



# COMPASSION FATIGUE EXHAUSTED NOT BROKEN – RESOURCES AND SELF CARE

Compassion fatigue has been described as “the cost of caring” for others in emotional pain. The helping field has gradually begun to recognize that workers are profoundly affected by the work they do, whether it is by direct exposure to traumatic events, secondary exposure, working with clients who are chronically in despair, witnessing people’s inability to improve their very difficult life circumstances, or feeling helpless in the face of poverty and emotional anguish.

Compassion fatigue is characterized by deep physical and emotional exhaustion and a pronounced change in the helper’s ability to feel empathy for their patients/clients, loved ones and their co-workers. It is marked by increased cynicism at work, a loss of enjoyment of our career, and eventually can turn into de-pression, secondary traumatic stress and stress-related illness.



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