



SHOW UP & SHOW OUT:

BRING YOUR BEST SELF TO THE COLLABORATIVE TABLE

Smith, N, Gilman, D. & Dobson, S

**9AM –9:10AM**

### **Greeting and Minute of Meditation**

- Emotional Backdraft explanation for safe spaces (see exercise A)
- Minute of Meditation exercise ("Slow Breathing" B)
  - Even small amounts of meditation have been shown to reduce anxiety, increase our ability to think creatively and help us see from other perspectives
  - Acknowledge this at the outset and encourage everyone to just do their best to be fully present. Then lead them through a basic mindfulness exercise: Ask them to simply focus on their breath for one minute.

**9:10– 10 AM**

### **Introduction to Self-Compassion**

USE SLIDIO WORD CLOUD TO ASK PARTICIPANTS TO DEFINE TERMS (Handout C) . Discuss the definitions in the research and how they apply to today's workshop.

PLAY A VIDEO to illustrate COMPASSION VS. EMPATHY (2min)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjDu\\_7xGy6w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjDu_7xGy6w)

**10–10:15 AM**

### **Large Group Exercise**

Imagine Showing Compassion (Handout D)  
10 minutes to complete  
5 minutes to share in pairs (2 min each)

**10:15 –10:30AM**

### **BREAK**

**10:30 –11 AM**

### **What is self-compassion? And why should we care?**

- Overview of Research
  - Paul Gilbert and Kristen Neff emphasize 3 key things:
  - Awareness (Mindfulness); Normalizing (Shared Humanity); Kindness.
  - + Self-Soothe component in Gilbert's research

HOW COLLABORATIVE PROFESSIONALS BENEFIT FROM THE PRACTICE OF SELF-COMPASSION

**11 –11:10 AM**

### **The Science of Self-Compassion**

LESS SELF-FOCUSED  
COPING AND RESILIENCE  
MOTIVATION  
HEALTHIER BEHAVIORS  
MORE FOCUSED ON OTHERS



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**11:10 – 11:45 AM**

**Barriers to Self-Compassion & the Inner Self-Critic**

- The opposite of self-compassion, self-criticism will be explored
  - Self-criticism activates the threat system (Handouts E-F)
- Cognitive Distortions
  - Stinkin Thinkin SLIDIO POLL (Handouts G &H)
- Positive Beliefs about self-criticism (Handout I)
- Review the Self-Critical Cycle (Handout J)

**11:45 AM–12 PM**

**Large Group Exercise**

Identifying (what you really want (Handout J)

10 minutes to complete

SLIDIO WORD CLOUD

5 minutes to reflect in small groups (build common humanity)

**12:00**

**LUNCH**

**1– 1:10 PM**

**Building Self-Compassion: SELF COMPASSION SCALE**

SLIDIO POLL (Handout K)

**1:10 –1:40 PM**

**Building Self-Compassion: Mindfulness (Awareness)**

- Mindfulness Scale (Handout L)
- How we think can be so important in determining how we feel emotionally and physically and can influence what we do.
- Rather than just accept self-critical thoughts as true, instead use your breathing and compassionate image to shift your mindset into self-compassion gear (handout M)
- VIDEO

**Methods of Building Mindfulness in Daily Life**

- Introduce two ways to bring a more compassionate perspective and tone to the way you are thinking about a specific problem:
  - Compassionate Thought Diaries
  - Compassionate Letter Writing
- Appreciating the positives more generally in day-to-day life
  - Pleasure Task Focusing
  - Appreciation Logbook/Reflection
  - Taking in the Good (Handout M)
- Developing an image that triggers compassionate feelings
  - imagining giving compassion to another person you care deeply about
  - creating your own ultimate compassionate image.



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**1:40–2:10 PM**

### **Building Self-Compassion: Common Humanity vs. Isolation**

- The mere fact that we are human beings means that we are imperfect and mortal. The emotion of compassion is interactive and stems from our recognition that feelings of imperfection mortality are universal.
- , instead of understanding our flaws, mistakes or suffering in the light of common humanity, we tend to feel isolated and disconnected from others when we make mistakes, suffer or fail. This is not a rational thought process but rather an irrational feeling.

#### **Large Group Exercise**

Common Humanity

15 minutes to complete

SLIDIO WORD CLOUD

5 minutes to reflect in small groups (build common humanity)

**2:10 – 2:50 PM**

### **Building Self-Compassion: Self-Kindness & Self-Soothe**

- Changing Your Critical self-talk (Handout N)
  - Reflection (Handout O)
- HOW DO I KNOW WHEN I'M STRESSED (SLIDIO)
- Self Care
  - Self care wheel (Handouts P & Q)
- Squad Care
  - Building Team Resilience (Handout R)

#### **Small Group Exercise**

- Handout S
- Squad Care Goals (How to show up for the team)
- 10 minutes
- 5 minutes share with the group

**2:50– 3:00 PM**

### **Putting it All Together**

Reflection of the 3 components of Self-Compassion (handout S)

3 Action Items

Burning Questions



## What can you do when 'Backdraft' occurs?

**Thankfully each of us already holds the capacity to work with painful feelings that can arise from beginning a practice of self-love. Here are some specific things that can help:**

- 1) Keep offering yourself compassion! Especially for difficult emotions that arise in the present moment.**
- 2) Label what's happening by saying to yourself something like, "I know this, this is 'backdraft'."**
- 3) Name the strongest emotion present. This can bring clarity and recognition to whatever is arising. It really helps to name the emotion with a kind tone of voice. For example, "Ah, this is grief."**
- 4) Explore with open curiosity where you feel the sensation of the emotion in your body. Perhaps you feel a constriction in your throat, tightness in your chest, a buzzing sensation in your head. It can also help to notice where you feel good in your body. Recognizing how our bodies are experiencing a particular emotion can be grounding. It can also help take us out of spinning thoughts about our experience, and allow us to be present to what is actually happening in the here-and-now.**
- 5) If you've located where a painful emotion is manifesting in your felt-body experience, you can offer soothing touch. To do this, place your palm wherever you're experiencing the sensation most strongly, and become aware of the warmth of your hand. You can visualize something soothing like light around your palm or the area of tension in your body, or just hold a warm and caring attitude for your experience.**
- 6) If the experience is extremely distressing, try redirecting your attention to something outside of yourself, like a noise, the feeling of your feet on the ground, a walk outside, or an image you find particularly attractive. There's no need to push an overly intense experience, so please take care of yourself if strong negative emotions arise or persist.**

**Re-experiencing painful emotions from the past can be extremely painful and confusing if we don't know why they're arising. These are some helpful guidelines for working with 'emotional backdraft' (adapted from the MSC program) that I hope will support you on your path. If you have something that you know works for you or want to tweak any of the above suggestions to better suit you, then please do. They're here for you to use and make your own.**

**"Love reveals anything unlike itself." By stepping into a journey of self-love, we're inviting a new way of being with ourselves. Trust that whatever wounds are revealed from beginning this practice are here to be healed, acknowledged, and embraced with compassion. You have all the tools within you to do this skillfully.**



# Slow Breathing

Slow breathing is our key to slowing down the body and mind, kick-starting the parasympathetic nervous system. Slow breathing helps us to put the 'pause button on' and reset.

Slow breathing may seem simple, but it is actually a deceptively powerful strategy that can help in switching us from threat to soothe mode.

The normal rate of breathing is 10-14 breaths per minute. When we are anxious and feel under threat, our breathing rate can be much, much higher than this. The type of breathing rate we recommend you try will slow your breathing to about 5 breaths per minute, so we are really winding things down.

Slowing down involves both slowing your rate of breathing and changing your breathing style. Use the following steps to be well on your way to activating the soothe system

Step 1: Ensure that you are sitting in a comfortable position

Step 2: Take a breath in for 4 seconds (through the nose if possible)

Step 3: Hold the breath for 2 seconds

Step 4: Release the breath for 6 seconds (again through the nose if possible)

Step 5: Pause slightly before breathing in again





# Terms We Will Be Discussing

What comes to mind when you hear the following  
(use your slidio link to share anonymously)

**MINDFULNESS**

---

**ACCEPTANCE**

---

**EMPATHY**

---

**LOVING KINDNESS**

---

**AUTHENTICITY**

---

**COMPASSION**

---

**SELF-COMPASSION**

---

**SELF-CARE**

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# Imagine Showing Compassion

**Close your eyes and consider the times when a close friend, colleague, or child was struggling in some way - failed at something, made a mistake, or felt inadequate and you were feeling pretty good that day. How would you typically respond to your friend, colleague, or child in such a situation? What do you say? What tone of voice do you use? Consider your posture and non-verbal gestures.**

**Write down what you notice**

**Next, close your eyes again and reflect on a time you were struggling in the same or similar ways. You had a misfortune, made a mistake or felt inadequate. How do you typically respond to yourself in these situations? What do you say to yourself? Notice the tone of your inner voice? What is your posture like? Do you notice any non-verbal gestures or attitudes?**

**Write down what you notice**

**Now, consider the difference between the two - how you treat a close friend or loved one when they are struggling, and how you treat yourself in the same situation. What do you notice?**

# SELF COMPASSION

## *Self-Kindness vs. Self-Judgment*

Self-compassion entails being warm and understanding toward ourselves when we suffer, fail or feel inadequate, rather than punishing ourselves with self-criticism (Neff, 2003).

We cannot always achieve exactly what we want.

When this reality is denied or fought against suffering increases in the form of stress, frustration, and self-criticism.

Self-compassionate individuals are those who recognize that imperfection and failure are inevitable, and thus tend to be more gentle with themselves when confronted with distressing or unpleasant experiences rather than getting angry when life falls short of self-imposed ideals (Neff, 2015).



## *Common Humanity vs. Isolation*

A self-compassionate individual recognizes that challenges and personal failures are something we all share. They are part of the human experience. In this way, self-compassion helps us understand that suffering is something we all go through and thus helps negate feelings of isolation (Neff, 2003).

## *Mindfulness vs. Over-Identification*

Self-compassion is intimately tied to the practice of mindfulness; that is paying attention to the present moment with complete acceptance of thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations. We cannot ignore our pain and feel compassion for it at the same time (Bishop, Lau, Shapiro, Carlson, Anderson, Carmody, 2004). Through self-compassion, negative emotions are accepted rather than suppressed, denied or exaggerated.



# SELF COMPASSION

## WHAT IS SELF-COMPASSION?

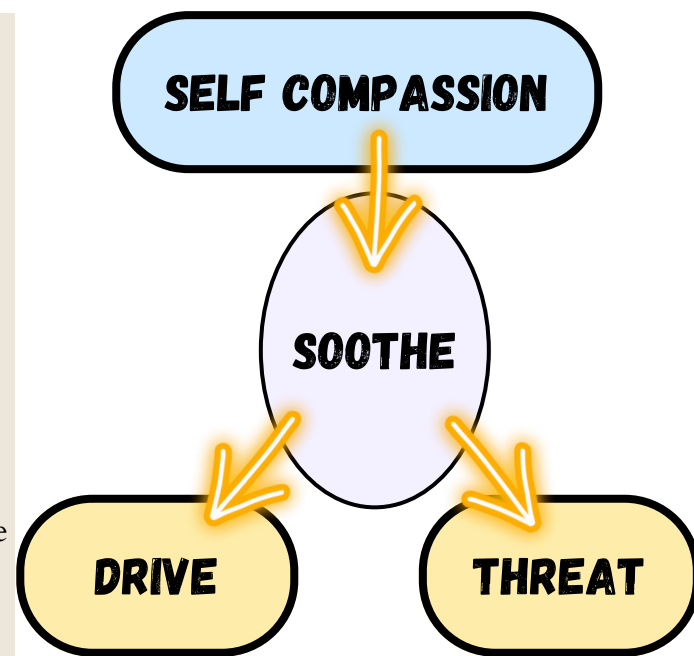
To define self-compassion, we really need to start with what is compassion. The two are really one and the same. Compassion is an attitude that involves a certain set of feelings, thoughts, motives, desires, urges, and behaviors that can be directed towards any living thing (e.g., ourselves, another person, a group of people, a society, animals, the environment).

When we talk about self-compassion, we are specifying that this attitude is being directed internally towards ourselves.

Self-compassion involves being aware of our own pain and suffering, and understanding that while feeling this pain is hard, it is a normal human experience. Directing feelings of kindness and care towards ourselves, and focusing our attention and energy on how we might alleviate our pain, are also crucial components of self-compassion.

## WHY IS SELF-COMPASSION IMPORTANT?

Self-compassion can bring great benefits for our mental health and well-being. Particularly, self-compassion can activate our soothe system, which calms our threat system (the system responsible for detecting potential dangers in order to protect ourselves) and our drive system (the system that spurs us on to get things done and be active in life). This is important, as without our soothe system, our threat and drive systems become overactive and can lead to difficult emotions such as anxiety, anger, and depression.



## THE SELF-CRITICAL SPIRAL

The opposite of self-compassion is self-criticism. We can get stuck in a self-critical cycle, where any problem we face activates our threat system and anxious, angry or depressive responses then follow. If we then use self-criticism as our way of dealing with whatever we are going through, that just keeps the threat system active, and keeps us stuck in the problem and our emotional suffering. Those who are highly self-critical particularly can benefit from developing the ability to relate to themselves in a more compassionate way.



# THREAT, DRIVE, and SOOTHE

Threat = protective mechanism that's hard-wired in us in order to survive. However, it sometimes becomes the default setting so we repetitively think about the bad stuff. This means it can be overactive and in overdrive, as even small mistakes or flaws can be seen as threats to our life, success, finance etc. Pain is seen as a threat to the body so in chronic pain particularly, our threat system is on high alert most of the time.

When we are in threat mode, our thinking quickly becomes narrow and negative. It's difficult to have balanced, rational thoughts as in threat mode, our brain doesn't have time for sophisticated thoughts as it feels it's in danger and needs to react quickly. As such, that's why the negative, irrational thoughts are first to pop up, which is important to understand so we don't berate ourselves for irrational thinking but it's our mind thinking we are in danger!

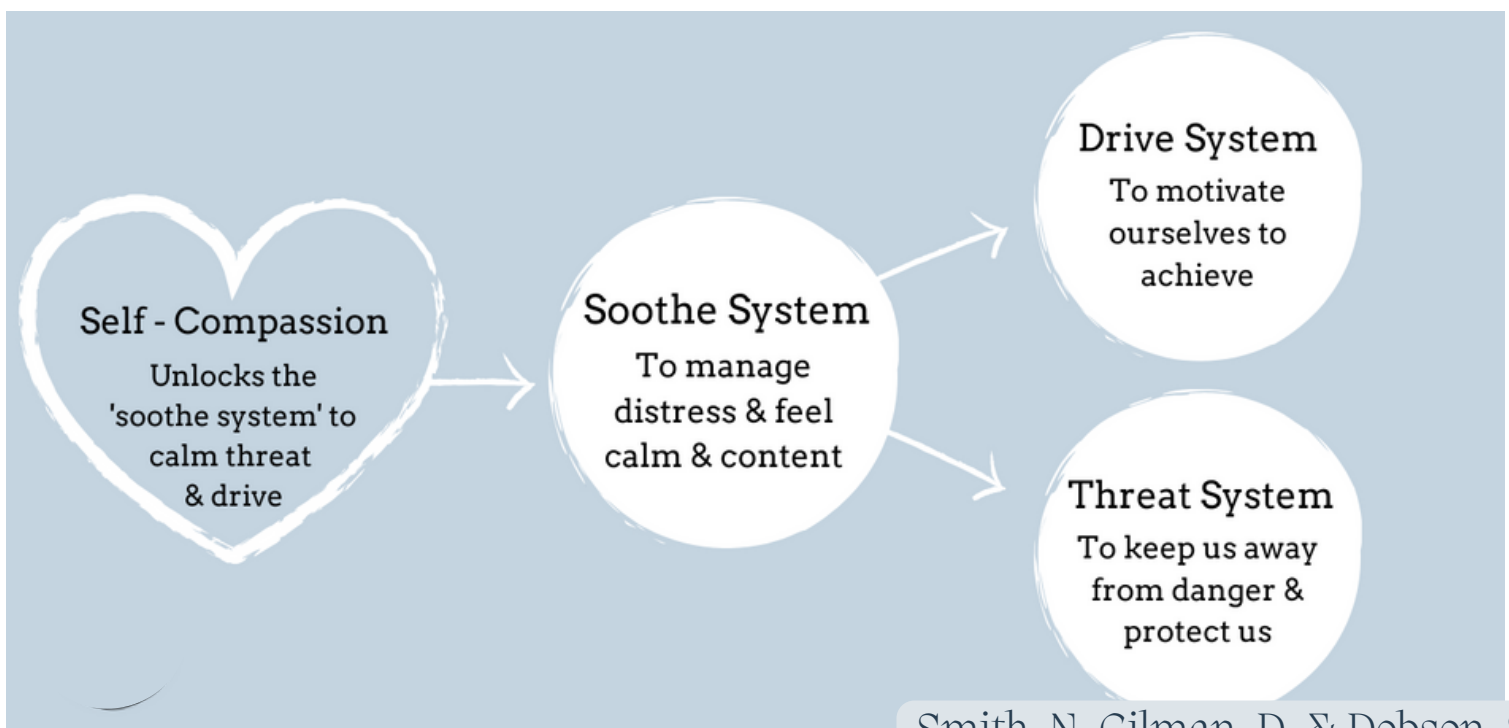
Soothe = to manage distress and calm the threat and drive systems down

The soothe system is at work when we are relaxed, feeling safe, calm, and content. You cannot be in threat mode and soothe mode at the same time, nor can you be in drive and soothe mode at the same time.

Experiences of kindness and care tend to stimulate the soothe system, which is where self-compassion comes in.

Drive = what motivates us to get things done and be active in life.

Without our drive system, we would feel lifeless and directionless (often seen in depression), so it's a really important emotional state. However, similar to threat mode, this can go into overdrive, especially if we compare ourselves to peers or society. We feel we should constantly do more and be better, and if not, then there is something wrong with us, we have failed.



**Fortune Telling**

**Assuming something bad will always happen.**

"No one will come to my party!"

**Minimizing**

**Downplaying the importance of any successes.**

"My award doesn't mean much to me."

**Catastrophizing**

**Thinking the worst situation will happen.**

"I'm definitely going to fail!"

**Self-Blaming**

**Blaming yourself if anything goes wrong.**

"It's all my fault!"

**Mind Reading**

**Assuming you know what someone else is thinking.**

"I definitely know my boss doesn't like me."

**Mental Filtering**

**Hyper-focusing on a negative detail of a situation.**

"It's raining outside! My party is ruined!"

**Should & Must**

**Believing things can only be a certain way.**

"I should always be perfect no matter what."

**Labeling**

**Applying a negative label to yourself.**

"I'm such a loser, no one likes me!"





# STINKIN' THINKIN'

## Why do I listen to my negative thoughts?

To understand this we need to learn a little more about negative automatic thoughts. They have a number of things in common.

- Automatic – they just happen. They pop up without you having to think of them.
- Distorted – when you stop and check you will find that they don't really fit all the facts.
- Continuous – you do not choose to have them and they can't easily be turned off.
- Seem true – they seem to make sense so you accept them as true without stopping to challenge and question them.
- Because our automatic thoughts seem very reasonable, we listen to them.
- We become very familiar with them because we hear them so often.
- The more we hear them, the more we believe and accept that they are true.



# Positive Beliefs about Self-Criticism

Ask yourself the following questions to see if you hold any positive beliefs about the benefits of being self-critical:

- **WHY IS MY MIND CRITICAL?**
- **WHY DOES IT SPEAK TO ME IN THIS CRITICAL WAY?**
  - **WHAT IS ITS MOTIVE?**
  - **WHAT IS ITS AIM?**
  - **WHAT IS IT TRYING TO ACHIEVE?**
- **HOW MIGHT MY MIND BE TRYING TO PROTECT OR HELP ME BY CRITICIZING ME?**
- **IF I WASN'T CRITICAL OF MYSELF, WHAT DO I FEAR MIGHT HAPPEN?**

Self-criticism usually occurs to fulfill at least one of two main aims:

**SELF-IMPROVEMENT**

**OR**

**SELF-PUNISHMENT**

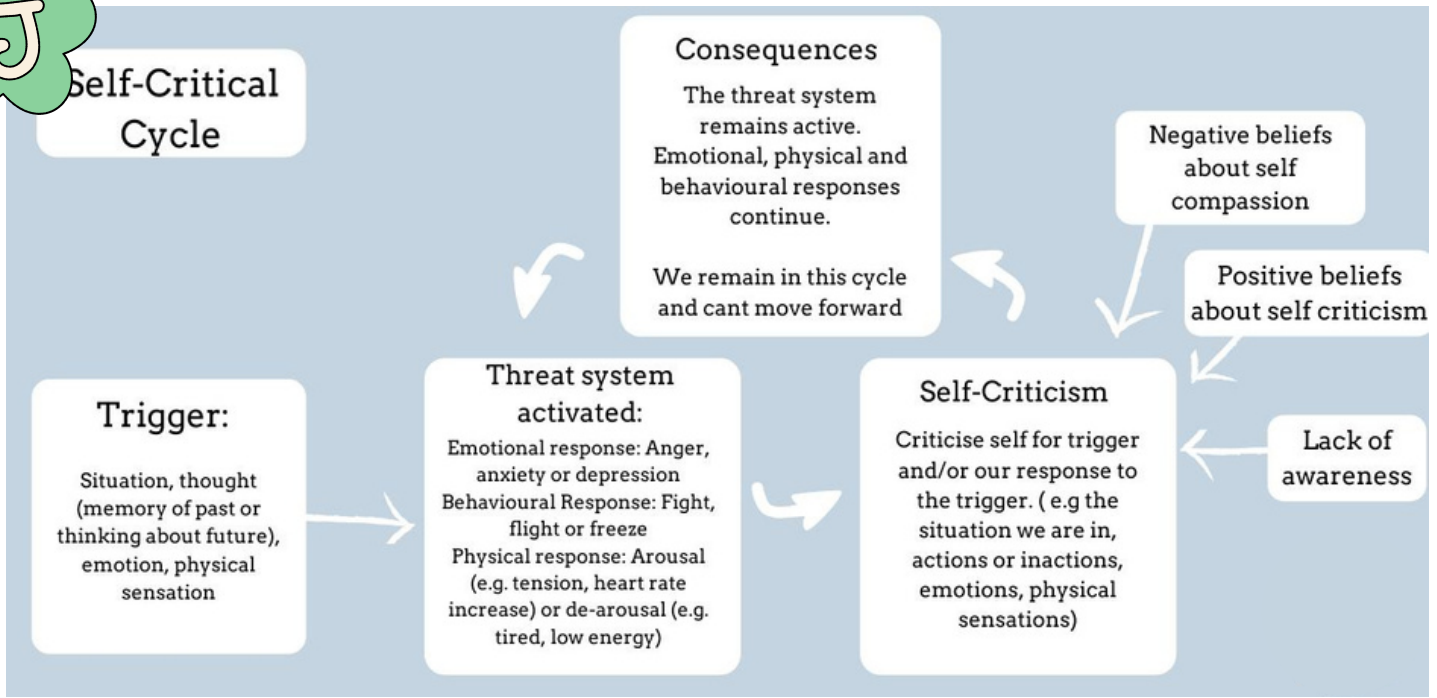
**BEING SELF-CRITICAL HELPS ME BECAUSE:**

**HOW MUCH DO YOU BELIEVE SELF-CRITICISM IS HELPFUL?  
(CIRCLE THE PERCENTAGE THAT BEST DESCRIBES THE STRENGTH OF YOUR BELIEF)**

**0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%**



# Self-Critical Cycle

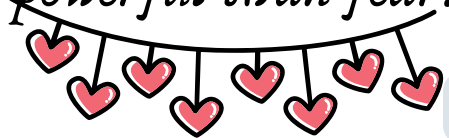


Gilbert, P. & Choden. (2015). Mindful Compassion: Using the Power of Mindfulness and Compassion to Transform Our Lives. Robinson: London.

## Identifying what we really want

1. Think about the ways that you use self-criticism as a motivator. Is there any personal trait that you criticize yourself for having (too overweight, too lazy, too impulsive, etc.) because you think being hard on yourself will help you change? If so, first try to get in touch with the emotional pain that your self-criticism causes, giving yourself compassion for the experience of feeling so judged.
2. Next, see if you can think of a kinder, more caring way to motivate yourself to make a change if needed. What language would a wise and nurturing friend, parent, teacher, or mentor use to gently point out how your behavior is unproductive, while simultaneously encouraging you to do something different. What is the most supportive message you can think of that's in line with your underlying wish to be healthy and happy?
3. Every time you catch yourself being judgmental about your unwanted trait in the future, first notice the pain of your self-judgment and give yourself compassion. Then try to reframe your inner dialogue so that it is more encouraging and supportive.

*Remember that if you really want to motivate yourself, love is more powerful than fear.*



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## Neff's Self-Compassion Scale (Short-form)

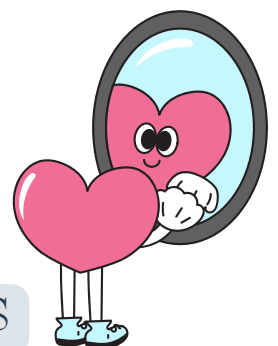
Please respond to each item by marking one box per row		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy. (R)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
2	I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
3	When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
4	When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am. (R)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
5	I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
6	When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
7	When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
8	When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure(R)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
9	When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong. (R)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
10	When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
11	I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies. (R)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
12	I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like. (R)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

### Scoring:

Coding and Scoring Key:	My Scores
Self-Kindness Items: 2, 6	
Self-Judgment Items: 11, 12	
Common Humanity Items: 5, 10	
Isolation Items: 4, 8	
Mindfulness Items: 3, 7	
Over-identified Items: 1, 9	
<b>Total:</b>	

Subscale scores are computed by calculating the mean of subscale item responses. To compute a total self-compassion score, note the reverse scores (the negative subscale items - self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification)- then compute a total mean.

Raes, F., Pommier, E., Neff, K.D., and Gucht, D.V. (2010). Construction and factorial validation of a short form of the self-compassion scale. *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 18, 250-255.







## The Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)

The trait MAAS is a 15-item scale designed to assess a core characteristic of mindfulness, namely, a receptive state of mind in which attention, informed by a sensitive awareness of what is occurring in the present, simply observes what is taking place.

Brown, K.W. & Ryan, R.M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 822-848.

Carlson, L.E. & Brown, K.W. (2005). Validation of the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale in a cancer population. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 58, 29-33.

Instructions: Below is a collection of statements about your everyday experience. Using the 1-6 scale below, please indicate how frequently or infrequently you currently have each experience. Please answer according to what really reflects your experience rather than what you think your experience should be. Please treat each item separately from every other item.

1	2	3	4	5	6
almost always	very frequently	somewhat frequently	somewhat infrequently	very infrequently	almost never

- \_\_\_ 1. I could be experiencing some emotion and not be conscious of it until some time later.
- \_\_\_ 2. I break or spill things because of carelessness, not paying attention, or thinking of something else.
- \_\_\_ 3. I find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present.
- \_\_\_ 4. I tend to walk quickly to get where I'm going without paying attention to what I experience along the way.
- \_\_\_ 5. I tend not to notice feelings of physical tension or discomfort until they really grab my attention.
- \_\_\_ 6. I forget a person's name almost as soon as I've been told it for the first time.
- \_\_\_ 7. It seems I am "running on automatic," without much awareness of what I'm doing.
- \_\_\_ 8. I rush through activities without being really attentive to them.
- \_\_\_ 9. I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I'm doing right now to get there.
- \_\_\_ 10. I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I'm doing.
- \_\_\_ 11. I find myself listening to someone with one ear, doing something else at the same time.
- \_\_\_ 12. I drive places on 'automatic pilot' and then wonder why I went there.
- \_\_\_ 13. I find myself preoccupied with the future or the past.
- \_\_\_ 14. I find myself doing things without paying attention.
- \_\_\_ 15. I snack without being aware that I'm eating.

Scoring: To score the scale, simply compute a mean (average) of the 15 items.

# Getting Started with Mindfulness



## What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

While mindfulness is something we all naturally possess, it's more readily available to us when we practice on a daily basis.

Whenever you bring awareness to what you're directly experiencing via your senses, or to your state of mind via your thoughts and emotions, you're being mindful. And there's growing research showing that when you train your brain to be mindful, you're actually remodeling the physical structure of your brain.

Jon Kabat-Zinn's working definition or operational definition of mindfulness: "the awareness that arises through paying attention on purpose in the present moment non-judgmentally"

"I think, therefore I am," doesn't mean I am my thoughts. So all we can really say is: "there are thoughts."

One of the reasons we suffer is because we hold tightly to a fixed view of self. We believe everything we think about others and ourselves.

Avoidance is powerful because it works so well in the short term. However, it has the added problem of perpetuating our problems and limiting our lives.

Responding mindfully means having the ability to move forward in any given situation uncontrolled by difficult emotions. In the words of mindfulness pioneer Jon Kabat-Zinn, "You can't stop the waves but you can learn to surf."

# How Mindfulness Helps You Navigate Difficulty

Mindfulness is a model of what it is to be human. Mindfulness is a conceptual model, conveying the principles and functionality of what it is to be a person. As a model it helps us to understand elements of the human experience.

Shapiro S. et al, (2006) created a way of thinking about the potential mechanisms of mindfulness with respect to how it helps free us from adding to those inevitably painful times that befall us.

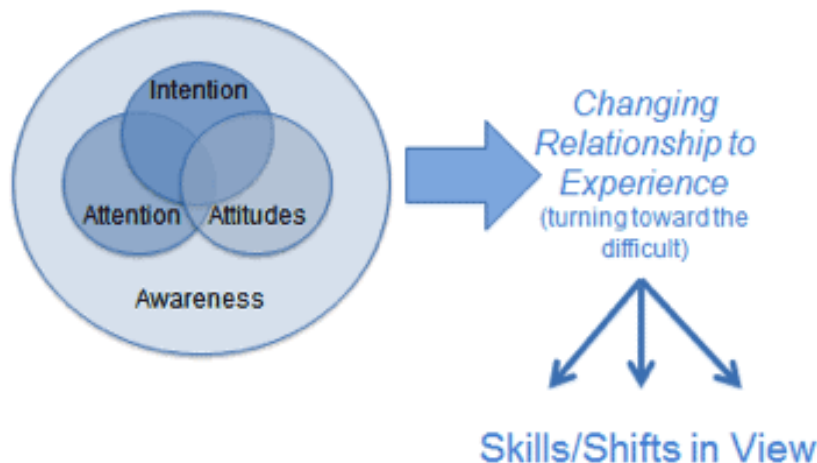
## Intention, Attention, and Attitudes

Intention allows us to be deliberate about where we place our attention, thus creating choice in what we attend to, developing the ability to shift and hold it as needed. Mindfulness trains attention to be focused, open, and receptive.

Focused attention allows us to disrupt negative, ruminative thinking such as, “I’m such a failure because someone criticized my work” by bringing attention to an object of awareness such as the sensations of breathing in the body or other body sensations. This is not suppression but rather redirection. Open and receptive monitoring of attention allows us to catch destructive thoughts and early changes in mood or increases in anxiety before they take hold, allowing us to take care of ourselves.

Attitudes of curiosity and kindness enable us to turn toward difficulty and to get interested in what is happening, rather than attempting to avoid or push away what we don’t like.

Mindfulness helps us learn to develop new skills and shift unhelpful views. We often come to reframe our perspective, to cognitively re-appraise that which at first may have been personalized (“It’s all about me”)



# Mindfulness Practice: Noticing Stressful Thoughts

Try this awareness practice taken from Cognitive Behavior Therapy when stressful events threaten to overwhelm\*:

Identify the stressful situation in one sentence. This helps stop you from getting lost in the story of how awful things are. (Remember, just the facts).

Record the thoughts that are popping into your head unbidden, particularly the ones you wouldn't want to tell an acquaintance. Thoughts usually appear in sentences or images.

Label the emotions that you are experiencing. Emotions come in one word such as angry, sad, mad, happy, and scared, to name a few. Check for similarity with the thoughts you wrote down.

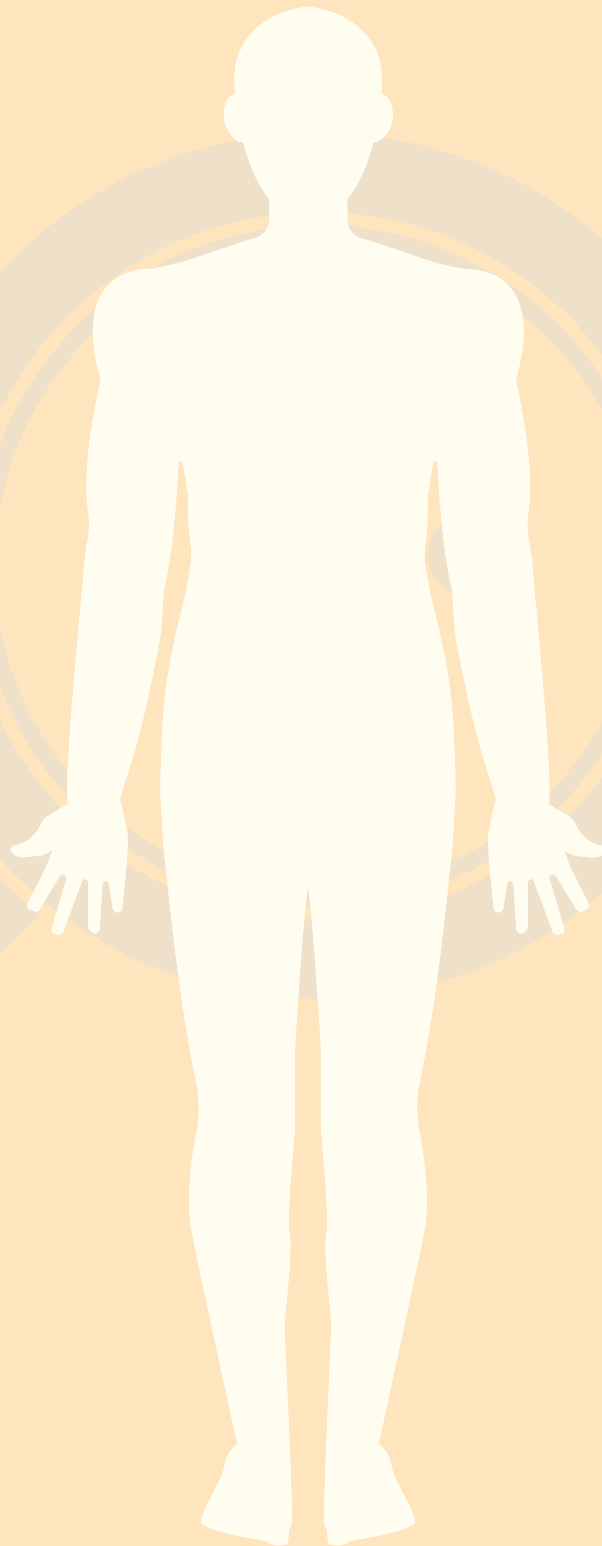
Name the body sensations and check for parallels with the emotions you are feeling. Look at what you have written.

What do you notice and do you have any insights or reflections about what you wrote?

Can you let the situation go or address it, and if so, how?

# BODY SCAN

Close your eyes. Take a deep breath in through your nose, and out through your mouth. Starting with the top of your head, become aware of how your body feels. Slowly move down your body, noticing how each body part feels, down to your toes. Make a note of any areas of discomfort on the body below. Draw a face on the person to represent how you are currently feeling.



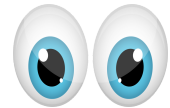
# Mundane Task Attention Training

When doing your mundane tasks, try to become aware of all the sensory aspects of the task. Hone in on whatever senses (i.e., touch, sight, sound, smell, taste) are most appropriate given the nature of the task at hand. Each time you notice your mind has wandered off the task, which will of course happen for everyone, anchor your attention back to the task by focusing, non-judgementally, on one or more of the following:

I can hear



I can see



I can smell



I can taste



I can touch





# Common Humanity

TO BOOST COMPASSION



Write down a negative experience. use the prompts:

1. What have you experienced that has made you feel alone or cut off from others?
2. What anxiety are you dealing with?
3. What situation or experience do you keep re-living in your head?
4. What is something you feel embarrassed about?
5. What is something you regret?

Who else has experienced something similar? (google it find a blog or research or article/combo of each)

1. How does this other person describe their experience?
2. What feelings does this evoke in them (if they do not mention, try to guess)?
3. What did they do in response?
4. What did they do to overcome or cope with the situation?

Now that you know that there are other people with similar hardships and/or experiences, how do you feel about your own experience? You can use the prompts below or write anything else that comes to mind.

1. What do you notice is in common with your experience and others' experiences?
2. Are you surprised other people are going through similar experiences?
3. How does it feel like to see other people struggling with the same things as you?
4. What can you learn from other people's experiences?
5. Now that you know other people are going through the same things, how can you be more kind to yourself? How can you reframe your experience in a kinder way?

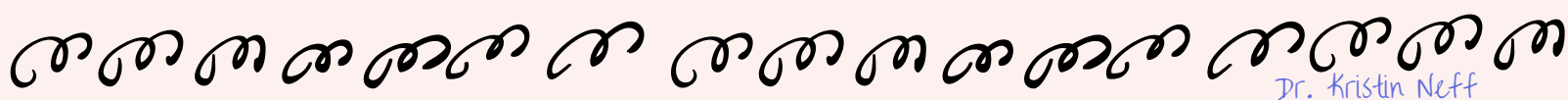




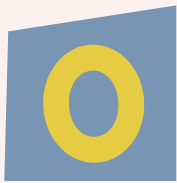
# Changing your critical self-talk

This exercise should be done over several weeks and will eventually form the blueprint for changing how you relate to yourself long-term. Some people find it useful to work on their inner critic by writing in a journal. Others are more comfortable doing it via internal dialogues. If you are someone who likes to write things down and revisit them later, journaling can be an excellent tool for transformation. If you are someone (like me) who never manages to be consistent with a journal, then do whatever works for you. You can speak aloud to yourself, or think silently.

1. The first step towards changing the way to treat yourself is to notice when you are being self-critical. It may be that – like many of us – your self-critical voice is so common for you that you don't even notice when it is present. Whenever you're feeling bad about something, think about what you've just said to yourself. Try to be as accurate as possible, noting your inner speech verbatim. What words do you actually use when you're self-critical? Are there key phrases that come up over and over again? What is the tone of your voice – harsh, cold, angry? Does the voice remind you of anyone in your past who was critical of you? 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. For instance, if you've just eaten half a box of Oreo's, does your inner voice say something like “you're so disgusting,” “you make me sick,” and so on? Really try to get a clear sense of how you talk to yourself.
2. Make an active effort to soften the self-critical voice, but do so with compassion rather than self-judgment (i.e., don't say “you're such a bitch” to your inner critic!). Say something like “I know you're worried about me and feel unsafe, but you are causing me unnecessary pain. Could you let my inner compassionate self say a few words now?”
3. Reframe the observations made by your inner critic in a friendly, positive way. If you're having trouble thinking of what words to use, you might want to imagine what a very compassionate friend would say to you in this situation. It might help to use a term of endearment that strengthens expressed feelings of warmth and care (but only if it feels natural rather than schmaltzy.) For instance, you can say something like “Darling, I know you ate that bag of cookies because you're feeling really sad right now and you thought it would cheer you up. But you feel even worse and are not feeling good in your body. I want you to be happy, so why don't you take a long walk so you feel better?” While engaging in this supportive self-talk, you might want to try gently stroking your arm, or holding your face tenderly in your hands (as long as no one's looking). Physical gestures of warmth can tap into the caregiving system even if you're having trouble calling up emotions of kindness at first, releasing oxytocin that will help change your bio-chemistry. The important thing is that you start acting kindly, and feelings of true warmth and caring will eventually follow.





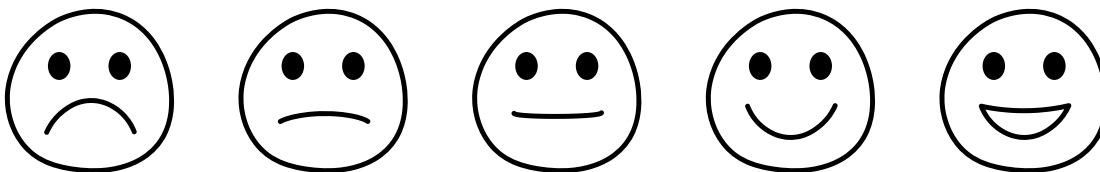


# Daily REFLECTION

Something I am struggling with today

Blank space for writing about something you are struggling with today.

How I feel about today:



Soften the critical voice:

Blank space for writing about softening the critical voice.

Reason for my rating

Lined space for writing the reason for your rating.

Reframe the Inner critic:

Lined space for writing about reframing the inner critic.

# TYPES OF SELF-CARE



**PHYSICAL**

- Sleep
- Stretching
- Walking
- Physical release
- Healthy food
- Yoga
- Rest



**EMOTIONAL**

- Stress management
- Emotional maturity
- Forgiveness
- Compassion
- Kindness



**SOCIAL**

- Boundaries
- Support systems
- Positive social media
- Communication
- Time together
- Ask for help



**SPIRITUAL**

- Time alone
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Connection
- Nature
- Journaling
- Sacred space



**PERSONAL**

- Hobbies
- Knowing yourself
- Personal identity
- Honoring your true self



**SPACE**

- Safety
- Healthy living environment
- Security and stability
- Organized space



**FINANCIAL**

- Saving
- Budgeting
- Money management
- Splurging
- Paying bills

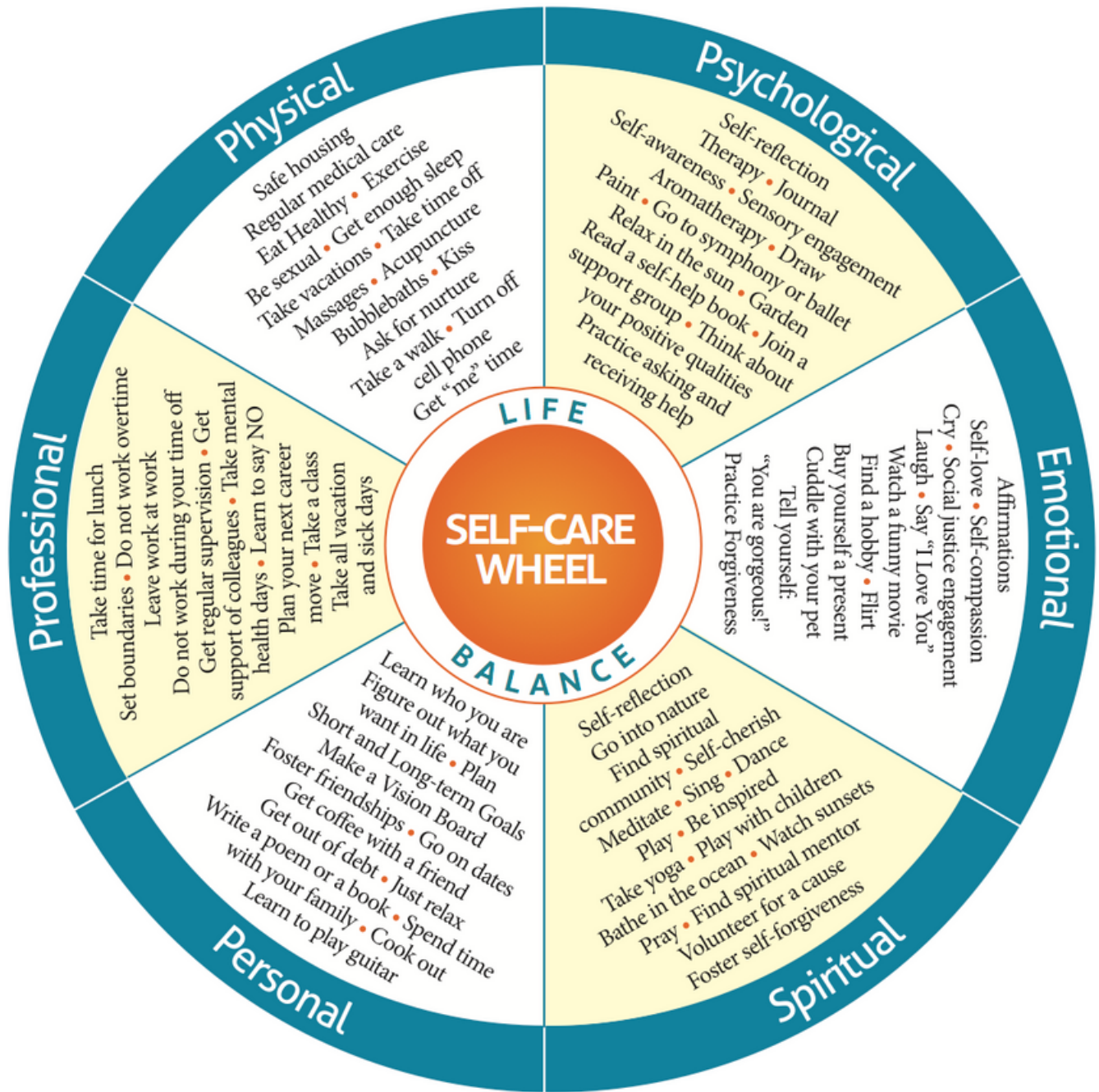


**WORK**

- Time management
- Work boundaries
- Positive workplace
- More learning
- Break time



# SELF-CARE WHEEL

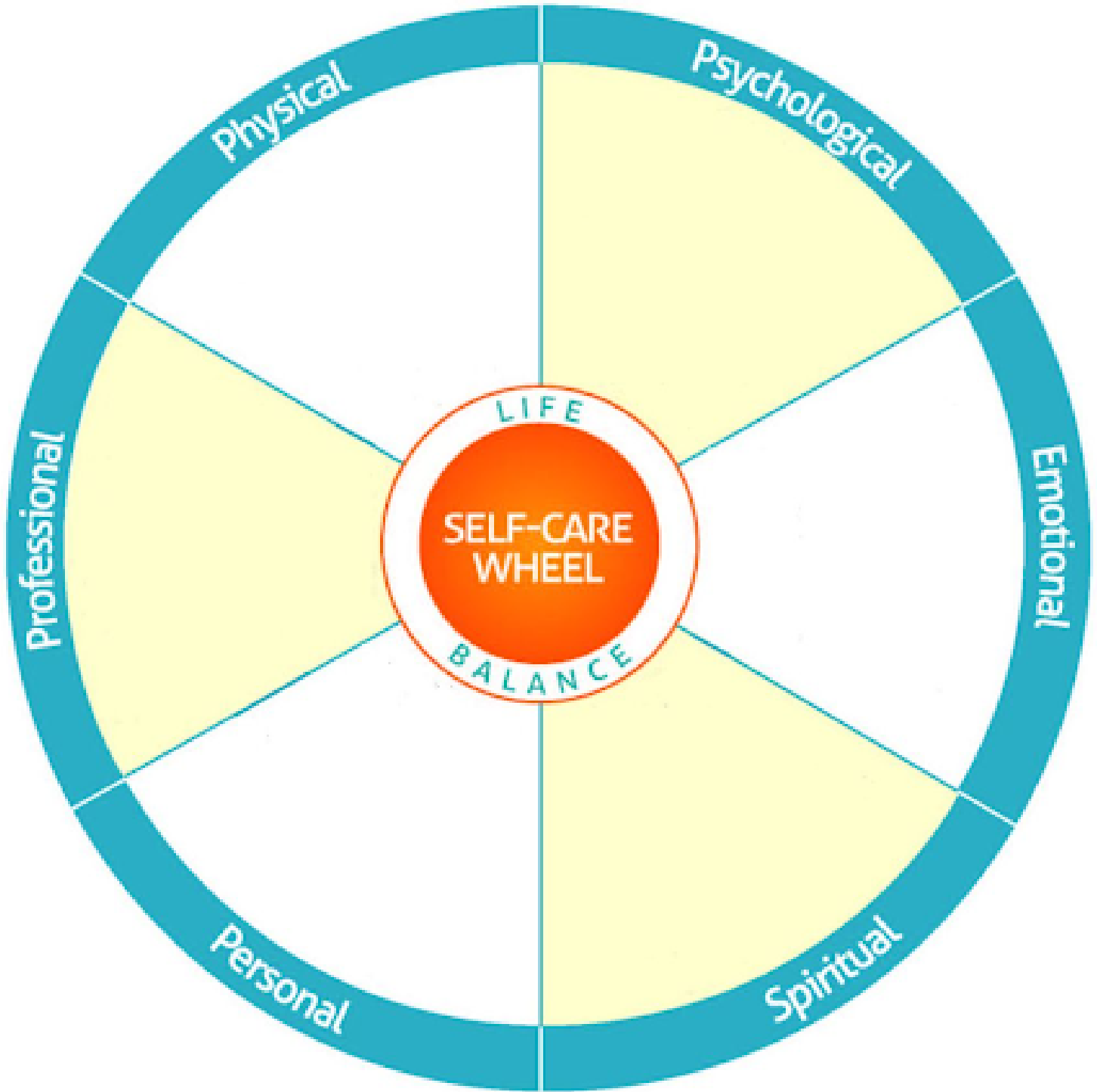


This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013).





# SELF-CARE WHEEL



# Squad Care

IS SELF CARE



Squad-care reminds us there is no shame in reaching for each other and insists the imperative rests not with the individual, but with the team & collaborative community.

Our job is to have each other's back

Two pilot studies, published in *Frontiers in Psychology* in June 2022, brought together high-stress personnel from the UK's Ministry of Defense to understand whether Team Mindfulness Training can support individual and collective stress management skills. These studies offer insights into how leaders could start incorporating mindfulness into their organizational systems. They found the simple act of caring about somebody else lowers a person's stress.

**How do I ask for help without seeming incompetent or like I'm not good enough at my job?**

## CARING FOR YOURSELF IN THE FACE OF DIFFICULT WORK

Our work can be overwhelming. Our challenge is to maintain our resilience so that we can keep doing the work with care, energy, and compassion.

### 10 things to do each day

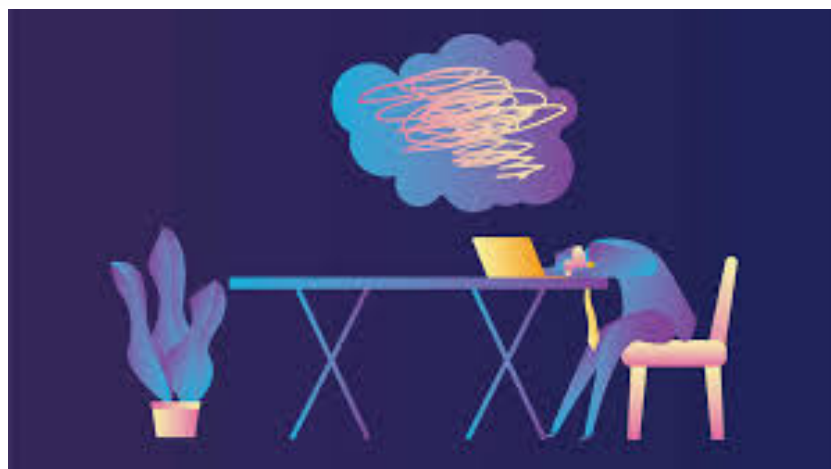
1. Get enough sleep.
2. Get enough to eat.
3. Vary the work that you do.
4. Do some light exercise.
5. Do something pleasurable.
6. Focus on what you did well.
7. Learn from your mistakes.
8. Share a private joke.
9. Pray, meditate or relax.
10. Support a colleague.

## FOCUSING YOUR EMPATHY

Your empathy for others helps you do your job. It is important to take good care of your feelings and thoughts by monitoring how you use them. The most resilient workers are those that know how to turn their feelings to work mode when they go on duty, but off-work mode when they go off duty. This is not denial; it is a coping strategy. It is a way they get maximum protection while working (feelings switched to work mode) and maximum support while resting (feelings switched off-work mode).

### How to become better at switching between Work and Off-Work Modes

1. Make this a conscious process. Talk to yourself as you switch.
2. Use images that make you feel safe and protected (work-mode) or connected and cared for (non-work mode) to help you switch.
3. Develop rituals that help you switch as you start and stop work.
4. Breathe slowly and deeply to calm yourself when starting a tough job.





# SQUAD CARE

In the boxes, describe or draw practical ways you can show up with compassion for your teams

# S

## SELF-COMPASSION REFLECTION



### MINDFULNESS

THIS WILL MAINLY INVOLVE BRING AWARENESS TO THE PAINFUL EMOTIONS THAT AROSE DUE TO YOUR SELF-JUDGMENT OR DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES. WRITE ABOUT HOW YOU FELT: SAD, ASHAMED, FRIGHTENED, STRESSED, AND SO ON. AS YOU WRITE, TRY TO BE ACCEPTING AND NON-JUDGMENTAL OF YOUR EXPERIENCE, NOT BELITTLING IT NOR MAKING IT OVERLY DRAMATIC. (FOR EXAMPLE, "I WAS FRUSTRATED BECAUSE SHE WAS BEING SO SLOW. I GOT ANGRY, OVER-REACTED, AND FELT FOOLISH AFTERWARDS.")

### COMMON HUMANITY

WRITE DOWN THE WAYS IN WHICH YOUR EXPERIENCE WAS CONNECTED TO THE LARGER HUMAN EXPERIENCE. THIS MIGHT INCLUDE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT BEING HUMAN MEANS BEING IMPERFECT, AND THAT ALL PEOPLE HAVE THESE SORTS OF PAINFUL EXPERIENCES. ("EVERYONE OVER-REACTS SOMETIMES, IT'S ONLY HUMAN.") YOU MIGHT ALSO WANT TO THINK ABOUT THE VARIOUS CAUSES AND CONDITIONS UNDERLYING THE PAINFUL EVENT. ("MY FRUSTRATION WAS EXACERBATED BY THE FACT THAT I WAS LATE FOR MY DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT ACROSS TOWN AND THERE WAS A LOT OF TRAFFIC THAT DAY. IF THE CIRCUMSTANCES HAD BEEN DIFFERENT MY REACTION PROBABLY WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT.")

### SELF-KINDNESS

WRITE YOURSELF SOME KIND, UNDERSTANDING, WORDS OF COMFORT. LET YOURSELF KNOW THAT YOU CARE ABOUT YOURSELF, ADOPTING A GENTLE, REASSURING TONE. (IT'S OKAY. YOU MESSED UP BUT IT WASN'T THE END OF THE WORLD. I UNDERSTAND HOW FRUSTRATED YOU WERE AND YOU JUST LOST IT. MAYBE YOU CAN TRY BEING EXTRA PATIENT AND GENEROUS TO ANY WAIT-STAFF THIS WEEK...")

PRACTICING THE THREE COMPONENTS OF SELF-COMPASSION WITH THIS WRITING EXERCISE WILL HELP ORGANIZE YOUR THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS, WHILE HELPING TO ENCODE THEM IN YOUR MEMORY. IF YOU KEEP A JOURNAL REGULARLY, YOUR SELF-COMPASSION PRACTICE WILL BECOME EVEN STRONGER AND TRANSLATE MORE EASILY INTO DAILY LIFE.



# REFERENCES & RESOURCES FOR FUTURE EXPLORATION

## Books:

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Brown, B. (2010) *The Gifts of Imperfection*. Center City, MN: Hazelden.

Brown, B. (2012) *Daring Greatly*. New York: Penguin

Chodron, P. (1997) *When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times*, Boston: Shambala

Chodron, P. (2005) *Start Where you are: How to Accept yourself and Others*. London: Element/HarperCollins

Dalai Lama. (1995) *The power of Compassion*. New York: HarperCollins

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Garvey, J. & Coughlin, C. (2022) *Unleash Your Complexity Genius*: California: Stanford University Press

Neff, K. & Germer, C (2018) *The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook*, New York, Guilford Press

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990) *Full Catastrophe Living*. New York: Dell.

Neff, K. (2001) *Self Compassion: The proven power of being kind to yourself*. New York: William Morrow.

## Other Resources

Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education, Stanford Medicine

Center for Healthy Mind, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Center for Mindfulness and Compassion, Cambridge Health Alliance, Harvard Medical School Teaching Hospital

Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society, University of Massachusetts Medical School

Cognitively-Based Compassion Training, Emory University

Compassion Focused Therapy, Compassionate Mind Foundation

Cultivating Leadership; <https://themeadow.space/>  
Greater Good Magazine, Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley

Institute for Meditation and Psychotherapy

Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy