

Compassion Fatigue: Connection to Trauma, Stages, and Assessments

Section 3

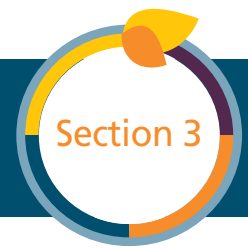
Staff Support



Circle Agenda

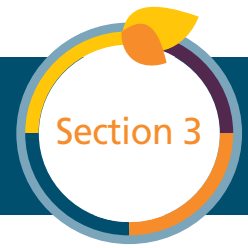
Circle Topic	CR Session 3: Compassion Fatigue
<p>Planning</p>	<p>Send the introduction document from Section 3 in the online toolkit at least 4 days prior to the circle to all participants. Highlight that there is a link to the Professional Quality of Life Questionnaire. The results are private. This session will help participants to better understand their results. Be sure to let participants know who is available to them if they would like to discuss their results.</p> <p>Hold a meeting with leadership to prepare for this section and invite the leader(s) to consider the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflect on both your experience of fatigue throughout your career and the impact that your team, your supervisors, and the system you worked within had on your experience of the cycle of fatigue. Be prepared to share your insights with the facilitation team and if invited, with the group. 2. What might you and your leadership team do today that would alleviate some of the burden of initial unrealistic self-expectations that new employees have in the Zealot Stage, or recent experiences of imperfections of clients/team/organization/surrounding systems for those in the Irritability Stage, or the overwhelm employees are experiencing from the complexity of the work for those in the Withdrawal Stage? Example: gather new employees to discuss what is needed to run the marathon of this work (celebrate initial success of “sprint behavior” and invite them to let go of some unrealistic self-expectations). You will get more ideas from the session 4 activity. <p>For the full leadership preparation document, please visit this page.</p>
<p>Purpose of Circle/ Learning Objectives</p>	<p>Introduce the cycle of compassion fatigue and use it for reflection on our patterns of fatigue and our resources for avoiding being stuck in the cycle.</p>

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<p>Materials/ Preparation/Time</p>	<p>Time: 45-50 minutes</p> <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Circle kit <input type="checkbox"/> Shared agreements <input type="checkbox"/> Quote and mindfulness statements on flipchart paper <input type="checkbox"/> Cards with "Just like Me" prompts <input type="checkbox"/> A few copies of the Compassionate Action Steps visual to place in the center of the circle <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of the following for all participants: Compassion Fatigue Cycle <p>Set-up: Up to 15 chairs arranged in a circle without furniture in the middle.</p> <p>To consider: Understanding Your Social Location as a Facilitator – Active Bystander Intervention: Training and Facilitation Guide.</p>
<p>Welcome/Check-In (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Welcome group.</p> <p>Share: Today, the content we will share about the cycle of compassion fatigue will offer some insights into why offering compassion can be tough.</p> <p>Remind the group of the key circle components: go-around, pass or speak, open mic, centerpiece, and agreements</p> <p><i>"You have dealt with so much, and done the best that you can, take a moment now to appreciate how strong you are." – Karen Salmansohn</i></p>
<p>Grounding/Wellness Practice (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Often our compassion resilience relies on our ability to step back from negative encounters. Try this 5-step mindfulness exercise when you are with someone you serve, colleague, or family member and feelings of compassion seem out of reach. Do it discreetly. We will practice by asking you to bring to mind someone who is a little difficult for you to be with at times. Eventually, you can use this to bring yourself out of a place of judgment in a tough interaction with another person. With your attention geared towards the other person, tell yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just like me, this person is seeking happiness in their life. • Just like me, this person is trying to avoid suffering in their life. • Just like me, this person has known sadness, loneliness, and despair. • Just like me, this person is seeking to fill their needs. • Just like me, this person is learning about life. <p>If you would like to consider a different grounding practice, please review the mindfulness appendix for additional suggestions.</p> <p>Review: (Go- around) Share one compass area and something you did to be resilient in that area since our last circle.</p>

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<p>Guiding Questions (25 minutes)</p>	<p>Review the full activity write-up for a more complete description of the cycle. Handout the Compassion Fatigue Stages and review how an individual is impacted by their expectations, work environment, and the systems that influence it. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zealot = early career, desire to change the world • Irritable = realizing the imperfections of the people and systems needed to reach positive outcomes for those they serve • Withdrawn = escaping from the needs and expectations of the work environment • Zombie = isolating from all others in order to survive the realities of the workplace and job requirements <p>Divide the group into four smaller groups – one per stage of the cycle: Zealot, Irritable, Withdrawn, Zombie</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (In your group) Discuss: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What feelings and experiences might contribute to a person “hanging out” in this stage – even to becoming one’s norm? b. How would that lead to one’s inability to act with compassion during your workday? (Think of any impact on specific steps of compassionate action.) 2. (Full group) Share your key insights with the larger group. 3. (Open mic) Share a story of renewal or resilience you have witnessed during your time in your career – yourself, colleagues, or family members.
<p>Putting it into Practice (5 minutes)</p>	<p>(Go-around) Pick a stage and picture if a friend or colleague were in that stage, what you would offer to them as a mentor?</p>
<p>Closing (5 minutes)</p>	<p>(Go-around) Share a mantra, quote, affirmation, or mindset that has been helpful to you to minimize compassion fatigue.</p> <p>Bonus Activity: Share the link with the grounding activity from this session and other helpful practices to develop compassion through mindfulness.</p>