



# Self-Compassion for Helping Professionals

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# Introduction

- Overview
  - Burnout/Compassion Fatigue/Empathy Fatigue
  - Benefits of Practicing Self-Compassion
  - Examine our own Self-Compassion Practices
  - How to Practice Self-Compassion
  - Practice
  - Discussion & Questions



# Introduction

- What brought you here today?

# Learning Objectives

- Identify symptoms of compassion or empathy fatigue
- Understand how the practice of self-compassion is an antidote to empathy fatigue
- Identify cultural and gender-role differences regarding self-compassion
- Improve your self-compassion practice





# Compassion & Empathy Fatigue

- Emotional numbing
- Increased cynicism
- Disconnected
- Feeling angry or easily irritated
- Restlessness
- Sleep Difficulty
- Distressing or intrusive thoughts

# Benefits of Self-Compassion

- Strongly linked to positive mind states  
(Warren, Smeets & Neff, 2016)
- Greater ability to positively cope with  
challenging emotions (Heffernan, Quinn & McNulty, S.,  
& Fitzpatrick, J. 2010; Neff, Rude & Kirkpatrick, 2007)

# Benefits of Self-Compassion

- Increased self-kindness
  - Ability to be caring and understanding with the self
    - Diminished self-judgment



# Benefits of Self-Compassion

- Increased connectedness to one's humanity
  - Recognition that being human comes with making mistakes
    - We all fail
    - We all have serious life challenges

# Benefits of Self-Compassion

- Increased ability to engage in mindfulness
  - Acknowledging we all have distressing, painful challenging experiences
    - Being able to view these experiences in a balanced way
      - Recognizing one's feelings about experiences without judgment
      - Does not exaggerate feelings

# Benefits of Self-Compassion

- These benefits lead to
  - Increased ability to mediate factors contributing to mental health challenges
  - Increased positive relationships
    - Personal and professional

# Benefits of Self-Compassion

- Activity

- Self-Compassion Scale

How compassionate are we with ourselves?

# Example

- Personal Experience with Self-Compassion



# Examining our own practices of Self-Compassion



# Barriers to Practicing Self-Compassion



# Barriers

- Self-Critical thoughts: feeling unworthy of self-compassion
- Triggers negative connotations such as being selfish, wishy washy, weak, self-indulgent
- How can I find the time?
- “I have to try to tough this out, that’s how I motivate myself”
- Too touchy feeling(laying hands on your heart or your face)
- No experiencing giving or receiving compassion
- Cultural differences(Neff, Pisitsungkgarn, and Hsieh, 2008)
- Gender stereotypes(Yarnell, Neff, Davidson and Mullarkey, 2018)

# The Yin and Yang of Self-Compassion







Love turned inwards  
allows our light to  
shine bright  
for others.

# How to Exercise Self-Compassion

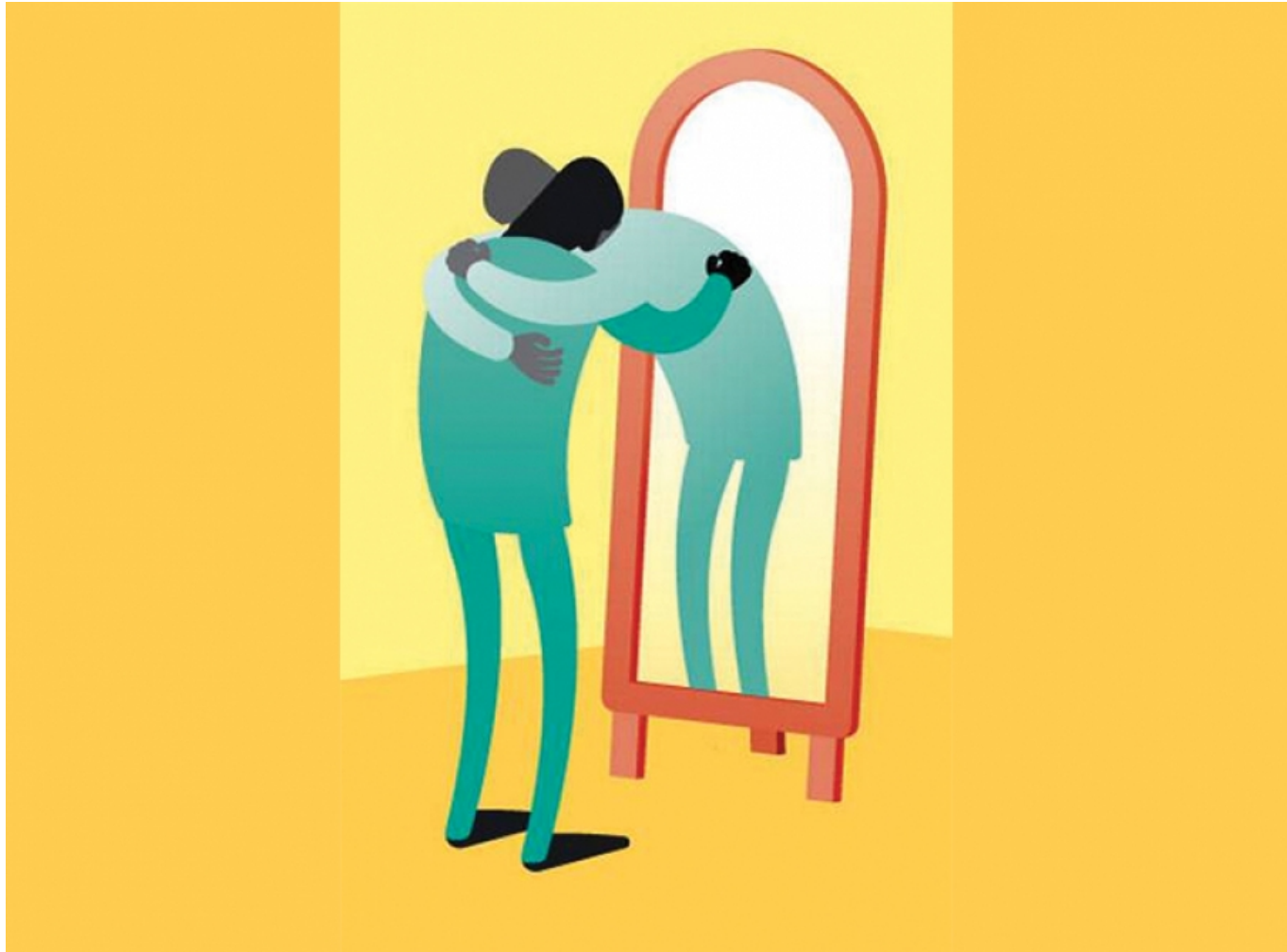




# Lets Take a Self Compassion Break



# Compassion for the Caregiver





What would you like to remember?



# Discussion & Questions



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