

WARNING SIGNS OF COMPASSION FATIGUE

Physical

- Physical exhaustion
- Insomnia
- Hypersomnia
- Headaches and migraines
- Increased susceptibility to illness
- Somatization and hypochondria

Behavioral

- Increased use of alcohol and drugs
- Other addictions (shopping, workaholism, compulsive overeating)
- Absenteeism
- Anger and irritability
- Exaggerated sense of responsibility
- Avoidance of clients
- Impaired ability to make decisions
- Forgetfulness
- Problems in personal relationships
- Attrition
- Compromised care for clients
- The silencing response

Psychological

- Emotional exhaustion
- Distancing
- Negative self-image
- Depression
- Reduced ability to feel sympathy and empathy
- Cynicism and embitterment
- Resentment
- Dread of working with certain clients
- Feeling professional helplessness
- Diminished sense of enjoyment/career
- Depersonalization
- Disruption of world view/heightened anxiety or irrational fears
- Increased sense of personal vulnerability
- Inability to tolerate strong feelings
- Problems with intimacy
- Hypervigilance
- Intrusive imagery
- Hypersensitivity to emotionally charged stimuli
- Insensitivity to emotional material
- Loss of hope
- Difficulty separating personal and professional lives
- Failure to nurture and develop non-work-related aspects of life

From The Compassion Fatigue Workbook by Francoise Mathieu