

## Comparing Burnout, Empathy Fatigue, and Compassion Fatigue

<b>Burnout</b>	<b>Empathy Fatigue</b>	<b>Compassion Fatigue</b>
Emotional and physical fatigue	Emotional fatigue	Emotional exhaustion
Many tasks, deadlines	Many distressful encounters	One acute traumatic event
Extended period of time	Extended period of time	One specific moment in time
Cumulative	Cumulative	Acute
Unspecific source	Unspecific source	One specific traumatic event
Direct impact to the caregiver	Direct impact to the caregiver	Secondary impact to the caregiver – vicarious trauma

***Burnout*** is too much to do, too little time, insufficient resources, lack of validation, unrealistic expectations, and cumulative physical and emotional distress.

- Typical causes
  - Tasks
  - Deadlines
  - Expectations
- Typical reactions and symptoms
  - Emotional and physical exhaustion
  - Depersonalization
  - Reduced vocational productivity
  - Reduced personal accomplishment
  - Lack of confidence or self-esteem
  - Changes in beliefs, values, and view of workplace or world
- Self care for burnout
  - Delegate
  - Negotiate
  - Redefine success
  - Set personal boundaries
  - Create margin
  - Make changes in your life
  - Others???

***Empathy fatigue*** is emotional and physical fatigue resulting from empathizing with other people's pain, grief, anxiety, anger, and other strong emotions over an extended period of time.

- Typical causes
  - Non-compartmentalized compassionate care
  - “Owning” other people’s problems/issues/concerns
  - Over identifying with other people’s distress
- Typical reactions and symptoms
  - Emotional exhaustion
  - Over-personalization
  - Reduced compassionate attitude
  - Reduced personal ministry satisfaction
  - Lack of ministry confidence or self-esteem
  - Changes in beliefs, values, and view of workplace or world
- Self care for empathy fatigue
  - Systematic, strategic, intentional breaks, rest, restoration periods
  - Set personal boundaries
  - Redefine ministry expectations

***Compassion fatigue*** is the costly result of providing care to those suffering from the consequences of traumatic events. Caregivers are especially vulnerable to compassion fatigue.

- Typical causes
  - Empathic connection to trauma survivor
  - Secondary traumatization from experiencing the traumatic event as though it was a personal experience
- Typical Reactions and Symptoms
  - Secondary traumatic stress symptoms
    - Intrusive memories
    - Avoidance or distancing
    - Stress arousal
  - Physical symptoms
    - Exhaustion
    - Insomnia
    - Headaches
    - Increased susceptibility to illness
- Personal stress management
  - Catharsis
  - Self awareness
  - Clarifying options
  - Reframing circumstances or situations
  - Intercession
  - Relaxation techniques
  - Pastoral counsel, therapeutic intervention