping technology.
- \_\_\_ 58. I feel I am working more for the money/prestige than for personal fulfillment.
- \_\_\_ 59. Although I have to do paperwork that I don't like, I still have time to work with those help.
- \_\_\_ 60. I find it difficult separating my personal life from my helper life.
- \_\_\_ 61. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with helping techniques and protocols.
- \_\_\_ 62. I have a sense of worthlessness/disillusionment/resentment associated with my role as a helper.
- \_\_\_ 63. I have thoughts that I am a "failure" as a helper.
- \_\_\_ 64. I have thoughts that I am not succeeding at achieving my life goals.
- \_\_\_ 65. I have to deal with bureaucratic, unimportant tasks in my work as a helper.
- \_\_\_ 66. I plan to be a helper for a long time.

## Index of Clinical Stress (Abel, 1991)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This questionnaire is designed to measure the way you feel about the amount of personal stress that you experience. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and as accurately as you can by placing a number beside each one as follows:

- 1=None of the time
  - 2=Very little
  - 3=A little of the time
  - 4=Some of the time
  - 5=A good part of the time
  - 6=Most of the time
  - 7=All of the time
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1. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel extremely tense.
  2. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel very jittery.
  3. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel like I want to scream.
  4. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel overwhelmed.
  5. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel very relaxed.
  6. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel so anxious I want to cry.
  7. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel so stressed that I would like to hit something.
  8. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel very calm and peaceful.
  9. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel like I am stretched to the breaking point.
  10. \_\_\_\_\_ It is very hard for me to relax.
  11. \_\_\_\_\_ It is very easy for me to fall asleep at night.
  12. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel an enormous sense of pressure on me.
  13. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel like my life is going very smoothly.
  14. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel very panicked.
  15. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel like I am on the verge of total collapse.
  16. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel like I am losing control of my life.
  17. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel that I am near the breaking point.
  18. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel wound up like a coiled spring.
  19. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel that I can't keep up with the demands on me.
  20. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel very much behind in my work.
  21. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel tense and angry with those around me.
  22. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel I must race from one task to the next.
  23. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel that I just can't keep up with everything.
  24. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel as tight as a drum.
  25. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel very much on edge.
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Score: \_\_\_\_\_

## COMPASSION FATIGUE ASSESSMENT PROFILE

### 1. Compassion Satisfaction/Fatigue Self Test (Stamm & Figley, 1998, 1995)

#### Measures

- ◆ Compassion Satisfaction
- ◆ Compassion Fatigue
- ◆ Burnout

#### Scoring

- ◆ Circle the following 23 items: 4, 6-8, 12-13, 15-16, 18, 20-22, 28-29, 31-34, 36, 38-40, 44.
- ◆ Put a check by the following 16 items: 17, 23-25, 41-42, 45, 48, 49, 51, 56, 58, 60, 62-65.
- ◆ Put an "X" by the following 26 items: 1-3, 5, 9-11, 14, 19, 26-27, 30, 35, 37, 43, 46-47, 50, 52-55, 57, 59, 61, 66.
- ◆ (Add the numbers you wrote next to the items for each set of items and note: )
- ◆ Add all circled numbers for your *Compassion Fatigue risk factor*: TOTAL = \_\_\_\_\_  
26 or less=extremely low risk; 27-30=low risk; 31-35=moderate risk; 36-40=high risk; 41 or more=extremely high risk.
- ◆ Add all numbers with checks beside them for your *Burnout risk*: TOTAL = \_\_\_\_\_  
36 or less=extremely low risk; 37-50=moderate risk; 51-75=high risk; 76-85=extremely high risk.
- ◆ Total numbers marked "X" for *Compassion Satisfaction factor*: TOTAL= \_\_\_\_\_  
118 and above=extremely high potential; 100-117=high potential; 82-99=good potential; 64-81=modest potential; below 63-0=low potential.

#### **FURTHER INTERPRETATION (Figley, In Press)**

Distinguish between changing jobs & changing ways: Look at your 3 sub-scores and the various combinations:

Score	Burnout Level	ComFat* Level	ComSat** Level
High	High Burnout	High CF	High Satisfaction
Medium	Mod Burnout	Mod CF	Mod Satisfaction
Low	Low Burnout	Low CF	Low Satisfaction

**Change Careers:** High Burnout, High CF, Low Satisfaction  
**Change Jobs:** High Burnout, Low CF, High Satisfaction  
**Stay & Manage Stress:** Low Burnout, High CF, Mod Satisfaction  
**Change Client:** Low Burnout, Low CF, Low Satisfaction

\*ComFat: Compassion Fatigue Level

\*\* ComSat: Compassion Satisfaction Level

## Index of Clinical Stress (Abel, 1991)

### Measures

Subjective individual stress

### Scoring

- ◆ Reverse scores for Items 5, 8, 11, 13
- ◆ Add Reversed Item scores then add Remaining Item scores to get the Total Score

$$\frac{\text{Reversed Items}}{\text{Reversed Items}} + \frac{\text{Remaining Items}}{\text{Remaining Items}} = \frac{\text{Total Score}}{\text{Total Score}}$$

- ◆ Subtract total # completed items (25 on scale) from Total Score to get Item Score

$$\frac{\text{Total Score}}{\text{Total Score}} - \frac{\text{\#items complete}}{\text{\#items complete}} = \frac{\text{Item Score}}{\text{Item Score}}$$

- ◆ Multiply Item Score by 100 to get Adjusted Score

$$\frac{\text{Item Score}}{\text{Item Score}} \times \frac{100}{100} = \frac{\text{Adjusted Score}}{\text{Adjusted Score}}$$

- ◆ Multiply # of completed items (25 on scale) by 6 to get Divisor

$$\frac{\text{\#items complete}}{\text{\#items complete}} \times \frac{6}{6} = \frac{\text{Divisor}}{\text{Divisor}}$$

- ◆ The Adjusted Total is divided by the Divisor to get the Total ICS Score

$$\frac{\text{Adjusted Total}}{\text{Adjusted Total}} / \frac{\text{Divisor}}{\text{Divisor}} = \frac{\text{Total ICS Score}}{\text{Total ICS Score}}$$

- ◆ Total ICS Score should range between 0-100  
Scores > 30 = significant stress