

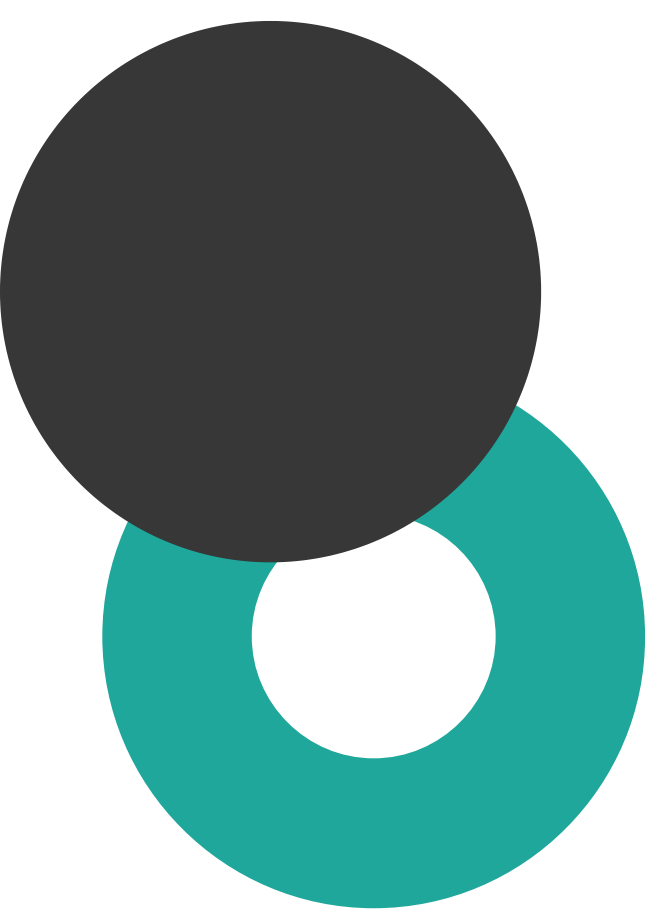
Community Education Series

The Recovery Village and Advanced Recovery Systems





Presentation Topic:
Compassion Fatigue and Self Care



Speaker:
Natasha D'Arcangelo, LMHC, NCC, CCTP

About the Speaker:

Natasha D'Arcangelo

LMHC, NCC, CCTP



- Natasha is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC), a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC) and a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional (CCTP). She works with children, adolescents and adults in private practice in Orlando, Fl. She has presented on the topic of mental health, carrying the message that it is normal to seek help and speak with a therapist. She is especially passionate about working with clients who are struggling with trauma, grief, depression and anxiety.

Compassion Fatigue & Self-Care Agenda

- Definition of compassion fatigue
- Understanding the symptoms
- Learning the warning signs
- Measuring your level of fatigue
- Develop a self care plan

What Is Compassion Fatigue?

- Compassion fatigue is a broadly defined concept that can include emotional, physical, and spiritual distress in those providing care to another. It is associated with caregiving where people or animals are experiencing significant emotional or physical pain and suffering. (Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project)

Vocabulary

- Compassion Satisfaction
 - Positive aspects of working as a helper
- Compassion Fatigue
 - Negative aspects of working as a helper
- Burnout
 - Inefficacy and feeling overwhelmed
- Work-Related Traumatic Stress
 - Primary traumatic stress direct target of event
 - Secondary traumatic exposure to event due to a relationship with the primary person

Healthcare Workers & First Responders

- Studies confirm that caregivers play host to high levels of compassion fatigue.
- Day in, day out, workers struggle to function in caregiving environments that constantly present heart-wrenching, emotional challenges.
- These issues have become more acute due to the COVID-19 crisis. It's possible you are feeling worse and don't know what to do. Let's work on preventing burnout and compassion fatigue.

How Are You Feeling?

- Difficulty concentrating?
- Feelings of numbness, disbelief, anxiety or fear?
- Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels?
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and upsetting thoughts and images?
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems?
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs?
- Worsening of chronic health problems?
- Anger or short-temper?

Are Things Getting Worse (Burnout)?

- Easily frustrated
- Lacking feelings, indifferent
- Blaming of others, irritability
- Sadness, depression, or apathy
- Isolation or disconnection from others
- Tired, exhausted or overwhelmed
- Poor self-care (hygiene)
- Feeling like:
 - A failure
 - Nothing you can do will help
 - You are not doing your job well
 - You need alcohol/other drugs to cope

Compassion Fatigue Symptoms

- Excessive blaming
- Bottled up emotions
- Isolation from others
- Voicing excessive complaints about administrative functions
- Substance abuse used to mask feelings
- Compulsive behaviors such as overspending, overeating, gambling, sexual addictions
- Poor self-care (i.e., hygiene, appearance)
- Apathy, sad, no longer finds activities pleasurable
- Mentally and physically tired
- In denial about problems
- Difficulty concentrating
- Preoccupied
- Legal problems, indebtedness
- Reoccurrence of nightmares and flashbacks to traumatic event
- Chronic physical ailments such as gastrointestinal problems and recurrent colds

Measuring Compassion Fatigue

- PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (ProQOL)
- The ProQOL is free
- A 30 item self report measure of the positive and negative aspects of caring
- The ProQOL measures Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue
- Compassion Fatigue has two subscales
 - Burnout
 - Secondary Trauma
 - For more information please visit www.proqol.org

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)

COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION FATIGUE (PROQOL) VERSION 5 (2009)

When you *[help]* people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you *[help]* can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a *[helper]*. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the *last 30 days*.

1=Never

2=Rarely

3=Sometimes

4=Often

5=Very Often

1. I am happy.
2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I *[help]*.
3. I get satisfaction from being able to *[help]* people.
4. I feel connected to others.
5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
6. I feel invigorated after working with those I *[help]*.
7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a *[helper]*.
8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I *[help]*.
9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I *[help]*.
10. I feel trapped by my job as a *[helper]*.
11. Because of my *[helping]*, I have felt "on edge" about various things.
12. I like my work as a *[helper]*.
13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I *[help]*.

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)

COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION FATIGUE (PROQOL) VERSION 5 (2009)

1=Never

2=Rarely

3=Sometimes

4=Often

5=Very Often

- _____ 14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have *[helped]*.
- _____ 15. I have beliefs that sustain me.
- _____ 16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with *[helping]* techniques and protocols.
- _____ 17. I am the person I always wanted to be.
- _____ 18. My work makes me feel satisfied.
- _____ 19. I feel worn out because of my work as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I *[help]* and how I could help them.
- _____ 21. I feel overwhelmed because my case *[work]* load seems endless.
- _____ 22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.
- _____ 23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I *[help]*.
- _____ 24. I am proud of what I can do to *[help]*.
- _____ 25. As a result of my *[helping]*, I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.
- _____ 26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.
- _____ 27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.
- _____ 29. I am a very caring person.
- _____ 30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.



Compassion Satisfaction Scale

Copy your rating on each of these questions on to this table and add them up. When you have added them up you can find your score on the table to the right.

- 3. _____
 - 6. _____
 - 12. _____
 - 16. _____
 - 18. _____
 - 20. _____
 - 22. _____
 - 24. _____
 - 27. _____
 - 30. _____
- Total:** _____

The sum of my Compassion Satisfaction questions is	And my Compassion Satisfaction level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

Compassion Satisfaction _____

Compassion satisfaction is about the pleasure you derive from being able to do your work well. For example, you may feel like it is a pleasure to help others through your work. You may feel positively about your colleagues or your ability to contribute to the work setting or even the greater good of society. Higher scores on this scale represent a greater satisfaction related to your ability to be an effective caregiver in your job.

If you are in the higher range, you probably derive a good deal of professional satisfaction from your position. If your scores are below 23, you may either find problems with your job, or there may be some other reason—for example, you might derive your satisfaction from activities other than your job. (Alpha scale reliability 0.88)

Burnout Scale

On the burnout scale you will need to take an extra step. Starred items are “reverse scored.” If you scored the item 1, write a 5 beside it. The reason we ask you to reverse the scores is because scientifically the measure works better when these questions are asked in a positive way though they can tell us more about their negative form. For example, question 1. “I am happy” tells us more about

You Wrote	Change to
	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1

the effects of helping when you are *not* happy so you reverse the score

- *1. _____ = _____
- *4. _____ = _____
- 8. _____
- 10. _____
- *15. _____ = _____
- *17. _____ = _____
- 19. _____
- 21. _____
- 26. _____
- *29. _____ = _____

Total: _____

The sum of my Burnout Questions is	And my Burnout level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

Burnout _____

Most people have an intuitive idea of what burnout is. From the research perspective, burnout is one of the elements of Compassion Fatigue (CF). It is associated with feelings of hopelessness and difficulties in dealing with work or in doing your job effectively. These negative feelings usually have a gradual onset. They can reflect the feeling that your efforts make no difference, or they can be associated with a very high workload or a non-supportive work environment. Higher scores on this scale mean that you are at higher risk for burnout.

If your score is below 23, this probably reflects positive feelings about your ability to be effective in your work. If you score above 41, you may wish to think about what at work makes you feel like you are not effective in your position. Your score may reflect your mood; perhaps you were having a “bad day” or are in need of some time off. If the high score persists or if it is reflective of other worries, it may be a cause for concern. (Alpha scale reliability 0.75)



Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale

Just like you did on Compassion Satisfaction, copy your rating on each of these questions on to this table and add them up. When you have added them up you can find your score on the table to the right.

- 2. _____
 - 5. _____
 - 7. _____
 - 9. _____
 - 11. _____
 - 13. _____
 - 14. _____
 - 23. _____
 - 25. _____
 - 28. _____
- Total:** _____

The sum of my Secondary Trauma questions is	And my Secondary Traumatic Stress level is
22 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Moderate
42 or more	High

Secondary Traumatic Stress _____

The second component of Compassion Fatigue (CF) is secondary traumatic stress (STS). It is about your work related, secondary exposure to extremely or traumatically stressful events. Developing problems due to exposure to other's trauma is somewhat rare but does happen to many people who care for those who have experienced extremely or traumatically stressful events. For example, you may repeatedly hear stories about the traumatic things that happen to other people, commonly called Vicarious Traumatization. If your work puts you directly in the path of danger, for example, field work in a war or area of civil violence, this is not secondary exposure; your exposure is primary. However, if you are exposed to others' traumatic events as a result of your work, for example, as a therapist or an emergency worker, this is secondary exposure. The symptoms of STS are usually rapid in onset and associated with a particular event. They may include being afraid, having difficulty sleeping, having images of the upsetting event pop into your mind, or avoiding things that remind you of the event.

If your score is above 41, you may want to take some time to think about what at work may be frightening to you or if there is some other reason for the elevated score. While higher scores do not mean that you do have a problem, they are an indication that you may want to examine how you feel about your work and your work environment. You may wish to discuss this with your supervisor, a colleague, or a health care professional. (Alpha scale reliability 0.81)





"Taking care of myself
doesn't mean 'me first'
It means 'me too.'"

L.R. Knost

Authentic & Sustainable Self Care

- The Compassion Fatigue Project recommends the following actions:
- Be kind to yourself
 - Enhance your awareness with education
 - Accept where you are on your path at all times
 - Understand that those close to you may not be there when you need them most
 - Exchange information and feelings with people who can validate you
 - Listen to others who are suffering
 - Clarify your personal boundaries. What works for you; what doesn't
 - Express your needs verbally
 - Take positive action to change your environment

Authentic & Sustainable Self Care

- Be kind to yourself Cont.
 - Practice health-building activities such as exercise, massage, and yoga
 - Eat nutritious food
 - Drink plenty of water daily
 - Practice the art of self-management: Just say no
 - Employ mindful meditation as much as possible
 - Develop a healthy support system: people who contribute to your self-esteem, people who listen well, people who care
 - Become proactive as opposed to reactive
 - Reserve energies for worthy causes: Choose your battles
 - Live a balanced life: Sing, dance, sit in silence

Tips From the PROQOL Measure

CARING FOR YOURSELF IN THE FACE OF DIFFICULT WORK

10 Things to Do Each Day

1. Get enough sleep
2. Get enough to eat
3. Vary the work that you do
4. Do some light exercise
5. Do something pleasurable
6. Focus on what you did well
7. Learn from your mistakes
8. Share a private joke
9. Pray, meditate or relax
10. Support a colleague

Tips From the PROQOL Measure

HOW TO BECOME BETTER AT SWITCHING BETWEEN WORK AND OFF-WORK MODES

1. Make this a conscious process. Talk to yourself as you switch.
2. Use images that make you feel safe and protected (work-mode) or connected and cared for (non-work mode) to help you switch.
3. Develop rituals that help you switch as you start and stop work.
4. Breathe slowly and deeply to calm yourself when starting a tough job.

What Can I Do To Feel Better?

- SELF CARE, SELF CARE, SELF CARE (and then some more self-care)
- Be kind to yourself. You are human and there is only so much you can do. What does your internal narrative sound like? Are you using “I should have, I could have done more, I’m a failure?” Try instead “I’m doing my best, I’m trying my hardest.”

What Can I Do To Feel Better? (Continued)

- Mindfulness-be present in your body. The drive home can be a time to listen to a guided meditation and just breathe. Pay attention to your five senses. What are you seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling? Where are you tense? Breathe and try to relax those muscles. Think of a place that is peaceful and relaxing for you and immerse yourself in that image.
- Enhance your awareness with education. You did this already by attending this session today! Now you know the signs to look out for in yourself and your colleagues. If you recognize they are present, you can do something about it.

What Can I Do To Feel Better? (Continued)

- **Accept where you are on your path at all times.** If you are feeling angry, sad, frustrated it's okay to sit with that feeling. That means not immediately dismissing how you feel or thinking you aren't allowed to feel that way. Acknowledge what is happening and check in with your body. This might mean you need to cry, walk away or talk to someone about it.
- **Exchange information and feelings with people who can validate you.** The connections with our colleagues that are going through the same thing are so important right now. When you work in high stress, fast paced conditions, you form a bond with each other. No one else gets it like the people we work with. Think about how you can support each other-maybe by sharing success stories.

What Can I Do To Feel Better? (Continued)

- **Clarify your personal boundaries.** What works for you; what doesn't. It's hard for our loved ones to understand how to best support us right now. Express your needs verbally. Our loved ones want to support us but we can't expect them to be able to read our minds. You might need some time to decompress when you come home and that's okay. Clearly stating that you need a break when you get home is more effective than assuming they know what you need.
- **Take care of your body.** Are you sleeping? Eating? Showering? Hydrating? These basic things are more important now than they ever were before. Insight Timer is a free app with guided meditations-some specifically for healthcare workers. You can avoid screen time before bed, cook in large batches on the weekend, set an alarm to remind you to drink water. Use your faith if that is a part of your life.

What Can I Do To Feel Better? (Continued)

- **Take breaks.** When was the last time that you stood in the sun during a shift? Even one minute just being outside to breathe and feel the sun on your skin can make a difference. Leave yourself an encouraging note taped to the inside of your car (I am one person and I'm going to do the best I can today). Take a deep breath and then walk in to the building. Wear a soothing scent-something like lavender can be helpful.
- **It is OK to ask for help.** It's normal to talk to a therapist about what you are going through and struggling with right now. Psychology Today, your insurance company and EAP are great places to get started looking for someone. You should feel comfortable talking to that person and feel like you can trust them. Encourage your colleagues to seek out help. Let them know you are concerned about them and it's okay to seek out help.



What are two things that you did today to take care of you? **Celebrate that!**

What does your self-care plan look like? **Try and implement one thing.**



Happiness
CAN BE FOUND EVEN
IN THE DARKEST OF
TIMES, IF ONE ONLY
REMEMBERS TO TURN
ON THE *Light*

- Albus Dumbledore

Contact Information

Natasha D'Arcangelo

LMHC, NCC, CCTP

Call: 407-808-5773

Email: natasha@Inbehavioralhealth.com

www.Inbehavioralhealth.com

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Behavioral Health Services

Where minds matter and hearts are healed

THANK YOU

