

Self-compassion

ROOTS OF SELF-COMPASSION

Western psychologists have only recently become interested in self-compassion, although the construct is central to the 2,500-year-old tradition of Buddhism.⁴



SELF-COMPASSION THEORY¹

Self-compassion is a healthy form of self-acceptance that consists of three components

- **Self-kindness**—meet distress with self-directed kindness
- **Common humanity**—understand that one is not alone in experiencing difficulties
- **Mindfulness**—notice any distressing feelings without getting lost in them

“Self-compassion involves relating to oneself with care and support when we suffer.”⁴

SELF-COMPASSION PRACTICE

- Use mindfulness apps like Mindshift, Calm, Headspace, and Shine.
- Use the relaxation resources from Parkland’s Counseling Support Center website.
- Notice harmful self-talk, set it aside, and design helpful self-talk.
- Journal and doodle to help process emotions & be playful.
- Be kind to yourself—treat yourself like you would a friend who made a mistake.
- Use helpful visualization, such as visualizing a calm /comfortable place.

SELF-COMPASSION RESEARCH

- ⇒ **Greater self-compassion is linked to less depression, anxiety, and stress.**⁴
- ⇒ Self-compassionate individuals make more accurate self-appraisals.³
- ⇒ Most useful when viewed as a skill that people can develop to facilitate mental health.²
- ⇒ A common reason people are not more self-compassionate is because they believe they need to be harshly self-critical to motivate themselves.⁴



References

1. Neff, K. D. (2003a). Self-compassion: An alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude toward oneself. *Self and Identity*, 2, 85–101.
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3. Neff, K. D., Rude, S. S., & Kirkpatrick, K. L. (2007b). An examination of self-compassion in relation to positive psychological functioning and personality traits. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 41, 908–916.
4. Neff, K. D., & Knox, M. C. (2020). Self-compassion. In *Encyclopedia of personality and individual differences* (pp. 4663-4670). Cham: Springer International Publishing.