



ARCHDIOCESE
of MILWAUKEE

Successful Volunteer Engagement Workshop
Series 2, Session 1
Managing Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

Housekeeping

- The session is being recorded.
- To help keep background noise to a minimum, make sure to mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
- Please submit questions anytime using the Chat feature in the bottom toolbar.
- Turning off your video may help with your connection.
- If you're experiencing computer audio issues, you may choose to dial-in.

Prayer

LIFE IS YOUR GIFT TO US

God, life is Your gift to us. Through Baptism, You invite us to share the gift of life in service to others. Be with us as we choose each day to show Your presence in our world. Give us the courage to respond to Your call and to invite others as well.

We pray especially for those who serve You in all ministries in our parishes and all those whom who serve. Grant that we all may continue to bear the Good News through our words and actions. Open the minds and hearts of the many, that they may accept Your challenge to build the kingdom in our parishes.

Lord Jesus, You tell us that the meaning of life consists in giving. Help us to realize that it is not riches or power, or fame that gives life meaning. Rather, it is generosity and service to You and others that brings true fulfillment and makes life worthwhile. May all of our service help us to build Your Kingdom. Amen

Introduction- Jessica Brandt



- Parish Relations/Volunteer Coordinator at Catholic Charities
- Vice President of the Association of Volunteer Managers serving Southeastern Wisconsin
- 8+ years of experience coordinating volunteers in various aspects
- Presented at the Human Concerns Summit in 2019
- Parishioner at St. Mary's Visitation in Elm Grove



Schedule of Sessions

Wednesday March 30 at 11 a.m. CST Session 1- Managing Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

Wednesday April 13 at 11 a.m. CST Session 2- Engaging with Youth Volunteers

Wednesday April 27 at 11 a.m. CST Session 3- Volunteer Program Strategies

Previous sessions and recordings: [Social Justice Training | Successful Volunteer Engagement \(archmil.org\)](#)

Outline

- Compassion and Compassion Fatigue
- Burnout
- What you can do: Volunteers
- What you can do for you!

Objectives

- Understand what Compassion Fatigue and Burnout are
- Identify the signs and symptoms
- Have actionable items to prevent it

‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father.
Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
a stranger and you welcomed me,
naked and you clothed me,
ill and you cared for me,
in prison and you visited me.’
Then the righteous will answer him and say,
‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you,
or thirsty and give you drink?
When did we see you a stranger and welcome you,
or naked and clothe you?
When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’
And the king will say to them in reply,
‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did
for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’



**The fruit of love is service,
which is compassion in
action.**

Mother Teresa

EVERYDAYPOWER

Compassion

- “Compassion means trying to share and understand the suffering of people. And I think it’s very good when people suffer. To me, that’s really like a kiss from Jesus. And a sign, also, that this person has come so close to Jesus, sharing his passion.”
- “Compassion is the joy of sharing. It’s doing small things for the love of each other—just a smile, or carrying a bucket of water, or showing some simple kindness. These are the small things that make up compassion.”



Why talk about Compassion?

- When we are best, we are extremely compassionate
- Through our work, we see the challenges and struggles within the community *and* help to create solutions so that individuals can overcome these.
- We want to help!

Extra Terms!

- **Empathy:** the ability to sense other people's emotions, coupled with the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling. Engage others in how you would want to be engaged
- **Altruism:** Acting to promote the well-being of someone else, even if it's detrimental to self-interest.



**"DO NOT ALLOW YOURSELVES TO BE
DISHEARTENED BY ANY FAILURE AS LONG
AS YOU HAVE DONE YOUR BEST."
MOTHER TERESA**

Compassion Fatigue and |
Burnout |

What is Compassion Fatigue?

- As we experience the suffering of others, we may encounter a repeated inability to alleviate suffering and beginning to feel discouraged
- When compassion is defined as an active response to empathy, a lack of empathy creates a lack of compassion
- When the ability to put oneself in another's shoes is lost, and emotions are not experienced or expressed, we lose the passion to serve



What is Burnout?

Burnout is a state of **emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion** caused by **excessive and prolonged stress**.

It occurs when you feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands.

Stress vs Burnout

Stress looks like...

- too much work
- too many tasks
- too many interruptions
- too many projects, and
- too many meetings

Burnout presents as...

- not enough support
- not enough time
- not enough money
- not enough resources
- not enough staff, and
- not enough volunteers

What you notice

- Feeling tired and drained most of the time.
- Change in appetite or sleep habits.
- Loss of motivation.
- Negative outlook
- Decreased satisfaction and sense of accomplishment
- Withdrawing from responsibilities.
- Isolating yourself from others.
- Procrastinating, taking longer to get things done

What's the difference?

- Compassion fatigue and “burnout,” are different even though the two words are sometimes used interchangeably
- Both compassion fatigue and burnout result from repetitive emotional involvement with other people and prolonged exposure to traumatic stress
- Compassion fatigue has an acute, or sudden onset
- Burnout has a slower, more insidious, trajectory.
- An unsupportive work **environment** is likely to lead to **burnout** and **compassion fatigue** as a repeated inability to **alleviate suffering**
- Compassion fatigue and burnout do often go hand-in-hand

[Kindness Combats Compassion Fatigue - Think Kindness](#)

Introductions

- Take a moment to reflect on Compassion Fatigue and Burnout
- Where do you see this in your work and how it can affect your volunteers



Your Volunteers

What can you do to
help alleviate burnout
and compassion
fatigue

Why do Volunteers Volunteer?

People volunteer for a variety of reasons:

- They want to make a difference
- Give back to their community
- Personal tie to the cause
- Meeting like-minded, motivated, positive people
- Creates empowerment
- Volunteering gives greater perspective and self-awareness

Causes of Compassion Fatigue and Burnout in Volunteers

- Not prepared for working directly with clients in crisis
- Do not know how to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with those they serve
- Experience a kind of “culture shock” as they immerse themselves in new communities and new contexts.
- The increase in stress of new challenges, program changes etc.
- Disappointment of unmet expectations (their own, the clients, or the program).
- Not seeing their impact
- There aren't enough volunteers to manage the tasks at hand- overworked
- Lack of support and appreciation for Volunteers

A silhouette of a person with long hair and glasses, looking out over a sunset or ocean. The person is in the foreground, and the background shows a horizon line with a warm, orange glow from the sun setting or rising. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

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What you can do

- Set clear expectations
- Create achievable goals and workloads
- Set appropriate boundaries
- Provide appropriate training and ongoing support
- Connect their work to the purpose
- **Celebrate accomplishments!**
- Check in and have a conversation around it

Now that we have talked about this more, where have you seen this in your volunteers? What have you done?



The Volunteer Coordinator

Let's focus on burn out

Stress vs Burnout

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- too many tasks
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Burnout presents as...

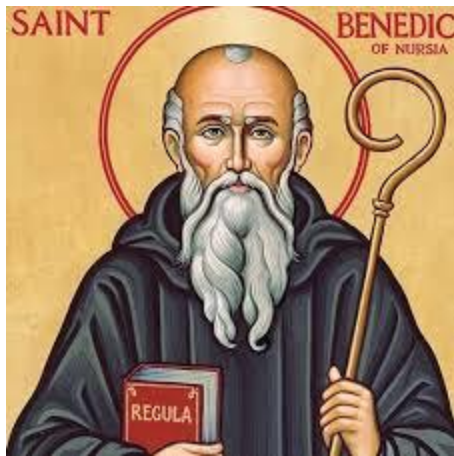
- not enough support
- not enough time
- not enough money
- not enough resources
- not enough staff, and
- not enough volunteers

What you can do- Seek Support

- Find with others who do similar type work (like your fellow attendees)
- It's important to our wellbeing that we “find our people,” especially when faced with challenging situations.
- These are the people who will help you travel through frustrations and challenges, celebrate your wins
- **Contact Rob or Jessica on questions/concerns etc.**

What you can do- Work/Life Balance

- More people work from home or this isn't their primary role
- Set boundaries about what you can and can't accomplish and communicate it
- If you are starting to feel stretched thin, it's likely because someone exceeded your boundary for work-life balance.
- By setting boundaries, and being clear and open about them, you are communicating to your boss that you respect your own wellbeing and the quality of work you can put out.



Benedictines **should not be consumed by work, nor should they spend so much time in prayer that responsibilities are neglected.** According to Benedict, all things – eating, drinking, sleeping, reading, working, and praying – should be done in moderation



Have a great compassion for people. To be able to have a heart full of compassion, we need to pray. Especially be kind, be loving to the poor. We think we do so much for the poor, but it is they who make us rich. We are in debt to them. Do you want to do something beautiful for God? There is a person who needs you. This is your chance.

— *Mother Teresa* —

AZ QUOTES

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, I do understand and believe that You are present, in hidden form, in the weakest of the weak, the poorest of the poor and in the sinner in our midst. Help me to diligently seek You out in each and every person I encounter, especially those in most need. As I find You, may I love You and serve You with my whole heart. Jesus, I trust in You.

Questions/ Discussion





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of MILWAUKEE

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Many Hands. One Vision.



Catholic Stewardship Appeal

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

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