

Compassion Fatigue Workbook

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Workbook for Compassion Fatigue Workshops

These exercises were developed to be used in the workshops: Compassion Fatigue: The Unspoken Hazard in Veterinary Medicine, Women and Stress: Keeping the Candle Lit Without Getting Burned, Dealing With Difficult People Starts With Dealing With Yourself: Self Care for increased Productivity or with the CD PowerPoint training programs of the same names by Chery F. Kendrick, DVM, MPVM, MLT, ASCP, CFS

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Breathing

Probably the number one stress reduction technique used is breathing. When people experience stress they may notice that their breathing becomes shallow, and that deeper breathing follows moments such as laughter.

Taking deep cleansing breaths is the easiest way to de-stress. The benefits of breathing deeply have been medically proven.

The Wellness Workbook by Ross (1988) has perhaps the simplest breathing exercises:

Breathing Exercise:

1. Sit down or lie down
2. Inhale slowly and say to yourself: "I am..."
3. Exhale slowly and say to yourself: "relaxed."

Gradually consider the advantage of allowing yourself to breath smoothly and naturally.

Consider that when you breathe this way and stop thinking about stressors your breathing becomes even deeper.

Keep in mind that the problem will not simply go away as you focus on your breathing however that this exercise will enable you to take a break from the problem calm yourself and come back to the problem with greater energy and mental clarity.

The more effective you are in learning how to breathe and manage stress better the more effective you will be in solving the problems.

So give yourself a break from your problems and stress just long enough to practice this exercise several times a day.

4. Exhale deeply, contracting your belly
5. Inhale slowly as you expand your abdomen
6. Continue inhaling as you expand your chest
7. Continue inhaling as you raise your shoulders up toward your ears
8. Hold for a few comfortable seconds
9. Exhale in reverse pattern slowly.
10. Release your shoulders, relax your chest, and contract your belly.
11. Repeat

Try to do this exercise before or after meals, and especially at bedtime

Creative Visualization Exercise

This is a relaxation technique that uses guided imagery.

The whole idea is to induce relaxation quickly by creating a picture in your mind of a “safe place” so that you can “go” there quickly. There is also a neutralizing exercise in this creative visualization exercise that helps you detoxify.

The more you practice this exercise the quicker you will achieve a relaxed peaceful state and the deeper that relaxed state will become.

Steps:

- 1) Go to a safe quiet place where you can work through your relaxation technique in peace and quiet.
- 2) Now take a deep cleansing breath to start and walk through the following steps, slowly breathing in, and then slowly releasing that cleansing breath.
- 3) Close your eyes to help you more completely visualize and feel
- 4) Think of all the things you love, things that comfort you, that trigger feelings of comfort, satisfaction and lack of stress.
- 5) Bring those images forward until you feel a smile forming on your face
- 6) Think of a specific or imagined place that is safe, joyful and serene. This will be your ***“Safe and Joyful Place” (SJP)***
- 7) Bring that **SJP** strongly to your mind and do the following:
 - a) Imagine sounds, smells, sensations- everything about the place – using all of your sense
 - b) Focus on what it looks like when you look straight above where you are in your SJP
 - c) Focus on things to the right and then to the left of you in your SJP
- 8) Allow yourself to be in this place that brings your mind the greatest peace, restfulness and joy possible
- 9) Start the detoxifying process while here in your **SJP** by imagining a kettle on the stove and drop each toxic by-product of your care giving into the kettle.

10) Now imagine that kettle of toxic by-products as a specific color- let's say for example dark purple.

11) Now take a dropper with all the joyous happy parts of care giving, all the good memories and sensations and imagine these as liquid in a bottle.

12) Take the dropper off the bottle and start adding drops into the kettle of toxic purple.

13) Watch as each drop dilutes and eventually neutralizes the toxic-by-products of caring for the suffering.

14) Now concentrate on the joy, restfulness and contentment that comes from neutralizing the toxic soup. Feel the zest for life coming back to you.

15) Concentrate on the contentment and love of life and the happiness derived from working with animals and people.

16) Take a deep cleansing breath breathing in then slowly releasing out.

17) Gradually return back to reality and the tasks of the day.

Be sure to take time to go to a special spot where you feel safe to go through your relaxation and visualization exercise whenever you need to.

Self Hypnosis Exercise (Self-Talk, Self-Advice)

The purpose of this exercise is to evoke a relaxed consciousness and focus that will help you overcome stress linked to various stressors.

It is especially important to understand that you need to heal yourself and to concentrate on your own situation and how **YOU** can control stress and its effects in your life, not rely on others to fix it for you.

First decide on the advice you want to give yourself and put it in the form of a positive statement. Some examples: "Slow down and enjoy life", "Be happy don't worry" or "Turn negatives into positives".

Be creative but make it something you really want to achieve and let it be a guide for you.

Write the suggestion down in the blank in the script below.

Now make a recording of this script with your personalized information included.

Play this recording to yourself at least once a day when you can give yourself at least 30 minutes to relax.

As with any of these exercises be sure to choose a safe quiet spot and take a deep cleansing breath before starting.

Don't worry if you fall asleep while listening – that's a good thing!

The Script:

1) My name is _____. I care about myself deeply and completely and know that when I am at my best I am more effective as a care giver. I choose to reserve the following thirty minutes to myself.

2) I am starting my self-talk session now. It will continue until I hear myself say "Attention". In the meantime I will get more and more relaxed and focus more and more on my voice. I will give myself advice. This advice will be effective only if I want it to be effective.

3) I will now close my eyes and focus my attention on lying down on a comfortable bed in a very safe and comforting place that I know about. This special place allows me complete privacy, safety and comfort.

4) In my safe place, lying on my safe and comfortable bed, I can feel a warm, **magical quilt** covering my feet. **This quilt is covered with materials representing the best scenes from my life in which I felt love.**

5) When I am ready, my feet will become more and more relaxed as I pull the quilt up to cover my lower legs. When I do so, my lower legs start to become more and more relaxed. My feet are becoming even more deeply relaxed, followed closely by my lower legs. All of the muscles in my feet and lower legs are becoming limp and relaxed.

6) When I am ready, I will pull the magic quilt over my knees. Now they begin to feel relaxed and soon feel as relaxed as my lower legs and feet. Every muscle and tendon in my knees and below them is becoming more and more relaxed. All tension is flowing out of this area, leaving all the muscles loose and limp.

7) Sometimes I may hear noises or have thoughts that attract my attention. I will just gently let them go away because this time is reserved for just me. I am thinking only of relaxing and letting go of all tension. All of my muscles are becoming more and more relaxed and I am feeling pleasantly drowsy. I will not go to sleep. I will remain alert but feeling more and more relaxed. I am sinking further and further into myself with no cares or worries.

8) When I am ready, I will pull the magic quilt over my upper legs. Now they begin to feel relaxed and soon feel as relaxed as the area below them. Every muscle and tendon in my upper legs and below them is becoming more and more relaxed. All tension is flowing out of this area, leaving all the muscles loose and limp.

9) When I am ready, I will pull the magic quilt up over my stomach and just below my chest. Now my stomach begins to feel relaxed and soon feels as relaxed as the areas below. Every muscle and tendon in the areas below my chest is becoming more and more relaxed. All tension is flowing out of this area, leaving all the muscles loose and limp.

10) When I am ready, I will pull the magic quilt up over my arms and chest, just below my neck. Now my arms and chest begin to feel relaxed and soon feels as relaxed as the areas below them. Every muscle and tendon in the areas below my neck is becoming more and more relaxed. All tension is flowing out of this area, leaving all the muscles loose and limp.

11) The relaxation is like warmth, spreading to every place covered by my magic quilt. The muscles in the covered area are becoming limper. I could move if I really had to, but I am

becoming so comfortably limp and relaxed that I don't want to move. I am still and relaxed, drifting deeper and deeper into a pleasant state of dreamy relaxation.

12) When I am ready, I will pull the magic quilt up over my neck, leaving just my head exposed. Now my neck begins to feel relaxed and soon feels as relaxed as the areas below it. Every muscle and tendon in the area covered by my quilt is becoming more and more relaxed. All tension is flowing out of this area, leaving all the muscles loose and limp.

13) Even though my magic quilt remains below my head, now the relaxation is spreading into my mouth and jaw muscles. My tongue is limp, resting in my mouth. I may briefly have more saliva in my mouth, but that will go away shortly. Now my cheeks and eyes are relaxing. I could open my eyes if I wanted to, but unless I need to, it would be too much work. It would take too much effort to open my eyes. I am drifting pleasantly downward, becoming more and more relaxed.

14) The muscles in my forehead are becoming more and more relaxed. I can imagine them, like loosening rubber bands across my forehead, becoming limp and floppy. I am feeling deeper and deeper relaxation. From the tips of my toes to the top of my head, I am becoming more and more relaxing, drifting downward, deeper and deeper.

15) When I am ready I am going to count down from twenty-five. As I count down, I will continue to become more and more relaxed and pleasantly deeper and deeper into relaxation. I will get drowsy and deeply relaxed, but I will not actually go to sleep. I will simply drift deeper and deeper into my self-hypnotic state of deeply relaxed awareness.

16) By the time I reach zero, I will be in a very pleasant, sleeplike state. I will still be able to direct my thoughts. I could rouse myself immediately if I needed to, but if not, I will give myself a break. I will continue to drift deeper and deeper into relaxation.

17) When I am ready I will attend to the counting twenty-five twenty-four twenty-three twenty-two drifting deeper and deeper with each number ... twenty-one ... twenty ... feeling drowsier and drowsier, yet still awake ... nineteen ... eighteen ... seventeen ... floating gently downward with each count ... sixteen ... fifteen ... fourteen ... drifting, drowsy ... thirteen ... twelve ... eleven ... ten ... more than halfway down, drifting deeper and deeper with each number ... nine ... eight ... seven ... six ... five ... feeling so relaxed ... four ... becoming more and more relaxed and drowsy ... three ... two ... one ... zero. Breathing pleasantly, slowly drifting deeper and deeper with each breath.

18) As I continue to be deeply relaxed and become even more relaxed, I am thinking about my advice: **[At this point insert advice to yourself]** _____:

19) All of the advice I give myself, I do so out of love and self-caring. I know that this is good advice and that my life and my work will be better as a result of following it.

20) Each time I practice this self-talk exercise, I will become better and better at it. I will be able to relax deeper and deeper in less time with each practice.

21) Now, as I count to three, I am going to slowly, gradually, pleasantly wake up and come to attention. I will return to my normal, waking state except that I'll be far more alert and relaxed than before and fully aware of my self-advice. Now, starting up, one ... becoming more alert ... two ... getting ready to wake up ... three, wake up.

22) **I congratulate myself for taking this time for my self-care** and will be thinking often of my own advice throughout the day and even when I sleep.

Dealing with Violent People

Police officers love to go through a short list of “to-dos” when discussing how to deal with violent people.

If you are ever confronted with a violent person follow these general rules:

- 1) The louder they get the quieter you get.
- 2) Offer to get assistance, for example you can say: “Our manager can help resolve this for you let me go get them” or “Let me get one of the doctors to help you with this issue”.
- 3) Do NOT get confrontational or accusatory
- 4) Do empathize slightly by saying things like “I can understand how you could feel...” without being condescending especially if their situation is one there is no way you can truthfully say you understand. Nothing sets a violent person off quicker than being told “I understand how you feel” if the person stating that has never experienced what they are experiencing so use empathy with care.
- 5) Give them an out by offering to wait in another area while you get a comfort item such as a drink of water, cup of coffee
- 6) Ask them if there is anyone they would like you to call to help them with whatever is distressing them
- 7) Ask them if they would like some quiet time in a quiet room

Bottom line is:

- 1) Do not get caught alone with a potentially violent person
- 2) Get Help! Never hesitate to call 911 or to press a panic alarm.
- 3) Run, kick, scream, do whatever you need to do to stay safe and get away from danger.

No job is worth endangering your life for. Talk to your Safety Coordinator about other ways your clinic protects employees from potential workplace violence such as panic alarms or secret alert words.

Giving Credit Exercise

We all like to be appreciated. Take a moment to think about ways to give yourself and others credit where credit is due.

- 1) Be sure to take time to say "Good job!"
- 2) Be sure to take time to give yourself a pat on the back
- 3) Take time to mention to others something one of your colleagues or co-workers did that you appreciate
- 4) Offer tidbits for newsletters or FaceBook inclusion about something you or colleague did that needs recognition
- 5) Use social interactions to uplift your co-workers
- 6) Avoid negative statements, even if there was a negative event find the positive
- 7) Being a Pollyanna isn't always all bad
- 8) Smile- it takes fewer muscles to smile more to frown and a smile is much healthier
- 9) Breathe deeply and realize your own self worth and team value

Learning To Say “No” Exercise

Just Say “No!” True this is easier said than done sometimes. However it may help you to choose wisely if you actually take a moment to think of the consequences of saying “yes” before you agree to take that next project on.

Exercise:

Work through five examples of types of things you are asked to do during the course of your job that are optional (not necessarily in your job duty or required)

Fill in the chart below listing the pros and cons- benefits and disadvantages - of saying yes - vs - saying no. Be sure to use this system mentally if not by actually writing it down and detailing the consequences of actions to weigh the cost of saying yes all the time. **I have an example for you below.**

Examples	Pro/Benefit of Saying “Yes”	Pro/Benefit Of Saying “No”	Con/Disadvantage of Saying “Yes”	Con/Disadvantage of Saying “No”
Work weekend shift	\$\$\$\$s	Time w/family	Miss kid’s game	Lose points with boss
Point B				
Point C				
Point D				
Point E				

Take a look at consequences before you commit or over commit yourself. Remember the work will get done or if not then changes will need to be made in terms of staffing needs. Ask yourself if you are trying to do too much then ask yourself why this is. Do not be led into a hero role where you perceive yourself as the only one who can get it done make it work make sure whatever is successful as this is not healthy for you your co-workers or the organization.

Be sure to schedule time for you.

In my Women and Stress workshops I continually bring up the caretaker role and multitasking. We as women are caretakers. Do not take on too many of the caretaker roles without allowing yourself down time which should be high quality time to refresh yourself or you will not only harm your own health but become a less capable caretaker. And above all remember to breath.

“Doc” Cheryl

The Self- Chakra Connection

Using Healing Touch and energy medicine to calm, clear and heal

Let's start by looking at some definitions as energy medicine, chakras and healing touch may be new to you.

What is a Chakra?

A chakra is an energy center.

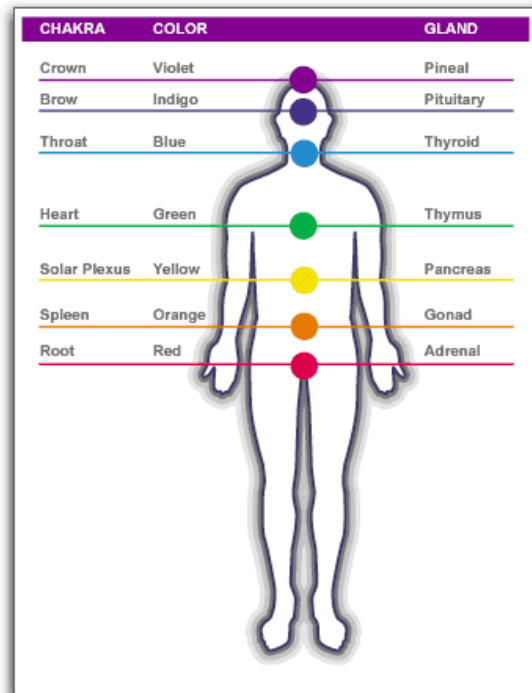
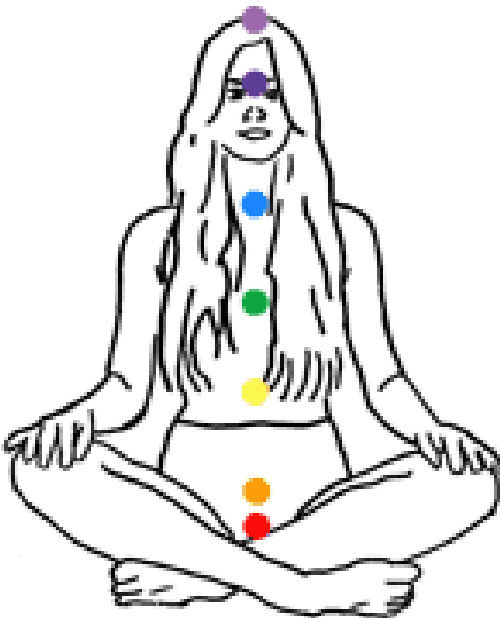
Throughout our body we have main **energy centers**, which are connected to major organs or glands that govern other body parts. Each of these main energy centers are referred to as a chakra.

Our energy centers are affected by the environment both physical and emotional. Our chakras are also affected by what people say and do as well as by what we say and do.

There are **seven main chakra centers** and each is connected to our well being on several different levels: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual.

On the **physical level** each chakra governs a main organ or gland, which is then connected to other body parts that resonate with the same frequency.

Each chakra is also connected to a **color vibrational frequency**.



For example, the heart chakra governs the thymus gland which regulates the functioning of the heart, lungs, bronchial system, lymph glands, secondary circulatory system, immune system as well as the arms and hands. And the ***heart chakra resonates to the color green.***

The seven main chakra centers are ***aligned along the spinal column.*** If there are disturbances on any level, this shows in the chakra's vitality level.

To help balance a chakra simply means to ensure all chakra centers are clear and resonating at a healthy frequency to allow energy to move freely throughout the organ systems.

Energy Medicine Defined:

Energy medicine includes things such as acupuncture, acupressure and healing touch therapy, which all rely on the concept of chakras and energy fields in the body.

The ***common ground*** is working with the body's natural energy pathways to help clear them and allow for normal ***energy flow*** throughout the body. ***Blockages*** in our energy systems can be caused by injury and disease as well as by insults from our physical world including what we eat, the environmental contaminants we are exposed to, as well as our emotions.

The basic idea of energy medicine starts with common energy sources such as the sun.

Sunlight is our main source and provider of light, heat and energy. Not only does sunlight sustain all life on Earth, but also it sustains the Earth itself. It provides plants with the energy for photosynthesis, which in turn sustains the lives of all animals and humans.

Sunlight consists of energies in the form of the electromagnetic waves and part of this electromagnetic energy includes cosmic rays, gamma rays, x-rays, visible light rays, infrared rays, micro waves and short and long waves (radio waves). We utilize many of these energies in our daily lives; however, we seem not to put much emphasis on the visible light rays.

Medical science has proven that toxins and other impurities, which include negative thoughts, chemical enhancements in our food and other poor environmental factors, influence our body. Constant forms of "pollution" can ***cause chakra imbalances*** to manifest, which may eventually ***affect us on a physical level.***

The benefit of learning about your own chakra system is for you to understand on a whole (whole = body, mind and spirit in harmony) that when all parts of you (all of your seven chakra centers) are communicating equally and working in alliance with each other, you will have little or no energy disorders. For example, if the mental part of you is powerful and so are the physical, emotional and spiritual parts of you equally as strong, it is then that you feel at your optimum level.

Nowadays, we live in a fast world and often forget about our “whole.” We put too much emphasis on independence and very little on interdependence. ***Our chakras are interdependent on each other for harmony and balance.***

If there is a disturbance on any level, this shows in a chakra’s vitality level. And each of the seven main chakras has its own innate intelligence and function. Similar to how your body functions automatically, your chakra centers also operate automatically.

The Self Chakra Connection is adapted from Brugh Joy’s Chakra Connection. It is a way to balance the energy systems throughout your body.

This full body balancing technique facilitates movement of energy from chakra to chakra by connecting the major and minor energy centers, and opening them to flow freely.

Designed to connect, open and balance the energy centers and enhance the flow of energy in the body, it can be used alone or in combination with other energy techniques.

The Chakra Connection is an excellent self-care technique, which can be incorporated into your daily or weekly self-care practice.

It can also be effectively used to care for yourself during stressful situations, times of decision making or for relaxation and rejuvenation at the end of the day.

Procedure: The Self Chakra Connection can be done sitting or lying down. Begin by opening either foot chakra by holding the foot position shown in figure 1 for approximately one minute.

Each position should be held for at least one minute. Let your body guide you, if you feel the need to stay at a chakra for longer then by all means do so. Don’t forget to breath! Deep even breaths help to calm and clear and cleanse.

Oftentimes it is helpful to have some meditative soothing type music playing quietly in the background.

Many people find this an excellent way to start their day as they work themselves to wakefulness.

















On the following pages you will find two visual representations of the self chakra procedure.

Here is a link to a You-Tube video that demonstrates the hand positions:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOKm6yHCxYk>

Self Chakra Connection

Adapted from Brugh Joy's Chakra Connection

1  Open Foot	2  Ankle to Knee	3  Knees to Hip Repeat steps 1-3 using Opposite leg.	4  Both Hips
5  Root to Sacral	6  Sacral to Solar Plexus	7  Solar Plexus to Spleen	8  Solar Plexus to Heart
9  Heart to High Heart	10  Wrist to Wrist	11  Both Elbows	12  Both Shoulders
13  High Heart to Throat	14  Throat to Brow	15  Brow to Crown	16  Crown to Transpersonal Point

Healing Touch Technique

Self Chakra Connection



The Chakra Connection is a full body balancing technique that facilitates movement of energy from chakra to chakra by connecting the major and minor energy centers, and opening them to flow freely. The Chakra Connection was developed by W. Brugh Joy, M.D. and is referred to in his book *Joy's Way*. Designed to connect, open and balance the energy centers and enhance the flow of energy in the body, it can be used alone or in combination with other energy techniques.

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Be sure to practice these exercises so that whenever you feel stressed you can take a moment to quickly re-center yourself.

For information on workshops and to ***order more workbooks*** please contact us at:

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