

## GUIDE TO SELF-COMPASSION

Treating yourself as you would treat a good friend

### WHAT IS SELF-COMPASSION?

It is simply giving the same kindness to ourselves that we would give to others.

Treating yourself as you would treat a good friend.

We offer compassion to others in our lives but easily neglect ourselves, often when we are struggling and need compassion the most.

This is human nature, as we are a mixture of our life's experiences and our genes.



### THE BENEFITS OF SELF-COMPASSION



Research shows people who are compassionate to themselves are:

- happier, more optimistic, experience gratitude, greater emotional intelligence, greater psychological well-being and better relationships with others
- resilient; being able to bounce back more easily from setbacks and learn from their mistakes
- much less likely to be depressed, anxious, insecure, stressed and less fearful of failure
- experience less compassion fatigue and burnout
- Self-compassion is an antidote to self-criticism and perfectionistic thinking

### WHY BE SELF-COMPASSIONATE?

We need to learn it for our own health and well-being.

We cannot give compassion to others if we are not giving to ourselves.

It increases our ability to offer our patients and colleagues' genuine and sustainable compassionate care and leadership.

Compassion in the workplace starts with Self-Compassion: treat yourself like you would a good friend.



### CAN YOU LEARN SELF-COMPASSION?



Yes!

It is not a feeling, an emotion or a state; it is a mind-set or skill which we can develop, and is available to all of us, at any time, in any place.

We need to learn it for our own health and well-being.

For more information and other factsheets and guides visit the OD pages or email [ODenquiries@nhs.net](mailto:ODenquiries@nhs.net)

# GUIDE TO SELF-COMPASSION

## THREE COMPONENTS OF SELF-COMPASSION

### 1) Mindfulness -

Recognising what we are thinking and feeling in the present moment without judging ourselves or over-reacting.

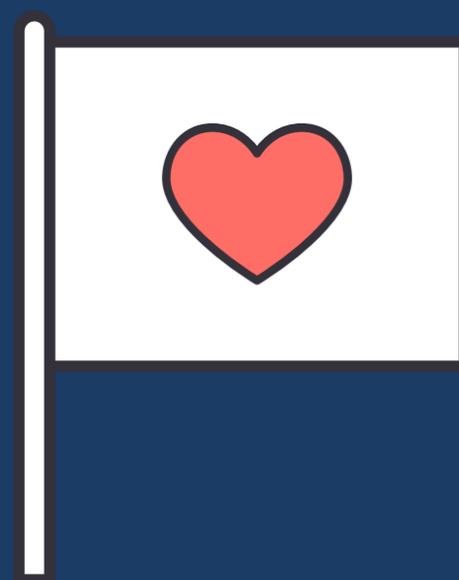
### 2) Self-Kindness -

Being supportive and understanding towards ourselves when we are having a hard time, rather than being harshly self-critical / beating ourselves up.

### 3) Common Humanity -

Remembering that everyone makes mistakes and experiences difficult times.

It's OK to not be OK.



## TAKE A FIVE MINUTE SELF-COMPASSION BREAK

### QUIETLY SAY TO YOURSELF

1 - "This is really hard right now".

"Caring for my patients with Covid-19 is really hard".

"Supporting my team to care for their patients is really hard".

"It's OK to not be OK"

(Name and acknowledge the suffering you are experiencing = Mindfulness)

2 - "Suffering is a part of life".

"It's not abnormal to feel this way; many people are feeling this way".

"Many people are experiencing this across the country".

(=Common Humanity)

3 - "May I be kind to myself". Place your hand over your heart, or where feels soothing and calming, and let the feelings of care to yourself stream through your fingers.

What kind words would you say to your good friend?

"I am here for you".

"I know it's tough but it's going to be OK".

"I care for you....." (say your name)

(say your name) ".....I am so sorry".

Express your deep wish that you will be well, happy and free from suffering.

As you take your hand away take a deep breath and breathe out slowly. Notice how your body feels right now and just be how you are in this moment (=Mindfulness).

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