



BODYMATTERS
AUSTRALASIA

Improving Self Compassion

Self compassion is about relating to yourself in a compassionate way, regardless of whether there is something you don't like about yourself. It is about viewing yourself with a tender heart -much like you would to someone you care about- regarding personal failings, inadequacies and painful experiences.

High self compassion is positively correlated with health and wellness, including greater life satisfaction, social connectedness, autonomy, resilience, emotional intelligence, personal growth, wisdom, curiosity, attachment, security and relationship satisfaction. It shares many of the benefits of high self esteem- however, unlike self esteem, it is not contingent on perceived success or positive experiences occurring.

Self compassion has 3 elements: self kindness; common humanity; and mindfulness.

Self Judgement

Being self critical and seeing the self as inadequate; having a harsh inner voice that attacks or berates the self for weakness, failings or pain.

“When I see aspects of myself that I don't like, I get down on myself”; “I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like”

Self Kindness

Accepting the self as is; treating oneself with gentleness, understanding and care; positive self talk; noticing when things are difficult- and actively self nurturing at this time.

“I try to be loving towards myself when I feel emotional pain”; “When I am going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need”

Isolation

Believing that we are the only ones struggling with difficult life experiences; experiencing a sense of isolation and separation from others; feeling self pity; asking “why me?”.

“When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure”; “When I think about my inadequacies, it tends to make me feel more separate and cut off from the rest of the world”

Common Humanity

Seeing suffering as normal, part of a larger human experience; recognising that others can relate to experiences in some way.

“When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone goes through”; “When I feel inadequate in some way I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people”

Over Identification

Getting carried away by the storyline of one's emotions and suffering; reacting, ruminating or fixating obsessively on negative thoughts and emotions;. Getting lost in the past or the future.

“When I am feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong; “When something upsets me I get carried away with my feelings”

Mindfulness

Maintaining awareness of awareness: living in the present moment and experiencing associated feelings in a clear and balanced manner; Seeing things just as they are- no more, no less.

“When I am feeling down I try to approach my feelings with curiosity and openness”; “When I fail at something important to me I try to keep things in perspective”

More information is available here:

<http://www.self-compassion.org>

http://www.medicalupdatemedia.com.au/426377/ED_D1_Josie_Geller_1/main.htm#