

COMPASSION FATIGUE CAN IMPACT US ALL

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO AVOID IT, WRITES MELANIE MCGREGOR



MELANIE MCGREGOR
Column

While being sensitive to the feelings and experiences of others is definitely a good thing, too much of this can leave us feeling worn out and challenge our ability to help.

It's called compassion fatigue: emotional withdrawal and exhaustion that comes from caring for others over time.

Basically, it's when you've given and felt so much that your emotions need to take a hiatus. You might feel less concern or react less to their experiences not because you don't care, but because you've cared so much that you are tapped out for the time being.

While we may associate this with helping professions, it can be experienced by anyone.

Signs of compassion fatigue can include finding it challenging to hear about the feelings of others, dismissing or downplaying their difficult experiences, and feeling less effective and hopeful about helping.

Others may feel you are being negative or insensitive, but it's really your emotions saying they're taking a break.

However, we can't always put a total pause on caring. If it's part of our day-to-day life, separating

ourselves may not be an option. Instead, it's about doing what we can to cope, recover our compassion and care. Consider these suggestions:

- Set and stick to boundaries. Know the limits of your professional role and recognize that the boundaries in your personal relationships may fluctuate depending on the other demands in your life.

- Have reasonable goals. You can't do everything or fix someone's problems in an instant. Expecting too much of ourselves can lead to giving more and more energy and feeling exhausted when we don't reach the goals we've set.

- Seek out professional and personal support. Talking things out can help redirect our energy from resisting feelings to exploring the experiences that have exhausted our compassion.

- Be patient. Compassion fatigue doesn't go away because we go for a massage or meditate - it builds up over time and will take time to improve.

Most importantly, have compassion for yourself. It will help you take the right steps to get back to caring in meaningful ways.

Melanie McGregor is the communications and advancement specialist at the Canadian Mental Health Association Halton Region Branch, which provides mental health/addiction community support and education. Visit www.halton.cmha.ca for more information and follow @cmhahalton on Twitter.

MORE ONLINE

SIGN UP FOR OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AT THEIFP.CA

TO LEARN HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR OWN CONTENT VISIT THEIFP.CA



STOCK MARKET CAN PROVIDE USEFUL INVESTING INSIGHTS

Do you want to know the best place to look for reliable information on the stock market?

The answer is simple. Look to the stock market.

The reason is buyers and sellers come together to trade a stock.

Both sides to the transaction must be satisfied and agree on a price; otherwise, no trade would be made.

That sale price can be your best proxy to the value of a stock.

That answers the first question many investors have: What is a stock worth?

The second question is what amount of return should you expect if you hold a strongly diversified portfolio?

Again we will look to the

considered. Stock returns are not consistent. About every one in four years, stock market values decreased.

Plain and simple, that's how the stock market works.

Our recommendation is to accept this reality.



PETER WATSON
Column

market. Since 1926, the average annual return of the stock portfolio is 10 per cent. This information is based on the S&P 500 Index that tracks 500 U.S. large companies.

The return for individual investors over that period is reduced by any management fees and trading costs incurred.

In order to be realistic with your expectations as to potential future returns, a couple of things should be

Peter Watson is registered with Aligned Capital Partners Inc. (ACPI) to provide investment advice. Investment products are provided by ACPI. ACPI is a member of the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada. The opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of ACPI. Only investment-related products and services are offered through Watson Securities of ACPI. Watson provides wealth management services through Watson Investments. He can be reached at www.watsoninvestments.com.

ABOUT US

This newspaper, published every Thursday, is a division of the Metroland Media Group Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Torstar Corporation. The Metroland family of newspapers is comprised of more than 70 community publications across Ontario.

This newspaper is a member of the National NewsMedia Council. Complainants are urged to bring their concerns to the attention of the newspaper and, if not satisfied, write The National NewsMedia Council, Suite 200, 890 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M4W 2H2. Phone: 416-340-1981 Web: www.mediacouncil.ca

nnc
National NewsMedia Council

ocna

newsroom@theifp.ca
IndependentAndFreePress
@IFP_11

WHO WE ARE

Publisher and Chief Executive Officer
Neil Oliver
Vice President, Content, Community and Operations
Dana Robbins
Regional General Manager
Jason Pehora
Director of Content
Lee Ann Waterman
Deputy Director of Content
Catherine O'Hara
Managing Editor
Karen Miceli
Director of Distribution
Charlene Hall
Circulation Manager
Kim Mossman
Directors of Advertising
Cindi Campbell and Graeme MacIntosh
Director Creative Services
Paul Gostlin

CONTACT US

The Independent & Free Press
901 Guelph Line
Burlington, ON L7R 3N8
Phone: 905-873-0301
Classifieds: 1-800-263-6480
Fax: 905-873-0398

Letters to the editor
All letters must be fewer than 320 words and include your name and telephone number for verification purposes. We reserve the right to edit, condense or reject letters. Published letters will appear in print and/or online at theifp.ca

Delivery

For all delivery inquiries, please e-mail lpolar@mitoncanadianchampion.com or call 905-234-1019.

Accredited
FDSA
Accredited