

## How Much is your Professional Helping Affecting your Well-Being? (The Professional Quality of Life Scale, ProQOL)

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### Instructions

Do you engage in a form of helping as part of your profession? If so, how much you enjoy and persist in your line of work may be dependent on how much compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue you experience as part of this job. This well-established measure has gone through several revisions, and is a reliable measure of your overall professional quality of life, as indicated through your compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue. Here are the instructions from the developer of this measure:

When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you help can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the answer that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the last 30 days.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1. I am happy.					
2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].					
3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.					
4. I feel connected to others.					
5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.					
6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].					
7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].					
8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person that I [help].					
9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].					
10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].					
11. Because of my helping, I have felt "on edge" about various things.					
12. I like my work as a [helper].					
13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experience of the people I [help].					
14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].					

15. I have beliefs that sustain me.					
16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with helping techniques and protocols.					
17. I am the person I always wanted to be.					
18. My work makes me feel satisfied.					
19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].					
20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I can help them.					
21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load					
22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.					
23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].					
24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].					
25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.					
26. I feel “bogged down” by the system.					
27. I have thoughts that I am a “success” as a [helper].					
28. I can’t recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.					
29. I am a very caring person.					
30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.					

### Scoring

Total Compassion Satisfaction = Sum Items 3, 6, 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 27 and 30.

Total Burnout = Sum Items 1, 4, 8, 10, 15, 17, 19, 21, 26 and 29.

Total Secondary Traumatic Scale = 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 23, 25 and 28

### Reverse Scoring

Items 1, 4, 15, 17 and 29 are reverse-scored

### Interpretation

For Compassion Satisfaction, scores of 22 and less indicate low compassion satisfaction, while scores between 23 and 41 indicate average compassion satisfaction and scores of 42 and more indicate high compassion satisfaction. The average score is 50. If you are in the higher range, you probably derive a good deal of professional satisfaction from your position. If your scores are below 40, you may either find problems with your job, or there may be some other reason—for example, you might derive your satisfaction from activities other than your job.

For Burnout, scores of 22 and less indicate low burnout, while scores between 23 and 41 indicate average burnout and scores of 42 and more indicate high burnout. The average score is 50. If your score is below 43, this probably reflects positive feelings about your ability to be effective in your work. If you score above 57 you may wish to think about what at work makes you feel like you are not effective in your position. Your score may reflect your mood; perhaps you were having a “bad day” or are in need of some time off. If the high score persists or if it is reflective of other worries, it may be a cause for concern.

For Secondary Traumatic Stress, scores of 22 and less indicate low secondary traumatic stress, while scores between 23 and 41 indicate average secondary traumatic stress and scores of 42 and more indicate high secondary traumatic stress. The average score is 50. If your score is above 57, you may want to take some time to think about what at work may be frightening to you or if there is some other reason for the elevated score. While higher scores do not mean that you do have a problem, they are an indication that you may want to examine how you feel about your work and your work environment. You may wish to discuss this with your supervisor, a colleague, or a health care professional.

## Reference

© B. Hudnall Stamm, 2009-2012. Professional Quality of Life: Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Version 5 (ProQOL). [www.proqol.org](http://www.proqol.org).

Emotivity thanks Dr. Beth Hudnall Stamm for her generosity and kindness in making the ProQOL accessible to both researchers and practitioners. Please visit the official ProQOL webpage at [www.proqol.org](http://www.proqol.org)