

Compassion Fatigue (continued)

Strategies for Preventing Compassion Fatigue

- maintaining a balanced lifestyle that includes boundaries and limit setting
- getting support and help when you need it
- having plans in place for coping with tough issues and incidents
- getting adequate professional training
- taking stock of your own healing and letting yourself experience the necessary spectrum of emotions
- replenishing yourself
- nurturing social relationships outside of work
- getting involved in a positive initiative
- maintaining proper sleep, nutrition, and fitness habits
- connecting with nature
- expressing yourself creatively
- meditating or engaging in spiritual practice
- being honest with yourself about your strengths and limitations
- maintaining a sense of humor—even during difficult and stressful times
- working in a positive, supportive, and team-oriented environment

Reflection Section

You have lots of students and a campus community to think about and care for. However, it is important not to forget about taking care of yourself! What have you done to treat YOURSELF lately?

Do you discuss your own personal well-being with your supervisor or advisor? Do you ask for help when you need it, or are you afraid that she expects you to be “the perfect student leader” at all times?

What outlets do you have? Who provides support?

What Can I Do if I Am Experiencing CF?

- cut out negative addictions or numbing agents such as alcohol, other drugs, caffeine, and nicotine
- get enough sleep
- tune into your body’s nutritional and exercise needs
- develop a segment of your life where you take rather than give
- put yourself in situations where you’re able to see the positives life offers
- take some time off, or in more serious situations, switch jobs if necessary

What can you be doing better in your life to prevent experiencing compassion fatigue?

How are you going to go about making these changes?

CF Self-Tests

In order to see if you may be experiencing CF, check out the following self-tests available on the web. Please keep in mind, however, that these instruments should in no way replace the advice of medical and counseling professionals who can best help.

- The CF Self-Test from ACE at www.ace-network.com/cftest.htm is an instrument under development from the Florida State University Psychosocial Stress Research Program
- The Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue (CSF) Test at www.isu.edu/~bhstamm/tests/satfat.htm may be freely copied based on conditions listed at the site.