

# Compassion Practices:

## Building a Foundation for Self-Care & Resilience

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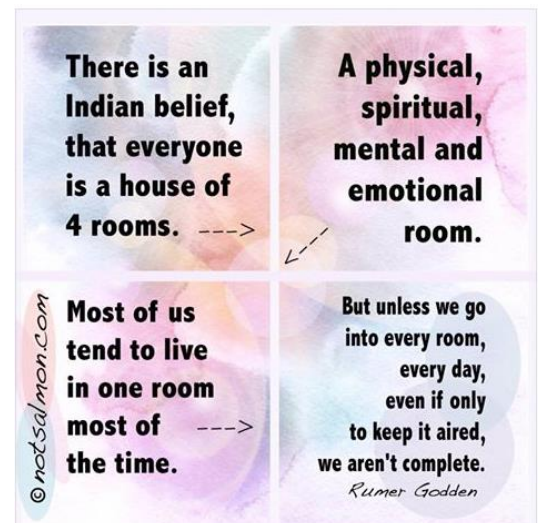
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## Self-Care ~ A Holistic Approach

Self-care refers to activities and practices that we can engage in on a regular basis to **reduce stress and maintain and enhance our short and longer-term health and well-being**. Self-care aims to:

- Take care of physical and psychological health proactively and responsively
- Manage and reduce stress, including compassion fatigue and burnout
- Honor our emotional and spiritual needs
- Help to foster and sustain healthy relationships
- Empower us to create balance and equilibrium across our personal, social, and work lives



## 5 Essential Self-Care Practices



## Resilience

- To recover and continue on in the face of adversity without being overwhelmed or acting in unhealthy ways
- To become strong, healthy, and successful again after something difficult or challenging happens.
- To recover from setbacks and adapt well to change and crisis

# Self-Compassion: Building a Foundation for Self-Care & Resilience

*"Self-compassion is the ongoing practice of relating to yourself kindly and fairly. It is especially helpful during times of stress and suffering. Self-compassion is not kicking yourself when you're down, which prolongs stress reactions, creates more suffering, and delays your ability to get back up. Instead, self-compassion is about treating yourself as you would treat a good friend in distress. It is about responding with caring support." ~ Whitlock, et al. (2021).*



## Research on Self-Compassion

- Increases well-being and resilience to stress and trauma
- Fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Supports practicing healthy behaviors and minimizing unhealthy behaviors (like more exercise and less substance use)
- Improves greater motivation, confidence, and sense of personal responsibility
- Strengthens social connections and helps build more fulfilling relationships
- Helps people sustain the act of caring for others
- Increases feelings of trust, safety, and calm

## Ways to Practice

- Journaling
- Positive self-talk or affirmations
- Meditation & Mindfulness practices
- Gratitude practice
- Challenging your inner critic
- Befriending yourself as you would another – *be your own best friend!*

## Three Elements of Self-Compassion



### Mindfulness

Being aware of the physical, emotional, or mental pain of the moment.



### Self-kindness

Treating ourselves with kindness, considering our own needs.



### Common Humanity

Recognizing that these experiences are a normal part of being human.

Image source: @THEU; based on the work of Neff et.al.

# Exploring Compassion Practices

## Loving-Kindness Meditation

### What is LKM?

- Considered a secular meditation practice with roots in ancient Buddhist traditions
- Uses visualization and phrases to cultivate a sense of loving-kindness and compassion
- Works with a range of categories such as Self, Family/Friends, Neutral Beings, All Beings
- Offers a strong foundation for cultivating self-compassion

### Loving-Kindness Phrases

May I be happy.  
May I be peaceful.  
May I be free of suffering.  
May I have ease of wellbeing..



## Practicing Gratitude



- Meditation
- Journaling
- Sharing With Friends & Family
- Gratitude Sharing Circle
- On The Spot – think of 3 things you are grateful for right now!

## Cultivating Connection

***Connection is vital to our personal experience of well-being, as well as our ability to serve and support others. As we cultivate practices that help us to feel connected, we become better able to access support when we ourselves need it, both inwardly and outwardly.***



### Ways to practice...

- Spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation, or contemplation
- Participating in community – local, social, hobbies, spiritual, co-visioning
- Spending time with family and friends
- Accessing peer support or mentorship
- Connecting with self through meditation, journaling, and self-reflection
- Spending time in nature
- Connecting with pets or animals
- Creativity activities or hobbies
- Listening to or playing music
- Journaling or letter writing to self or others



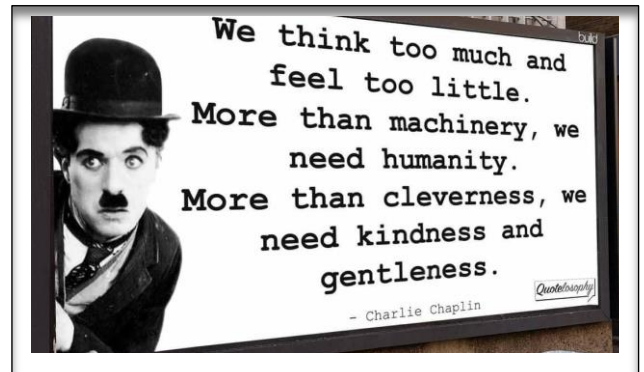
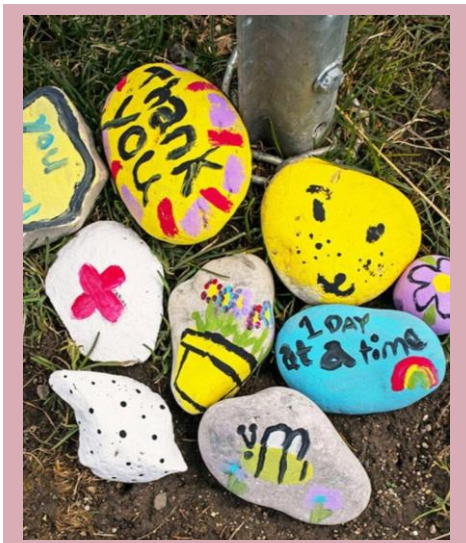
# Self-Compassion, Self-Care & Resilience Resources & References

## Resources

- Greater Good In Action ~ <https://greatergood.com>
- Science of Health & Happiness/Dr. Emma Seppala ~ <https://emmaseppala.com>
- May Is For Metta (Lovingkindness Meditation) ~ <https://bethterrence.com/mayisformetta/>
- Happiness & Wellness/Karen Salmansohn ~ [notsalmon.com](https://notsalmon.com)
- Self-Compassion/Dr. Kristen Neff ~ <https://self-compassion.org/category/exercises>
- Center for Mindfulness/UC San Diego ~ <https://cih.ucsd.edu/mindfulness/mindfulness-compassion-resources>
- Compassion Resources/Tara Brach ~ <https://www.tarabrach.com/compassion-others-self>

### Mindfulness Apps:

Think  
Mindbody  
Shine  
Insight Timer  
Self-Compassion  
Ten Percent Happier



## References

- Greater Good Magazine. (2021). *Keys to Wellbeing: Compassion*. <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/compassion>.
- Eckman, E. (2019). *Five Ways to Protect Your Well-Being as a Health Care Professional*. [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/five\\_ways\\_to\\_protect\\_your\\_wellbeing\\_as\\_a\\_health\\_care\\_professional](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/five_ways_to_protect_your_wellbeing_as_a_health_care_professional).
- Seppala, E. (2014). *Scientific Benefits of Self-Compassion Infographic*. <https://emmaseppala.com/scientific-benefits-self-compassion-infographic/>.
- Whitlock et al. (2021) *How to Practice Self-compassion for Resilience and Well-being*. <https://accelerate.uofuhealth.utah.edu/resilience/how-to-practice-self-compassion-for-resilience-and-well-being>.