

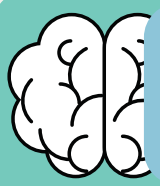
Practicing Self-Care Through Self-Compassion

What is Self-Care?

Self-care is taking care of our minds, bodies, and souls by engaging in activities that promote well-being and reduce stress. However, self-care may not be enough. Caregivers especially struggle to take time out for themselves. Research suggests practicing **self-compassion** as a key element in helping to make caregiving less frustrating and in reducing the feeling of burnout.

Self-Compassion

Self-compassion involves acting with kindness and understanding towards ourselves when we are having a difficult time or notice something we don't like about ourselves.



Mindfulness

- Willingness to observe our negative thoughts and emotions with openness and clarity so that they are held in mindful awareness.
- Non-judgmental, receptive mind state in which we observe our thoughts and feelings as they are without trying to suppress or deny them.



Self-Kindness

- We cannot always be or get exactly what they want of course, but when this reality is denied or fought against, suffering increases in the form of stress, frustration, and self-criticism.
- When this reality is accepted with sympathy and kindness, greater emotional calmness and control is experienced.



Common Humanity

- Self-compassion involves recognizing that suffering and personal inadequacy is part of the *shared human experience* – something we all go through rather than something that happens to "me" alone
- Frustration of not having things exactly as we want is often accompanied by a pervasive sense of isolation.

Data adapted from "Practicing Self-Care Through Self-Compassion", a webinar originally held on 8/11/2021.
Presented by August Cheetham



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How to Cultivate Self-Compassion

1. Changing your critical self-talk

- a. Involves noticing when we are being self-critical. Whenever you're feeling bad about something, think about what you've just said to yourself. You want to be able to get to know the inner self-critic very well and to become aware of when your inner judge is active.

2. Ask yourself "How would I treat a friend?"

- a. How would you respond to a friend who is feeling bad about themselves or struggling in some ways? What factors or fears come into play that lead you to treat yourself and other so differently? Why not treat yourself like a good friend and see what happens?

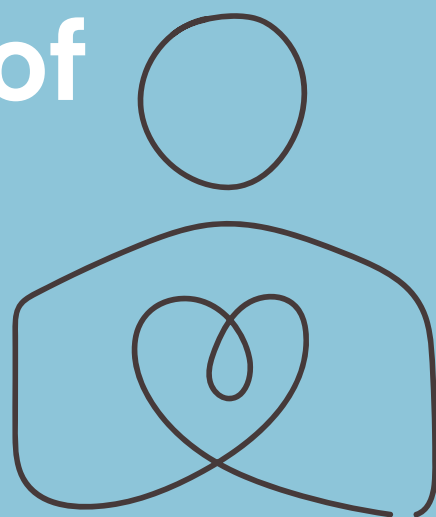
3. Take a self-compassion break

- a. Think of a situation that is difficult or is causing you stress. Call the situation to mind and see if you can actually feel the stress and emotional discomfort in your body. Say to yourself "This is a moment of suffering, and that is a part of life" "May I be kind to myself."

4. Supportive Touch

- a. Touch activates the part of the nervous system that helps us to calm down and feel safe. Give yourself a hug! Your body responds to the physical gesture of warmth and care.. our skin is an incredibly sensitive organ.

Take care of yourself to
better take care of
others.



Resources

www.self-compassion.org

www.multiculturalcaregiving.net/self-care-and-self-compassion-two-powerful-caregiving-tools

www.scrubbing.in/how-to-practice-self-care-through-self-compassion

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