



CREATING A BRAVE AND EMPOWERING SPACE FOR
EQUALITY THROUGH TRAUMA INFORMED CARE.

SELF-COMPASSION

This time of year, there is an extra emphasis on showing compassion to those closest to us. But do we remember to have compassion for ourselves as well? In her book titled *Self-Compassion*, Kristin Neff defines **self-compassion** as “giving yourself the same compassion you’d naturally show a friend when *you’re* struggling or feeling badly about yourself. It means being supportive when you’re facing a life challenge, feel inadequate, or make a mistake.” So how can we integrate self-compassion into our lives?

Core Components

Kristin Neff identifies three core components to self-compassion in her book: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. **Self-kindness** occurs when we are understanding and gentle toward ourselves rather than judgmental and harsh. **Common humanity** refers to the understanding that humans are interconnected in our experiences and that we are not alone in our suffering. **Mindfulness** allows us to view our experiences clearly and without judgement in the present moment.





Benefits

One benefit of self-compassion is **emotional resilience** when facing adversity. When we can show ourselves compassion in difficult situations, we can more effectively cope through them. Self-compassion also offers **freedom from self-judgement and self-criticism**. When we recognize that we can be kind to ourselves instead of harsh, we can decrease the pressure we put on ourselves and improve our motivation to accomplish goals. Self-compassion often leads to overall **personal growth**.



Self-Compassion in Art

Art can be a great way to express self-compassion.

Here are some examples of art styles that can represent self-compassion:

- **Kintsugi**-The Japanese art of repairing clay bowls with gold.
- **I Am Poetry**-Use writing to identify personal strengths and affirmations.
- **Emotional Expression Art**-Use shape, line, and color to express emotions related to self-compassion.
- **The Compassionate Visitor**-Create a figure that represents a compassionate presence and add tangible details/characteristics.



Self-Compassion in Music

There are a lot of musicians that have created music focused on self-compassion. Here are some examples of songs that reflect messages of self-compassion:

- "I am enough just as I am."
I Am Enough by Daphne Willis
- "Everyone trips, everyone falls, so don't be so hard on yourself..."
Don't Be So Hard On Yourself by Jess Glynne
- "I still fall on my face sometimes, and I can't color inside the lines. 'Cause I'm perfectly incomplete, I'm still working on my masterpiece."
Masterpiece by Jessie J

Important Dates!

- **January was Art Therapy Appreciation Month!** If you have the opportunity to work with one of our talented art therapists, give them a huge thank you!
- **Feb 24-Mar2 is Eating Disorders Awareness Week!** “Eating Disorders Awareness Week (EDAW) is an annual campaign to educate the public about the realities of eating disorders and to provide hope and visibility to individuals and loved ones impacted by eating disorders” (National Eating Disorders Association, 2025). For more information on how you can participate, please visit NEDA’s website at www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/edaw

OUR MISSION AT EXPRESSIVE THERAPIES:

Creating a brave and empowering space for equality with – race, gender, sexuality, age, economic status, cognitive, physical, spiritual needs and those living with mental illness – through trauma informed care: music therapy, art therapy, dance/movement therapy and psychotherapy, to improve health and well-being.

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