

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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<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~bhstamm/index.htm>.

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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, which 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.
- _____ 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 have 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 pre-occupied 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 I 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.

Scoring Instructions

Please note that research is ongoing on this scale and the following scores should be used as a guide, not confirmatory information. Cut points are theoretically derived and should be used with caution and only for educational purposes.

1. Be certain you respond to all items.
2. Mark the items for scoring:
 - a. Circle the following 23 items: 4, 6-8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20-22, 28, 29, 31-34, 36, 38-40, 44.
 - b. Put a check by the following 16 items: 17, 23-25, 41, 42, 45, 48, 49, 51, 56, 58, 60, 62-65.
 - c. 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.
3. Add the numbers you wrote next to the items for each set of items and note:
 - a. Your potential for Compassion Satisfaction (x): 118 and above=extremely high potential; 100-117=high potential; 82-99=good potential; 64-81=modest potential; below 63=low potential.
Your score _____
 - b. Your risk for Burnout (check): 36 or less=extremely low risk; 37-50=moderate risk; 51-75=high risk; 76-85=extremely high risk. **Your score:** _____
 - c. Your risk for Compassion Fatigue (circle): 26 or less=extremely low risk, 27-30=low risk; 31-35=moderate risk; 36-40=high risk; 41 or more=extremely high risk. **Your score:** _____