



1

---

---

---

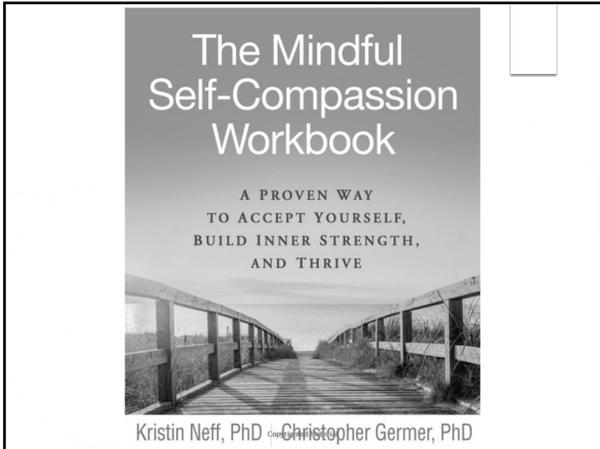
---

---

---

---

---



2

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



3

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Self-Compassion is...

- treating **yourself** the way you would treat a **friend** who is having a hard time
- Is a practice in which we learn to be a **good friend to ourselves** when we need it the most – to become an **inner ally** rather than an **inner enemy**.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

4

How Self-Compassionate Are You?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

5

The Self-Compassion Scale

Almost never 1      2      3      4      Almost always 5

- I try to be understanding and patient with the parts of my personality that I don't like.
- When something painful happens, I try to take a balanced view of the situation.
- When I'm going through a hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.
- When something upsets me, I keep my emotions in balance.
- When I fail or feel inadequate, I remind myself that failure and feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

6

## The Self-Compassion Scale

Almost always 1      2      3      4      5 Almost never

- When I fail at something important to me, I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.
- When I'm feeling down, I tend to think that most people are probably happier than I am.
- When I fail at something important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure.
- When I'm feeling down, I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's going wrong.
- I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.
- I'm intolerant and impatient toward those aspects of myself that I don't like.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

7

## The Self-Compassion Scale

### How Self-Compassionate Are You?

- ▶ Add your score for all 12 items, then divide by 12.
  - ▶ 1 to 2.5 - low self-compassion
  - ▶ 2.5 to 3.5 - moderate self-compassion
  - ▶ 3.5 to 5 - high self-compassion
- ▶ If you scored lower than you'd like, don't worry! Self-compassion is a skill that can be learned, just give yourself time and it will happen eventually.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

8

## The 3 Core Elements of Mindful Self Compassion

- ▶ Self-Kindness
- ▶ Common Humanity
- ▶ Mindfulness




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

9

## Self-Kindness

- We are as **caring** toward ourselves as we are towards others.
- Instead of criticizing ourselves for our shortcomings, we are **supportive, encouraging, and protect** ourselves from harm.
- Instead of attacking and berating ourselves for being inadequate, we offer ourselves **warmth and unconditional acceptance.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

10

## Common Humanity

- Recognizing that **all humans** are flawed, that everyone fails, makes mistakes and experiences hardship.
- The circumstances are different, the degree of pain is different, but the **basic experience of human suffering is the same.**
- Pain is part of the shared human experience, and every moment of suffering becomes a moment of **connection with others.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

11

## Mindfulness

- Rumination **narrows** our focus and **exaggerates** our experience.
  - Not only did I fail, "*I am a failure.*"
  - Not only was I disappointed, "*My life is disappointing.*"
- When we mindfully observe our pain, we can take a **wiser and more objective perspective** on ourselves and our lives.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

12

## Mindfulness

- To be self-compassionate, mindfulness is actually the first step we need to take. We need presence of mind to **respond in a new way**.
- Most people **don't acknowledge** how much pain they're actually in, especially if it is from their own self-criticism
- Or when confronted by life's challenges, they get so caught up in **problem solving mode** that they don't pause to consider how hard it is in the moment.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

13

## Mindfulness

- Being open to the reality of the **present moment**.
- Allowing all thoughts, emotions and sensations to enter awareness **without resistance or avoidance**.
- Helps us acknowledge our suffering **without exaggerating** and lets us take a **wiser** and more **objective perspective**.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

14

## Reflection Questions

- ▶ Think about a time when you had a **close friend** who was struggling (*had a misfortune, failed, or felt inadequate*). How do you typically respond to **your friend** in such situations?
  - ▶ What do you say?
  - ▶ What tone do you use?
  - ▶ How is your body language?
  - ▶ Your nonverbal gestures?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

15

## Reflection Questions

► Think about a time when **you** were struggling (*had a misfortune, failed, or felt inadequate*). How do you typically respond to **yourself** in such situations?

- What do you say?
- What tone do you use?
- How is your body language?
- Your nonverbal gestures?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

16

## Reflection Questions

What came up for you during this practice?

- Many people are shocked at how badly they treat themselves compared to how they treat their friends.
- Our culture doesn't encourage us to be kind to ourselves

***We need to intentionally practice changing our relationship with ourselves in order to counter the habits of a lifetime***

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

17

## Reflection Questions

Relating to Ourselves with Mindfulness

- Write about a current struggle you're going through in life (one that's not too serious).
- Write down any ways you may be lost in the story line of the situation. Is it all you can think about, and are making a bigger deal out of things than is warranted?
- Now see if you can **mindfully acknowledge** and **validate the pain** you're feeling without exaggerating or being overly dramatic. Write down painful or difficult feelings, trying not to get overly caught up in the storyline of what you're feeling.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

18

## Reflection Questions

### Relating to Ourselves with Common Humanity

- ▶ Write down any ways you may be feeling isolated by the situation, thinking that you're the only one who has been in this situation.
- ▶ Now try to remind yourself of the common humanity of the situation – how normal it is to have feelings like this and that **many people** are probably experiencing feelings similar to yours.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

19

## Reflection Questions

### Relating to Ourselves with Self-Kindness

- ▶ Write down any ways you may be judging yourself for what happened. Are you calling yourself names, or being overly harsh with yourself?
- ▶ Try writing some **words of kindness** for yourself in response to the difficult emotions you are feeling. Write using the same type of **gentle, supportive words** you might use with a good friend you care about.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

20

## Reflection Questions

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>▶ Mindfulness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How do you get lost in your story?</li><li>- How does your story become exaggerated when you ruminate on it?</li><li>▶ _____</li><li>- Validate while not getting caught up in the storyline</li><li>- Acknowledge what's going on without adding more drama</li></ul> | <p>▶ Common Humanity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How does this make you feel isolated?</li><li>▶ _____</li><li>- How normal is it to have feelings like this?</li><li>- How does it feel knowing others are probably experiencing similar feelings?</li></ul> | <p>▶ Self-Kindness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Write down how you judge yourself</li><li>▶ _____</li><li>- Write words of kindness in response</li><li>- Use gentle, supportive language that you would use for a good friend.</li></ul> |
|---|---|--|

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

21

## Reflection Questions

How are you feeling?

- ▶ Take a moment and try to fully accept how you're feeling at this moment, allowing yourself to be just as you are.
- ▶ If this exercise felt supportive for you, allow yourself to savor the feeling of caring for yourself.
- ▶ If it felt awkward or uncomfortable, can you allow yourself to learn at your own pace, knowing that it takes time to form new habits?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

22

“ Cultivating a state of loving, connected presence can change our relationship with ourselves and the world around us. ”

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

23

“ Through self-compassion we become an **inner ally** instead of an **inner enemy**. ”

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

24

Informal Practice  
at Home

# Keeping a Self-Compassion Journal

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

25

In the evening, review your day's events. Write down anything that you felt bad about, anything you judged yourself for, or any difficult experience that caused you pain.

- ▶ **Mindfulness**
  - Involves bringing balanced awareness to painful emotions that arose from your self-judgment or difficult circumstances.
  - Write about how you felt (use the emotions list)
  - Try to be accepting and non-judgmental of your experience, without diminishing it or becoming overly dramatic.
- ▶ **Common Humanity**
  - Write down ways on how your experience was part of being human.
  - Acknowledge that being human means being imperfect and that everyone has painful experiences.
  - Think about unique causes and conditions underlying your painful event, and how your reaction could have been different if the circumstances were different.
- ▶ **Self-Kindness**
  - Write yourself some kind, understanding words, as if you were writing to a good friend.
  - Let yourself know that you care about your happiness and well-being, adopting a gentle, reassuring tone.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

26

## Reflection Questions

How are you feeling?

- ▶ After keeping your journal for at least a week, ask yourself if you noticed any change in your **internal dialogue**.
- ▶ How did it feel to write to yourself in a more compassionate manner? Did it help you cope with your difficult situation?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

27

# What Self-Compassion Is Not

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

28

### Misconceptions about Self-Compassion

"Doesn't self-compassion just mean throwing a pity party for poor me?"

- In fact, self-compassion is an **antidote** to self-pity. It helps avoid rumination and exaggeration of our struggles, and reminds us that life is hard for everyone.

"Self-compassion is for wimps. I have to be tough and strong to get through my life."

- Self-compassion does not make us weak and vulnerable. Instead, it is a reliable source of inner strength that builds courage and resilience.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

29

### Misconceptions about Self-Compassion

"I need to think more about other people, not myself. Being self-compassionate is way too selfish and self-focused."

- Giving compassion to ourselves actually enables us to give more to others, be more caring, supportive, and forgiving.

"Self-compassion will make me lazy. I'll probably just eat chocolate chip cookies all day!"

- Compassion favors long-term health and well-being, not short-term pleasure. Self-compassionate people are more likely to do healthy behaviors like exercise, eating well, keeping up with preventative care.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

30

## Misconceptions about Self-Compassion

"If I'm compassionate to myself, I'll let myself get away with anything. I need to be hard on myself when I mess up to make sure I don't hurt others."

- Self-compassion helps us to admit mistakes and take personal responsibility for our actions.

"I will never get to where I want in life if I let up on my harsh self-criticism. It's what drives me to succeed. I need my high standards to achieve my goals."

- Self-criticism undermines self-confidence. Self-compassion motivates us to reach our goals because we don't beat ourselves up when we fail, making us more likely to try again and persist in our efforts after failing.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

31

## Self-Esteem vs. Self-Compassion

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

32

## Self-Esteem vs. Self-Compassion

- ▶ In Western culture, high self esteem requires being **special** and **above average**.
- ▶ The problem is, there's **always** someone more attractive, successful, and intelligent than we are.
- ▶ We end up feeling like failures when we compare ourselves to those "better" than us.
- ▶ It can also lead to an **unhealthy desire** to be better than everyone else, and to keep that elusive feeling of high self esteem.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

33

## Self-Esteem vs. Self-Compassion

Self-Esteem	Self-Compassion
An evaluation or judgment of self-worth.	A way of relating to ourselves with kindness and acceptance, even if we fail or feel inadequate.
Requires feeling better than others.	Requires acknowledging that we are all imperfect
Is there when we succeed, but deserts us when we fail or make mistakes.	Always there for us, a reliable source of support, regardless of what happens.
Is measured by things like physical attractiveness, success, social comparison.	Provides a more stable sense of self-worth over time, not related to outward things.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

34

## Reflection Question

How is self-esteem working for you?

- ▶ How do you feel when you receive feedback that your performance is average in an area of life that you care about (work, parenting, friendship, romance)?
- ▶ How do you feel when someone is better than you at something you really care about?
- ▶ How does it impact you when you fail at something you care about (your work evaluation is poor, your kid says you're a horrible parent, you don't get asked out for a second date, etc)?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

35

## Reflection Question

How is self-esteem working for you?

- ▶ If you're like most people, you don't feel okay to be average, or have other people seem "better" than you.
- ▶ This is the limitation of self-esteem. It causes us to constantly compare ourselves to others so our **self-worth bounces up and down**, depending on our latest success or failure.
- ▶ Do you notice that your need for high self-esteem is causing you problems? Then it's time to relate to ourselves in a new way – with self-compassion!

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

36

The Physiology  
of Self-Criticism &  
Self-Compassion

37

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

The Reptilian Brain

- When we criticize ourselves, our body's **threat-defense system** is triggered. It is our first reaction when things go wrong.
- Our amygdala releases **cortisol** and **adrenaline**, and we get ready to **fight, flee, or freeze**.
- This works well for physical danger, but nowadays we are threatened mostly by challenges to our **self-image or self-concept**.

▶ When we feel inadequate, our self-concept is threatened, so we attack the problem – **ourselves!**

38

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

The Reptilian Brain

- Feeling threatened puts stress on the mind and body, and chronic stress can cause **anxiety** and **depression**.
- This is why habitual self-criticism is so bad for emotional and physical well-being.

▶ With self-criticism, we are both the **attacker** and the **attacked**.

39

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## The Mammalian Brain

- When we practice self-compassion, the **care system** is activated.
- **Oxytocin** (love hormone) and **endorphins** (feel-good hormones) are released.
- The safer people feel, the more open and flexible they can be in response to their environment.

▶ With compassion, we feel safe and cared for, like a **child** held in a **warm embrace**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

40

## Relationship of the Stress Response to Self-Compassion

Stress Response	Stress Response Turned Inward	Self-Compassion
Fight	Self-Criticism	Self-Kindness
Flight	Isolation	Common Humanity
Freeze	Rumination	Mindfulness

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

41

Informal Practice

- Soothing Touch
- Kind Words
- Compassionate Movement

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

42

## Soothing Touch

- By putting one or two hands on our physical body in a caring, gentle way, we feel **safe** and **comforted**.
  - Different physical gestures create different emotional **responses**.
  - Find a manner of touch that feels supportive to you, so that you can use this to care for yourself when under stress.
- ▶ Your hand over your heart
  - ▶ Gently stroking your chest
  - ▶ One hand on your heart and one on your belly
  - ▶ Two hands on your belly
  - ▶ One hand on your cheek
  - ▶ Cradling your face in your hands
  - ▶ Gently stroking your arms
  - ▶ Giving yourself a gentle hug
  - ▶ One hand holding the other
  - ▶ Cupping your hands in your lap

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

43

## Soothing Touch

- Sometimes it can feel awkward or uncomfortable when we receive soothing touch, as it can remind us of times when we were not treated kindly and cause **old pains** to emerge.
  - As an alternative, you can use a firmer gesture.
  - You can also touch an external object that is warm and soft.
- ▶ Petting a dog or cat
  - ▶ Holding a soft pillow
  - ▶ Tapping
  - ▶ Fist-bumping your chest

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

44

## Kind Words

### Mindfulness in Times of Stress

- ▶ Think of a situation in your life that is causing you stress, (such as a health, relationship, or work problem, or some other struggle).
  - ▶ Choose a problem in the mild to moderate range, as we want to build up this skill gradually.
- ▶ Visualize the situation clearly in your mind's eye. What is the setting? Who is saying what to whom? What is happening? What *might* happen?
- ▶ Can you feel the discomfort in your body as you bring this difficulty to mind?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

45

## Kind Words

### Mindfulness in Times of Stress

- Involves bringing awareness to painful emotions that arose from your self-judgment or difficult circumstances.
- Write about how you are feeling (anger, sadness, etc)
- Try to be accepting and non-judgmental of your experience, without diminishing it or becoming overly dramatic.
- "This is a moment of suffering"
- "This hurts"
- "This is stressful"

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

46

## Kind Words

### Common Humanity

- Acknowledge that being human means being imperfect, and everyone has painful experiences.
- "Suffering is a part of life."
- "I'm not alone"
- "Everyone experiences this, just like me."
- "This is how it feels when people struggle in this way."

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

47

## Kind Words

### Self-Kindness in Times of Stress

- Offer yourself the gesture of soothing touch.
- Let yourself know that you care about your happiness and well-being, adopting a gentle, reassuring tone.
- If you're having trouble finding the right words, imagine you are speaking to a dear friend or loved one.
- "May I be kind to myself"
- "May I give myself what I need."
- "May I accept myself as I am."
- "May I forgive myself."
- "May I be strong."
- "May I be patient."

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

48

## Kind Words

### Self-Kindness in Times of Stress

- ▶ Sometimes it takes a bit of time to find language that works for you personally and feels authentic.
- ▶ Allow yourself to be a slow learner – eventually you will find the right words.
- ▶ Note that this informal practice can be done slowly as a sort of mini-meditation, or you can use the words as a three-part mantra when you encounter difficulties in daily life.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

49

## Compassionate Movement

### 1. Anchoring

- Stand up and feel your feet on the floor. Rock back and forth, side to side. Make little circles with your knees.
- Anchor your awareness in your feet.

### 2. Opening

- Open your field of awareness and scan your whole body for areas of sensations of ease and of tension.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

50

## Compassionate Movement

### 3. Responding compassionately

- Now, focus on any areas of tension or discomfort.
- Let your body guide you and move in a way that feels good to you, giving yourself compassion.
- Roll your shoulders
- Turn your head
- Twist at the waist
- Drop into a forward bend
- Sway side to side
- Now, focus on any areas of tension or discomfort.
- Let your body guide you and move in a way that feels good to you, giving yourself compassion.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

51

## Compassionate Movement

### 4. Coming to Stillness

- Finally, stand still.
- Feel your entire body, noting any changes.
- Allow yourself to be just as you are in the moment.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

52

## Reflection Questions

How are you feeling?

- ▶ Did it feel different to stretch as an intentional caring response to discomfort? Were you able to find a way of moving that gave your body what it needed?
- ▶ This practice can be used multiple times during the day. The goal is to be able to notice when you're holding tension in your body and responding in a caring manner.
- ▶ We often ignore our bodies' distress signals, so getting into the habit of checking in and intentionally giving ourselves what we need can go a long way to a healthier and more supportive relationship with ourselves.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

53

## The Yin & Yang of Self-Compassion

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

54

## Yin & Yang of Self-Compassion

- In traditional Chinese philosophy, Yin and Yang is based on the assumption that all seemingly opposite attributes - such as male/female, light/dark, active/passive - are complementary and interdependent, and we all need these opposite qualities to be in balance.
- Significantly, each side of the yin-yang symbol has a dot of the opposite color contained within it.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

55

## Yin & Yang of Self-Compassion

The **YIN** of self-compassion is about "being with" ourselves in a compassionate way.

- It can take the form of solace and a soft leaning into difficult emotions (comforting)
- It involves letting our bodies know with warmth and tenderness that everything is okay (soothing)
- It can also require being accepting and open to what is currently happening (validating)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

56

## Yin & Yang of Self-Compassion

The **YANG** of self-compassion is about "acting in the world"

- It can be a stern "no!" and turning away from danger (protecting)
- Sometimes it means figuring out what we need and giving it to ourselves (providing)
- Sometimes it encourages us to jump up and do something about it (motivating)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

57

## Reflection Questions

What Aspect of Self-Compassion Do I Need Right Now?

► **Comforting**

**YIN**

► Would it help to learn how to comfort yourself and give support for your emotional needs when you're upset?

► **Soothing**

► Would you like to feel more comfortable and relaxed in your body, helping you feel more calm?

► **Validating**

► Do you feel alone or misunderstood and need validation for your feelings? Can you do it in a kind and tender way?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

58

## Reflection Questions

What Aspect of Self-Compassion Do I Need Right Now?

► **Protecting**

**YANG**

► Is there some way that you are being harmed, and would you like to find the inner strength to stop it? Protecting means saying no to others who are hurting us, or to the harm we inflict on ourselves, often in unconscious ways.

► **Providing**

► Can you give yourself what you truly need? We must first know **what** we need, and then have the **conviction** that we **deserve** to get our needs met, and then to **take action** to try to meet those needs.

► **Motivating**

► Can you motivate yourself with love instead of fear? With kindness, support and understanding, not harsh criticism?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

59

## Reflection Questions

- Hopefully, the question "What do I need right now?" will arise in your mind continuously in the next few weeks.
- By simply asking the question, you allow yourself a moment of self-compassion, even if you can't find an answer or don't have the ability to meet your needs at the time.

YIN	YANG
Comforting	Protecting
Soothing	Providing
Validating	Motivating

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

60