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Solving Compassion Fatigue in Nursing

Compassion fatigue effects innumerable caregivers and has become a serious problem especially in healthcare workers that assist in third world countries. Many of the people working on humane effort missions find that over time they begin to reflect the kind of negative effects that the same environment has on the natives. Irritability, lack of drive, and a general disconnect from the world around them stems from a lack of self care. Some develop trauma disorders while others feel generally out of sorts and burnt out. The more workers we lose to this issue every year, the more pressing the need to get the word out and inform people about how to best defend themselves from the phenomenon.

Given a personal desire to work abroad for in-need countries and people, compassion fatigue is something that is particularly relevant. Many people that work in the healthcare industry and especially those that work in humanitarian efforts, have lived their lives with a general compassion for people and often a high amount of selflessness. The result of this, is that

people often put others and their care before their own well being. These same healthcare workers often take on more than they can chew, all the while neglecting their own health and well being.

People begin to forget about taking care of themselves and lose touch with their own beliefs,

feelings, and condition. Life issues or social problems can go unchecked and spiral into larger ordeals that have a great effect on a nurse. As a nurse fails to address their own life issues, they grow into larger and larger problems that become more and more difficult to address. Before addressing how to solve these issues, it is important to understand just why they are happening.

Compassion fatigue often comes from investing time, energy, and emotion into your patients while failing to address your own personal issues and care for yourself. What this looks

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patients follow them around throughout the day and when you are working with people suffering from illness, these can often be very stressful and very real problems. These problems put into perspective your own and make it difficult to justify working on your own life issues because of a strong desire to help people with their own. A sense of selfishness can accompany any attempt

to not spend time for one's self and many nurses are constantly trying to take care of the needs whilst

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trifling of the day-to-day seem to take enough energy and looking at larger tasks like

furthering education, learning a new skill, reading, meditating, or any other kind of self-

development seems selfish and requires more time than a nurse has to give. The unfortunate fact here though, is that a nurse needs to toss aside these feelings and be able to care for themselves in order to help those around them.

Indeed, the solution to compassion fatigue is setting time aside for one's self and remaining connected to the events of one's own life. In order to best serve one's own patients, they need to make sure that there is fuel left in the tank. All care starts with self-care and by guaranteeing that you yourself are happy, healthy, and wise, you guarantee a better quality of

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try common meditation techniques like breathing exercises and mindfulness training. What these serve to do is center oneself, make you more aware of the world around you and better capable of understanding your past, present, and future reactions to issues and trauma. Initially, such a practice aims to reveal the faults in your current habits and then give you the foresight to be able to tackle them. It isn't until you understand what and where your problems are that you can then

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Compassion fatigue is a worrying issue that is particularly problematic for nurses working in areas that are filled with sorrow and pain. It can effect anyone without being particularly noticeable and once it triggers emotional responses or a lack of compassion



ful in the tank to help others, it is unnecessary difficult to help others and as such, all nurses should make it a priority to ensure they are in good mental and spiritual health before working so hard.