**Empathy (Compassion) Fatigue: Defined & Symptoms**

The physical, emotional, and spiritual exhaustion and emotional withdrawal experienced by those that care for sick or traumatized people over an extended period. It leads to a decline in one’s energy, desire, and/or ability to love, nurture, care for, or empathize with another's suffering.

* Feeling burdened by the suffering of others
* Blaming others for their suffering
* Isolating yourself/withdrawal
* Loss of pleasure in life
* Difficulty concentrating/distracted
* [Insomnia](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/insomnia)
* Physical and mental fatigue
* Exhaustion
* Bottling up your emotions
* Increased [nightmares](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/conditions/nightmares)
* Feelings of hopelessness or powerlessness
* Frequent complaining about your work or your life
* [Overeating](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/conditions/binge-eating-disorder-compulsive-overeating)
* Poor self-care
* Beginning to receive a lot of complaints about your work or attitude
* Somatization- Your health is showing your stress burden (headaches, gastro, pain)
* Denial
* Worry/Anxiety
* Overwhelmed
* Forgetfulness
* Anger
* LossLoss of faith
* Loss of purpose
* Guilt
* Apathy
* Negative Coping (drinking, drugs, gambling, shopping, addictions...)
* Tardiness
* Staff Conflicts
* Absenteeism
* Avoidance of clients/patients
* Hypervigilance
* Exaggerated sense of responsibility
* Impaired ability to make decisions
* Change in career
* Affecting personal relationships

A syndrome caused by chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It is characterized by three dimensions: 1) feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion; 2) increased mental distance from one’s job or negative feelings/cynicism related to one’s job; and 3) reduced professional efficacy. These phenomena only apply to one’s occupation.

**Burnout Symptoms & Causes**

**Job burnout symptoms**

Ask yourself:

* Have you become cynical or critical at work?
* Do you drag yourself to work and have trouble getting started?
* Have you become irritable or impatient with co-workers, customers or clients?
* Do you lack the energy to be consistently productive?
* Do you find it hard to concentrate?
* Do you lack satisfaction from your achievements?
* Do you feel disillusioned about your job?
* Are you using food, drugs or alcohol to feel better, or to simply not feel?
* Have your sleep habits changed?
* Are you troubled by unexplained headaches, stomach or bowel problems, or other physical complaints?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you might be experiencing job burnout. Consider talking to a doctor or a mental health provider because these symptoms might be caused by health conditions, such as depression.

**Possible causes of job burnout**

Job burnout can result from various factors, including:

* **Lack of control.** An inability to influence decisions that affect your job — such as your schedule, assignments or workload — could lead to job burnout. So could a lack of the resources you need to do your work.
* **Unclear job expectations.** If you're unclear about the degree of authority you have or what your supervisor or others expect from you, you're not likely to feel comfortable at work.
* **Dysfunctional workplace dynamics.** Perhaps you work with an office bully, or you feel undermined by colleagues or your boss micromanages your work. This can contribute to job stress.
* **Extremes of activity.** When a job is monotonous or chaotic, you need constant energy to remain focused — which can lead to fatigue and job burnout.
* **Lack of social support.** If you feel isolated at work and in your personal life, you might feel more stressed.
* **Work-life imbalance.** If your work takes up so much of your time and effort that you don't have the energy to spend time with your family and friends, you might burn out quickly.