

**PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)**

**Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue  
(ProQOL) Version 5 (2009)**

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 number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the *last 30 days*.

**1=Never**

**2=Rarely**

**3=Sometimes**

**4=Often**

**5=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 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 experiences 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 could help them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 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.

## Appendix 21-A. The Professional Quality of Life Scale (Continued)

### What is my score and what does it mean?

In this section, you will score your test and then you can compare your score to the interpretation below.

#### Scoring

1. Be certain you respond to all items.
2. Go to items 1, 4, 15, 17 and 29 and reverse your score. For example, if you scored the item 1, write a 5 beside it. We ask you to reverse these scores because we have learned that the test works better if you reverse these scores.

You Wrote	Change to
1	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1

To find your score on **Compassion Satisfaction**, add your scores on questions 3, 6, 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 27, 30.

The sum of my Compassion Satisfaction questions was	So My Score Equals	My Level of Compassion Satisfaction
22 or less	43 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Around 50	Average
42 or more	57 or more	High

To find your score on **Burnout**, add your scores on questions 1, 4, 8, 10, 15, 17, 19, 21, 26 and 29. Find your score on the table below.

The sum of my Burnout questions	So My Score Equals	My Level of Burnout
22 or less	43 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Around 50	Average
42 or more	57 or more	High

To find your score on **Secondary Traumatic Stress**, add your scores on questions 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 23, 25, 28. Find your score on the table below.

The sum of my Secondary Traumatic Stress questions	So My Score Equals	My Level of Secondary Traumatic Stress
22 or less	43 or less	Low
Between 23 and 41	Around 50	Average
42 or more	57 or more	High

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## Appendix 21-A. The Professional Quality of Life Scale (Continued)

### YOUR SCORES ON THE PROQOL: PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCREENING

Based on your responses, your personal scores are below. If you have any concerns, you should discuss them with a physical or mental health care professional.

#### **Compassion Satisfaction** \_\_\_\_\_

Compassion satisfaction is about the pleasure you derive from being able to do your work well. For example, you may feel like it is a pleasure to help others through your work. You may feel positively about your colleagues or your ability to contribute to the work setting or even the greater good of society. Higher scores on this scale represent a greater satisfaction related to your ability to be an effective caregiver in your job.

The average score is 50 (SD 10; alpha scale reliability .88). About 25% of people score higher than 57 and about 25% of people score below 43. 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.

#### **Burnout** \_\_\_\_\_

Most people have an intuitive idea of what burnout is. From the research perspective, burnout is one of the elements of compassion fatigue. It is associated with feelings of hopelessness and difficulties in dealing with work or in doing your job effectively. These negative feelings usually have a gradual onset. They can reflect the feeling that your efforts make no difference, or they can be associated with a very high workload or a non-supportive work environment. Higher scores on this scale mean that you are at higher risk for burnout.

The average score on the burnout scale is 50 (SD 10; alpha scale reliability .75). About 25% of people score above 57 and about 25% of people score below 43. If your score is below 18, 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.

#### **Secondary Traumatic Stress** \_\_\_\_\_

The second component of Compassion Fatigue (CF) is secondary traumatic stress (STS). It is about your work-related, secondary exposure to extremely or traumatically stressful events. Developing problems due to exposure to other’s trauma is somewhat rare but does happen to many people who care for those who have experienced extremely or traumatically stressful events. For example, you may repeatedly hear stories about the traumatic things that happen to other people, commonly called Vicarious Traumatization. You may see or provide treatment to people who have experienced horrific events. If your work puts you directly in the path of danger, due to your work as a soldier or civilian working in military medicine personnel, this is not secondary exposure; your exposure is primary. However, if you are exposed to others’ traumatic events as a result of your work, such as providing care to casualties or for those in a military medical rehabilitation facility, this is secondary exposure. The symptoms of STS are usually rapid in onset and associated with a particular event. They may include being afraid, having difficulty sleeping, having images of the upsetting event pop into your mind, or avoiding things that remind you of the event.

The average score on this scale is 50 (SD 10; alpha scale reliability .81). About 25% of people score below 43 and about 25% of people score above 57. 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.

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## The Holmes-Rahe Life Stress Inventory

### The Social Readjustment Rating Scale

**INSTRUCTIONS: Mark down the point value of each of these life events that has happened to you during the previous year. Total these associated pointed.**

<b>Life Event</b>	
1. Death of spouse	100
2. Divorce	73
3. Marital Separation from mate	65
4. Detention in jail or other institution	63
5. Death of a close family member	63
6. Major personal injury or illness	53
7. Marriage	50
8. Being fired at work	47
9. Marital reconciliation with mate	45
10. Retirement from work	45
11. Major change in the health or behavior of a family member	44
12. Pregnancy	40
13. Sexual Difficulties	39
14. Gaining a new family member (i.e. birth, adoption, older adult moving in, etc.)	39
15. Major business adjustment	39
16. Major change in financial state (i.e. a lot worse or better than usual)	38
17. Death of a close friend	37
18. Changing to a different line of work	36
19. Major change in number of arguments with spouse (i.e. a lot more or less)	35
20. Taking on a mortgage (for home, business, etc.)	31
21. Foreclosure on a mortgage or loan	30
22. Major change in responsibilities at work (i.e. promotion, demotion, etc.)	29
23. Son or daughter leaving home (marriage, college, military, etc.)	29
24. In-law troubles	29
25. Outstanding personal achievement	28
26. Spouse beginning or ceasing work outside the home	26
27. Beginning or ceasing formal schooling	26
28. Major change in living condition (i.e. new home, remodeling, deterioration, etc.)	25
29. Revision of personal habits (i.e. dress, associations, quit smoking, etc.)	24
30. Troubles with the boss	23
31. Major changes in working hours or conditions	20
32. Changes in residence	20
33. Changing to a new school	20
34. Major change in usual type and/or amount of recreation	19
35. Major change in church activity (i.e. a lot more or less)	19
36. Major change in social activities (i.e. clubs, movies, visiting, etc.)	18
37. Taking on a loan (i.e. car, tv, freezer, etc.)	17
38. Major change in sleeping habits (i.e. a lot more or less)	16
39. Major change in number of family get-togethers (i.e. a lot more or less)	15
40. Major change in eating habits (i.e. a lot more or less, eating hours, surroundings, etc)	15
41. Vacation	13
42. Major holidays	12
43. Minor violations of the law (i.e. traffic tickets, jaywalking, etc.)	11

**Now, add up all the points you have to find your score.**

**150pts or less** means a relatively low amount of life change and a low susceptibility to stress-induce health problems.

**150 to 300pts** implies about a 50% chance of a major stress-induced health problem in the next 2 years.

**300pts or more** raises the odds to about 80%, according to the Holmes-Rahe prediction model.

## Activities to Improve Your Spirits

1. Reading novels or magazines
2. Watching TV
3. Renting and watching a video
4. Learning a new craft or hobby
5. Camping
6. Working in politics or for a political or social cause
7. Having lunch with friends
8. Taking a shower
9. Being with animals
10. Singing in a group
11. Going to church socials
12. Playing a musical instrument
13. Going to the beach
14. Rearranging your furniture
15. Reading something spiritual
16. Going to a sports event
17. Playing sports
18. Going to the movies
19. Cooking meals
20. Having a good cry
21. Going to a restaurant
22. Looking at beautiful flowers or plants
23. Saying prayers
24. Canning, making preserves, etc.
25. Taking a bath
26. Making food or crafts to sell or give away
27. Painting or drawing
28. Visiting people who are sick or shut in
29. Bowling
30. Gardening or doing yard work
31. Shopping
32. Sitting in the sun
33. Going to the zoo or amusement park
34. Playing board games
35. Doing outdoor work
36. reading the newspaper
37. Swimming
38. Running, jogging or walking
39. While walking, noticed new things
40. Playing Frisbee
41. Listening to music
42. Knitting, crocheting, needlework
43. Starting a new project
44. Having sex
45. Bird watching
46. Repairing things
47. Bicycling
48. Giving gifts
49. Going on outings (to the park, picnic)
50. Playing basketball
51. Helping someone
52. Seeing beautiful scenery
53. Hiking
54. Going to a museum
55. Fishing
56. Going to a health club
57. Writing letters, cards, notes
58. Going to luncheons, potlucks, etc.
59. Being with my spouse or partner
60. Going on field trips, nature walks, etc.
61. Expressing my love to someone
62. Caring for houseplants
63. Collecting things
64. Sewing
65. Going to auctions, garage sales, etc.
66. Doing volunteer work
67. Seeing old friends
68. Writing to old friends
69. Calling old friends
70. Going to the library

# *Desiderata*

*Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons.*

*Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant, they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit.*

*If you compare yourself to others, you may become vain and bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.*

*Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.*

*Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let not this blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.*

*Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is as perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.*

*Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.*

*Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.*

*Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive him to be, and whatever your labors and aspirations in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul. With all its sham drudgery and broken dreams; it is still a beautiful world.*

*Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.*



On the day when  
the weight deadens  
on your shoulders  
and you stumble,  
may the clay dance  
to balance you.  
And when your eyes  
freeze behind  
the grey window  
and the ghost of loss  
gets in to you,  
may a flock of colours,  
indigo, red, green,  
and azure blue  
come to awaken in you  
a meadow of delight.

When the canvas frays  
in the currach of thought  
and a stain of ocean  
blackens beneath you,  
may there come across the waters  
a path of yellow moonlight  
to bring you safely home.

May the nourishment of the earth be yours,  
may the clarity of light be yours,  
may the fluency of the ocean be yours,  
may the protection of the ancestors be yours.

And so may a slow  
wind work these words  
of love around you,  
an invisible cloak  
to mind your life.

**beannacht - john o'donohue**