



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Mental health for all

Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale
La santé mentale pour tous

Compassion Fatigue

Presented by:

Lucette Wesley

Canadian Mental Health Association

About CMHA

- One of Canada's most established charities, now 100
- Our policies and programs anchored in evidence and informed by people's personal experience.
- We work towards mental health for all, including people with addictions.
- Over 120 locations throughout Canada; 14 in BC



Content

- What is compassion fatigue
- ABCs
- Workplace strategies for yourselves and each other
- Resources



Compassion Fatigue

C.Figley, 1995-

“We feel the feelings of our clients.

We experience their fears, We dream their dreams.

Eventually, we lose a certain spark of optimism,
humor and hope.

We tire. We aren't sick, but we aren't ourselves.”



Compassion Fatigue

The negative aspects of helping

- The negative aspects of working in helping systems.
- May be related to:
 - Providing care
 - To the system
 - Work with colleagues
 - Beliefs about self
- Burnout
- Work-related trauma

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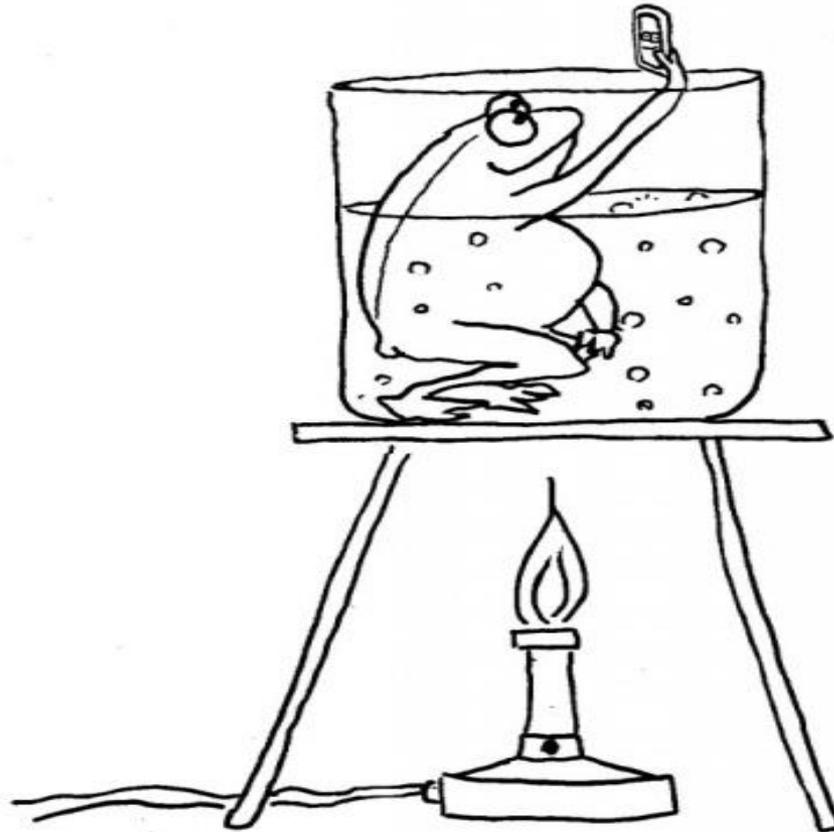
Physical and mental exhaustion and emotional withdrawal

Emotional exhaustion and a profound decrease in the ability to empathize - “becoming jaded”

Stress that occurs as a result of trying to help others in need-often referred to as the “cost of caring”

Emotional Blunting





@ CARTOON RALPH



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Compassion fatigue is not a failing;

**it just means we are out of balance and we
need to realign ourselves.**

<https://www.debbiecharles.com/compassion-fatigue-signs-symptoms-solutions/>



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ABC's of Prevention

Awareness

- Recognizing the signs

Balance

- Self Care
- Positive Coping Strategies
- Emotional Boundaries

Connections

- De-brief
- Positive support System



Awareness

Awareness - Recognize the Signs



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Awareness - Recognize the Signs

- Chronic mental and physical exhaustion
- Reduced feelings of empathy
- Diminished enjoyment of career
- Poor work life balance
- Reduced concentration
- Impaired decision-making
- Withdrawal and isolation
- Loss of purpose
- Impaired immune system
- Feelings of irritability, anger or anxiety
- Depersonalization



Balance

Balance / Self Care

- Practice healthy nutrition
- Breathe
- Practice work-life balance
- Seek and give support (co-workers, family, community)
- Take a break
- Relax
- Walk
- Debrief difficult situations
- Treat yourself
- Mindfulness/meditation
- Mental fitness



Mindfulness

Jon Kabat-Zinn defines it as:

Awareness and paying attention in the present moment non judgementally



Balance - More

- Honor your emotional needs/self compassion
- Set emotional boundaries
- Positive coping strategies
- Seek personal therapy



Balance - Coping Strategies

- NOT substances
- What are yours?



Connections

Connections

- Talk out your stress
- Build a positive support system



Workplace Strategies Awareness

Awareness in the Workplace

**When you recognize signs in a colleague
how do you have that
challenging conversation ?**



How to have challenging conversations

1. Talk to yourself
2. I notice
3. I'm wondering
4. How can I help?
5. Take a moment



Workplace Strategies Balance

Balance- Positivity

Positive traits and experiences that help us to thrive

- Micro moments
- Upward spiral
- Gratitude
- Kindness
- Awe
- Optimism



Balance in the Workplace

20,000 moments in a day



More- Ratio of 5 to 1

Increase awareness of negative comments and work to a ratio of 5 to 1

- Prevent Bucket Dipping
- Shine a light on what is right
- Make Friends
- Give unexpectedly
- Reverse the Golden Rule



Balance - Nourishing Activities

Balance nourishing and depleting
Activities:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Mental
- Spiritual



Physical	Emotional	Mental	Spiritual
To regularly renew and recharge	To feel valued and appreciated for our contributions	The opportunity to focus in an absorbed way on our most important tasks and define when and where we get our work done	To do more of what we do best and enjoy most



Workplace Strategies Connections

C- Connections in the Workplace

- De-briefing
- Peer Support
- Shared resiliency building



Workplaces and compassion fatigue

Leaders who Walk the Talk

- Workloads
- Reduction in exposure
- Experiencing success
- Better social support
- How service is delivered

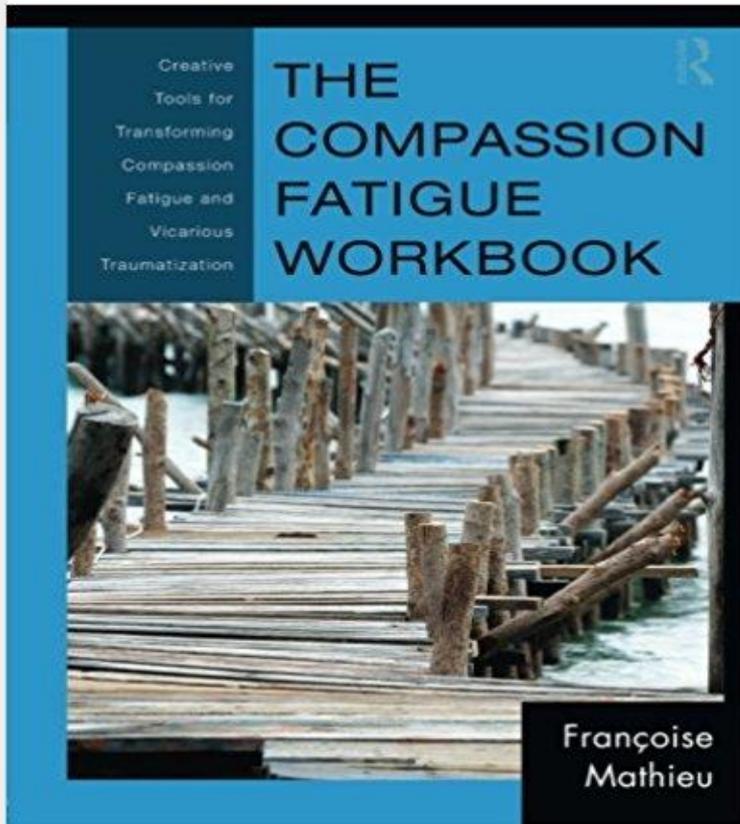


Resources

Compassion Fatigue Resources

<http://www.tendacademy.ca/books/>

The Compassion Fatigue Workbook



**Creative Tools for Transforming
Compassion Fatigue
& Vicarious Traumatization**



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Getting help for yourself

- Family doctor best first point of contact
- Employee & Family Assistance Program
- Benefits plan may offer psychological services
- Supervisor, Manager, HR or Union
- Crisis Line: **310-6789**
- Canadian Mental Health Association



Workplace Health Resources

- Bottom Line Conference
www.bottomlineconference.ca
- Canadian Mental Health Association
www.cmha.bc.ca
www.cmha.ca
- Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health
www.gwlcentreformentalhealth.com
- Guarding Minds @ Work
www.guardingmindsatwork.ca
- HeretoHelp
www.heretohelp.bc.ca



ON THIS PAGE

- [Understand the issue](#)
- [Consider workplace factors](#)
- [Recognize signs and symptoms](#)
- [Management prevention strategies](#)
- [Support recovery at work](#)
- [Recovering from burnout](#)

Burnout Response

SUMMARY: Understanding the issue, recognizing workplace factors, being aware of signs and symptoms and taking pro-active steps for prevention can help reduce the impact of burnout on employees and workplaces.

Understand the issue

Burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism and ineffectiveness in the workplace, and by chronic negative responses to stressful workplace conditions.

While not considered a mental illness, burnout can be considered a mental health issue. According to the Journal of Applied Biobehavioral Research (cited below), it is having a growing impact on workplaces, in particular in advanced economies and during times of economic downturn.

CMHA resources

CMHA offers a number of resources for coworkers, friends, family members or yourself.

**LIVING LIFE
TO THE FULL**
helping you to help yourself

 **BounceBack**
reclaim your health

Confident Parents
Thriving Kids





**Stressed? Down?
Screening can help**

beyond the blues
education & screening days

Check in on your mood,
anxiety and well-being

Learn More

What would you like to explore?

- I want to complete a screening self-test.
 - I want to learn more about mental health.
 - I want to learn more about anxiety problems.
 - I want to learn more about depression.
- I want to read an information sheet.
 - I want to learn more about alcohol use or other drugs.
 - I want to learn more about schizophrenia or psychosis.
 - I want to learn more about eating disorders.

Family members

When your family member or loved one experiences a mental health or substance use problem, it's important to take an active role. [more](#)

Professionals

Learn how to use this site if you're a professional supporting a client or family member. [more](#)

School & campus staff go [here](#)

Individuals

If you're worried about yourself, you may not know what to do next. Here, you'll take charge of your mental health and support your journey to wellness. [more](#)

✓ **Read the Wellness Modules:**

- Mental Health Matters
- Stress and Well-Being
- Social Support
- Problem-Solving
- Anger Management
- Getting a Good Night's Sleep
- Eating and Living Well
- Healthy Thinking
- Finding Balance
- Staying Mentally Healthy with Technology
- Mindfulness

CMHA and BCMISA working together

CMHA and BCMISA are offering three courses:

- Awareness of Mental Health at Work
- Responding with Respect On the Front Line
- Safe and Sound: Creating a Psychologically Healthy and Safe Workplace



CMHA in your Community

- Vancouver-Fraser
- Victoria
- Cariboo Chilcotin
- Cowichan Valley
- Kamloops Kelowna
- Kootenays
- Mid-Island
- North & West Vancouver
- Port Alberni
- Prince George
- Shuswap/Revelstoke
- South Cariboo
- South Okanagan
Similkameen
- Vernon & District



Additional training

Workshops are available through CMHA:

- Leadership training on mental health and accommodations – including for union leaders
- Mental Health First Aid
- Suicide awareness and intervention – SafeTalk and ASIST
- Certified Psychological Health and Safety Advisor training
- Webinars



#b4stage4

GET LOUD. TAKE ACTION.

Sign the manifesto at
b4stage4.ca



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Questions? Comments?

Please complete the evaluation questionnaire.

THANK YOU!

Keep in touch!

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