Course: a guide to overcoming compassion fatigue with compassion resilience

Address: https://asadis.net/en/course/from-compassion-fatigue-to-compassion-resilience-a-guide-and-toolbox-for-healthcare-professionals/

Duration: 5h

Type of course: Continuing education

Location: Online course

Individual price: $200.00

Overview:
Therapeutic presence carries a measurable physiological cost. Empathic attunement relies on neural pathways that, when sustained or repeatedly activated without adequate autonomic regulation, can progressively degrade the very capacity they support. As a result, the very mechanism of therapeutic presence becomes a source of burnout.

This course offers a Polyvagal-informed lens for distinguishing empathic distress from compassionate engagement. Through it, you will explore the neuroscience of compassion fatigue and understand why certain practitioners maintain resilience while others experience progressive depletion under similar clinical demands.

Central to this exploration is the relationship between vagal states and sustained compassion. You will learn to assess your own autonomic responses and recognize the early physiological markers of compassion fatigue before they escalate into burnout or secondary traumatic stress.

Evidence-based practices drawn from contemplative neuroscience and somatic psychology provide the foundation for strengthening nervous system flexibility. These include vagal toning exercises, compassion meditation protocols, gratitude practices, and character strengths applications — from immediate interventions like the three-breath reset to longer-term practices like loving-kindness meditation.

Practical tools for maintaining compassionate presence without emotional depletion round out the curriculum:

methods for reducing mind wandering during sessions, cultivating appropriate therapeutic distance, and applying neuroplasticity principles to build lasting resilience. Assessment instruments are included to help monitor your professional quality of life and identify personal risk factors.

Each technique is grounded in research demonstrating measurable outcomes — improved heart rate variability, reduced emotional exhaustion, enhanced perspective-taking, and sustained compassion satisfaction — and can be applied immediately in clinical practice.

By course completion, you will have a neuroscience-based framework for understanding compassion fatigue and a repertoire of specific interventions. These skills will allow you to sustain therapeutic presence across demanding clinical encounters, recover more rapidly from vicarious traumatization, and maintain the sense of purpose that drew you to this work — with direct benefits for both your professional effectiveness and your patients' outcomes.

Learning objectives:

1. Analyze the concept of compassion fatigue and establish how it relates to secondary trauma and burnout
2. Assess the factors that can contribute to compassion fatigue
3. Investigate the role of autonomic nervous system reactions in compassion fatigue
4. Employ evidence-based strategies from mindfulness and mental health treatments to reduce stress and increase well-being

Learning material:

A theoretical course illustrated with clinical examples. This course is composed of videos of 5 to 15 minutes each. The PowerPoint of the course to download.

Audience: This training is intended for mental health professionals.

The expert

Dr. Debra Alvis is a licensed psychologist and internationally recognized expert in compassion fatigue prevention whose evidence-based trainings have supported thousands of healthcare professionals across medical and mental health settings worldwide. Her specialized programs have been implemented at major university health centers, helping clinicians sustain therapeutic presence while preventing burnout and secondary traumatic stress.

As founder of the Mind/Body Program at the University of Georgia, Dr. Alvis trained doctoral-level clinicians in integrative approaches that combine contemplative practices with modern neuroscience. Her research team explored applied mindfulness interventions, and she supervised psychology doctoral students while serving as university faculty. This academic foundation informs her practical, research-grounded approach to professional resilience.

For over two decades, Dr. Alvis has specialized in designing individual and group interventions that address the unique demands faced by professionals in empathy-intensive fields. Her work focuses on enhancing stress hardiness, work-life integration, and sustainable compassion through Polyvagal-informed interventions,

somatic psychotherapies, and contemplative neuroscience applications.

Dr. Alvis holds certifications as both a mindfulness meditation teacher and yoga therapist (C-IAYT), along with specialized training in mind-body medicine (MMT). She maintains an active psychotherapy practice and leads international retreats, bringing a deeply integrative perspective to clinical training. Her presentations combine rigorous scientific grounding with immediately applicable tools that clinicians can implement to protect their wellbeing while maintaining therapeutic effectiveness.

Her compassion fatigue programs emphasize measurable outcomes including improved heart rate variability, reduced emotional exhaustion, and sustained compassion satisfaction, making her trainings particularly valuable for organizations seeking evidence-based approaches to clinician wellness and retention.

Syllabus

PowerPoint
Introduction
Movement, Breath, and Sound Practice
Disclaimers
Compassion Fatigue – How it Impacts Helthcare Professionals
Call The Spirit Back
Defining Compassion and Suffering
Empathy and Compassion Fatigue
History of Compassion Fatigue
How Compassion Fatigue Diminishes Your Ability to Nurture
Compassion Satisfaction
The Neuroscience & Physiology of Compassion
Chanting & Song
The ethics of self-care
Signs and Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue
Identifying Compassion Fatigue
Identify Triggers for Emotional Distress
Restore Clarity
Take a Serotonin Break
Character Strengths and Virtues
Enhance Gratitude and Well-Being
Build Competence and Compassion by Being Present
Neuroplasticity Stories and Metaphors
The Benefits of Compassion Meditation
The Compassion and Empathy Toolkit
The Language of the Amygdala
Emotional Regulation, Self-Compassion & Mindfulness
Strenghen Awareness of Stress Response & Shift to Relaxation Response
Avoid Compassion Fatigue

GRACE and Release the Negative
Creating a Healthy Home/Work Balance
Bring Calm After Shifts With Relaxation Techniques that Work
How to rewire your brain towards happiness
Food as medicine
Empathic Joy
Retention and Resiliency Strategies
Stair-Steps Towards Building Resilient Practitioners
Conclusion

Evaluation:
To validate the achievement of the learning objectives, a final evaluation in the form of true/false questions is required. It must be completed in order to obtain the certificate of completion.
In addition, an optional self-assessment is offered at the beginning and end of the course, allowing you to measure your progress on the targeted skills.
These evaluations are not graded and are intended primarily to support your professional reflection.

Access timeline: Once registration is confirmed, you (or the learner) may start the training at any time, independently and at your own pace. You can access the training for as long as Asadis as the legal right to diffuse it (typically 10 years).

Questions? Feel free to contact us at *contact@asadis.net*