



# What is compassion fatigue?

*Compassion fatigue* refers to the emotional and physical exhaustion that can affect helping professionals, supporters, and caregivers over time. For some, it can appear as a gradual desensitization to others' stories, an increase in frustration or irritation in supporting others, and the potential for higher rates of depression and anxiety. In addition, compassion fatigue can present with symptoms such as hopelessness, inability to concentrate, sleep disruption, self-doubt, and loss of purpose. Supporters and caregivers experiencing compassion fatigue have also found that their empathy and ability to connect with their loved ones and friends is reduced, and their motivation for their work is diminished.

Compassion fatigue is a very real issue that can affect anyone who serves others. Learning about and practicing self-care and compassion is a great step toward prevention.