



Preventing Compassion Fatigue
Nehemiah 8:9 -12 (NIV)

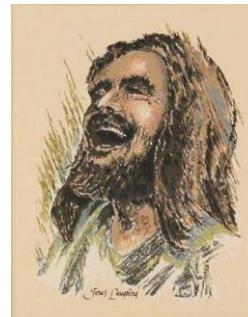
Rev. Abi Foerster
March 29, 2020

*This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve,
for the joy of the LORD is your strength. (Nehemiah 8:10b)*

ASK: Have you ever felt drained, dried up, or even despairing about helping others? Overwhelmed by the needs before you?

3 Warning Signs You Might Be Experiencing Compassion Fatigue:

1. Increasing exhaustion.
2. Resentment towards constant demands.
3. Lack of lightness or laughter in your life.



Jesus models for us a balanced and sustainable way of doing life and ministry where compassion and care for others and self is lived out.

What is your picture God?
How does this inform your faith?

3 Core Behaviors to Sustain A Healthier Life of Compassion:

1. Become a Compassionate Neighbor to Yourself

You shall love your neighbor as you love yourself. (Mt. 22:39, NRSV)

Consider:

How do we become compassionate neighbors to ourselves?

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Curb Tendencies Toward Compulsive Caring

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10, NIV)

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.
(Psalm 46:10, NIV)

These simple “Yes / No” Questions may aid your reflection:

- Do you usually rush into an active helping role when faced with someone in need?
- Do you often experience weariness from taking on too many caring responsibilities?
- Do you normally struggle to share your needs with others?

3. Commit to Making Celebration a Way of Life

The Levites calmed all the people, saying, “Be still, for this is a holy day. Do not grieve.” Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them. (v. 11 – 12)

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! (Ph. 4:4, NIV)

Some Examples of Natural Times to Celebrate

- Daily meal times
- Birthdays, anniversaries, milestones
- Great festivals of the church calendar (Christmas, Easter, Pentecost)
- Sunday worship & Holy Communion

BOTTOM LINE:

Our life in Christ through faith needs to balance between celebration and being serious. Both are necessary for personal wholeness and an ability to love generously and compassionately as God loves us.



Doggy Bag: *Something to Chew On and Ponder Throughout the Week*

1. Can you describe a time of compassion fatigue from your own experience?
2. In what one way can you better care for yourself?
3. Identify one symptom of addictive helpfulness in your life.
4. Do you enjoy God? If so, how?
5. Consider possibilities for a group celebration and select one that you can pursue together with others in the near future.