

WAYS TO AVOID COMPASSION FATIGUE

I CAN:

1. Have a manageable patient load, know and set boundaries and limits.
2. Use as many “others” as possible in my work with patients, work as a team.
3. Take a “Mental Health Day” when needed.
4. Laugh, joke, have time to unwind.
5. Have a holistic approach to taking care of myself – mind, body, feelings, spirituality. Let go, do not allow stress or take on others’ stress, reduce anxiety, recognize choices.
6. Have an understanding supervisor.
7. Have supervision with supervisor and peers.
8. Get and give feedback with supervisor and peers.
9. Read materials and go to workshops and training seminars related to compassion fatigue.
10. Be assertive with feelings and concerns.
11. Let people know my limits.
12. Process, talk things out. Talk to a health care professional if needed.
13. Have a safe work environment.
14. Stay organized.

(Adapted by Lisa D. Butler, PhD from materials provided by the Social Work Department of Roswell Park Cancer Institute. <http://roswellpark.org>.)

Tips for Vitality and Serenity

Be Realistic – Accept your basic personality, utilize your strengths and accept your weaknesses.

Appreciate What You Have – rather than focusing on what you don't have.

Say "No"! – You're no good to anyone if you are exhausted, resentful, and over-stretched.

Say "Yes"! – List to what you want, and go for it. You'll experience more joy and pleasure in life.

Move Your Body – Stretch, strengthen, and get your heart pumping. You'll look and feel better.

Sleep – You know how much rest you need; aim to get it.

Choose Food Wisely – Include plenty of whole grains, vegetables, and fruit, eat some protein, and avoid excess sugar, fat, and salt. Stop eating when slightly full.

Enjoy Simple, Everyday Pleasures – It will brighten each day.

Reduce Guilt – Be clear on what you can and cannot control, and move on.

Live in the Present – rather than dwelling on the past or worrying about the future.

Feel Your Feelings – and express them in healthy ways.

Laugh More – It's one of the best ways to reduce tension.

Keep Hopeful – A positive attitude helps to create positive outcomes.

Try New Things – Take a risk, keep an open mind, invite spontaneity...it keeps life fresh.

Recognize When You Need Help – and ask for it.

Take Quiet Time – It's important to reflect and contemplate.

Remember to Relax – and breathe deeply.

Communicate Openly and Honestly – to avoid conflict and confusion.

Embrace Creative Expression – Dance, music, art, and writing are powerful and magical resources.

Connect With Your "Spiritual Self" – however you define it.

Listen to Your Intuition – It has very good advice.

Follow Your Dreams – and keep dreaming ... it creates happy people.

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Self Care

This article is about the maintenance of one's personal health. For a person's assessment of his/her own value and dignity, see Self-esteem.

Self care

Intervention

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Self care is personal health maintenance. It is any activity of an individual, family or community, with the intention of improving or restoring health, or treating or preventing disease.

Self care includes all health decisions people (as individuals or consumers) make for themselves and their families to get and stay physically and mentally fit. Self care is exercising to maintain physical fitness and good mental health. It is also eating well, practicing good hygiene and avoiding health hazards such as smoking and drinking to prevent ill health. Self care is also taking care of minor ailments, long term conditions, or one's own health after discharge from secondary and tertiary health care.

Individuals do self care, and experts and professionals support self care to enable individuals to do enhanced self care.

Self care support has crucial enabling value and considerable scope in developing countries with an already overburdened health care system. But it also has an essential role to play in affluent countries where people are becoming more conscious about their health and want to have a greater role in taking care of themselves.

To enable people to do enhanced self care, they can be supported in various ways and by different service providers.

Self care support

Self care support can include the following:

- Self care information on health and human body systems, lifestyle, physical activity, or healthy eating

- Support to capture, manage, interpret, and report Observations of Daily Living (ODLs),^[1] the tracking of trends, and the use of the resulting information as clues for self care action and decision making.

- Information prescriptions^[2] providing personalised information and instructions to enable an individual to self care and take control of their health

- Self care and self monitoring devices and assistive technology^[3]

- Self care skills and life skills training programmes and courses for people

- Aid from spiritual care givers

Advice from licensed counselors, clinical social workers, psychotherapists, pharmacists, physiotherapists and complementary therapists

Self care support networks which can be face to face or virtual, and made up of peers or people who want to provide support to others or receive support and information from others. (Including a self care Primer for provider/consumer convergence.)

Self care approaches

Self care topics include:

- General fitness training

- Health

- Personal hygiene

- Life extension

- Life skills

- Nutrition

- Physical exercise

- Sleep

- Stress management

Developing Your Emergency Self-Care Plan



Why do I need one?

It is very hard to think of what to do for yourself when things get tough. It is best to **have a plan ready** for when you need it.

What should be in it?

You need to address **3 areas**: what to do, what to think, and what to avoid.

What to do:

1. **Make a list of what you can do when you are upset that will be good for you.**

1. What will help me relax? For example,
 1. Breathing
 2. Muscle relaxation
 3. Music
 4. Reading for fun
 5. Exercise
 6. Talking a walk
 7. Watching a movie
2. What do I like to do when I'm in a good mood?
 1. List all the things you like to do so you remember what they are when you need to think of something to do.
3. What can I do that will help me throughout the day?
 1. Avoid too much caffeine if feeling anxious
 2. Remember to breathe
 3. Watch my thoughts
 4. Stay in the moment
4. Other: What else do YOU need to do that is specific to YOU?

2. Make a list of people you can contact if you need support or distraction.

1. Best friend, other friends, sibling, parent, grandparent, other relative, therapist, priest/minister/rabbi/imam, etc.
2. Divide the list of people into categories by asking yourself the following questions:
 1. Who can I call if I am feeling depressed or anxious?
 2. Who can I call if I am lonely?
 3. Who will come over to be with me if I need company?
 4. Who will listen?
 5. Who will encourage me to get out of the house and do something fun?
 6. Who will remind me to follow my self-care plan?
 7. Other:

3. Next, make a list of positive things to say to yourself when you are giving yourself a hard time.

1. Example of negative self-talk: "I got a B- on the paper; that proves that I shouldn't be in graduate school." CHANGE to: "That is a good grade. I will work on getting a better one."
2. "I do not understand research methods, I am so dumb." CHANGE to: "A lot of students are having a problem with this course. Maybe we should start a study group to help each other."
3. "I can't get all this work done. I should just drop out." CHANGE to: "I will develop a schedule so that I can get this all done." "I can check with other students for ideas." "I can get some feedback from the professors that might help me do the assignments."
4. You get it. Try to think about what you would say to a client with the same struggles and apply it to yourself.

4. Next, make a list of who and what to avoid when you are having a hard time.

Examples of people to avoid:

1. My boy(girl)friend broke up with me. I will not call my sister as she always hated him. She'll be happy he's gone.
2. I didn't get my assignment in on time and I'm worried about my grade. I will not call my dad. He is a stickler for doing things in advance so that they are never late. He'll just give me a hard time.
3. I am discouraged about my grades. I won't call my best friend because she'll just tell me not to worry about it and to quit school if it's such a hassle.

- 4.
5. You get this too. Not everyone can be supportive or helpful with every situation. Go to the ones who can be supportive about the specific issue you are dealing with.

Examples of things to avoid:

1. I should not stay in the house all day.
 2. I should not stay in bed all day.
 3. I should open the shades and let the light in.
 4. I should not listen to sad music.
 5. I should not drink too much alcohol.
 6. Other:
 7. Again, you get it.
5. **Write this plan on a 3x5 card. Keep it in your purse/wallet (and on your phone if you can). Look at it often. Add any good ideas to it whenever you can. USE IT!**

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