

Intro to Mindful Self-Compassion: An Experiential Workshop

Catherine Crisp, PhD, MSW, MSC Teacher-in-Training
Associate Professor and MSW Coordinator
clcrisp@ualr.edu www.catherinecrisp.com

Adrienne Orozco, BA
MSW student: Clinical Concentration, May 2019 graduate
adrienne.orozco93@gmail.com

Presentation and resources can be found at
<http://catherinecrisp.com/msc-workshops/nasw-ar-2019/>
or by scanning this QR code to go directly to the website



Agenda

- Soft landing
- “Imperfections” by Elizabeth Carlson
- Overview of Mindful Self-Compassion
- Experiential Exercises
 - “Just for now” by Danna Faulds
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 - Soft landing
 - Exercises
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- Journeys with MSC
- Resources
- “Walk Slowly” by Danna Faulds
- Take my survey 😊

Imperfections by Elizabeth Carlson

I am falling in love
with my imperfections
The way I never get the sink really clean,
forget to check my oil,
lose my car in parking lots,
miss appointments I have written down,
am just a little late.

I am learning to love
the small bumps on my face
the big bump of my nose,
my hairless scalp,
chipped nail polish,
toes that overlap.

Learning to love
the open-ended mystery
of not knowing why

I am learning to fail
to make lists,
use my time wisely,
read the books I should.

Instead I practice inconsistency,
irrationality, forgetfulness.

Probably I should
hang my clothes neatly in the closet
all the shirts together, then the pants,
send Christmas cards, or better yet
a letter telling of
my perfect family.

But I'd rather waste time
listening to the rain,
or lying underneath my cat
learning to purr.

I used to fill every moment
with something I could
cross off later.

Perfect was
the laundry done and folded
all my papers graded
the whole truth and nothing but

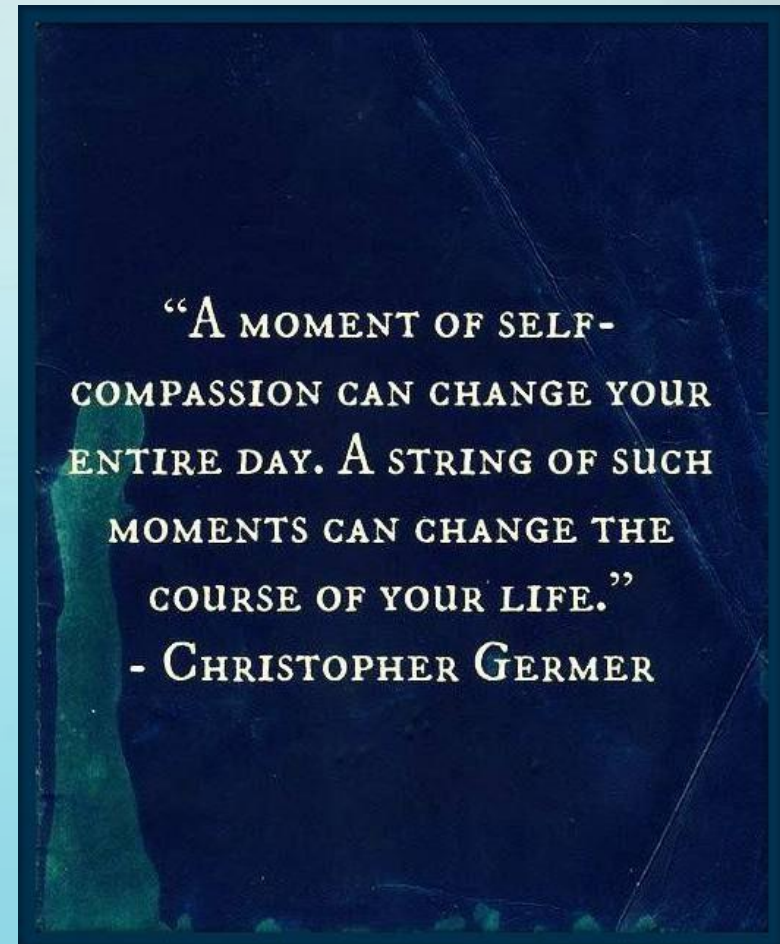
Now the empty mind is what I seek
the formless shape
the strange off center
sometimes fictional
me.



Overview of MSC

Self-compassion starts within

- MSC is an INSIDE-OUT process.
- When we start applying MSC to ourselves, we become more compassionate with others.



Guiding principles for our time together

- Take care of your needs.
- Be as present as you can.
 - Stay off your phones and electronic devices.
 - Pay attention to what arises physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.
- Be here for yourself as much as you can be.
- Use the microphone when asking a question and/or commenting.

What is Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC)?

- Self-compassion is a response to our own suffering.
- It entails treating ourselves as we would a cherished friend (Neff, 2003b).



MSC can be used to respond to our own

- Suffering
- Struggling
- Shame
- Stress
- Strain
- Striving
- Sickness
- Silliness
- Stubbornness
- Self-consciousness
- Stupidity
- Spelling errors
- So much more than this

Classic MSC question

- “What do I need?”
- “What works for me?”

Gestures of self-compassion

- Stand if you are comfortable doing so.
 - If not, feel free to remain seated.
- Spread out as much as you can and feel comfortable doing so.
- Follow my directions as much as you are comfortable doing so.
- This exercise represents the three components of self-compassion.

Three components of MSC

- **Mindfulness** vs Over-identification:
 - Allows us to “be” with painful feelings just as they are without trying to change them.
 - Avoids extremes of suppressing or running away with painful feelings.
- **Common humanity** vs Isolation:
 - Seeing our own experience as part of larger human experience, not as isolating or abnormal.
 - Recognizing that life is imperfect (and we are, too and that’s ok).
- **Self-Kindness** vs Self-Judgment:
 - Treating our self with care and understanding rather than harsh judgment.
 - Actively soothing and comforting our self.

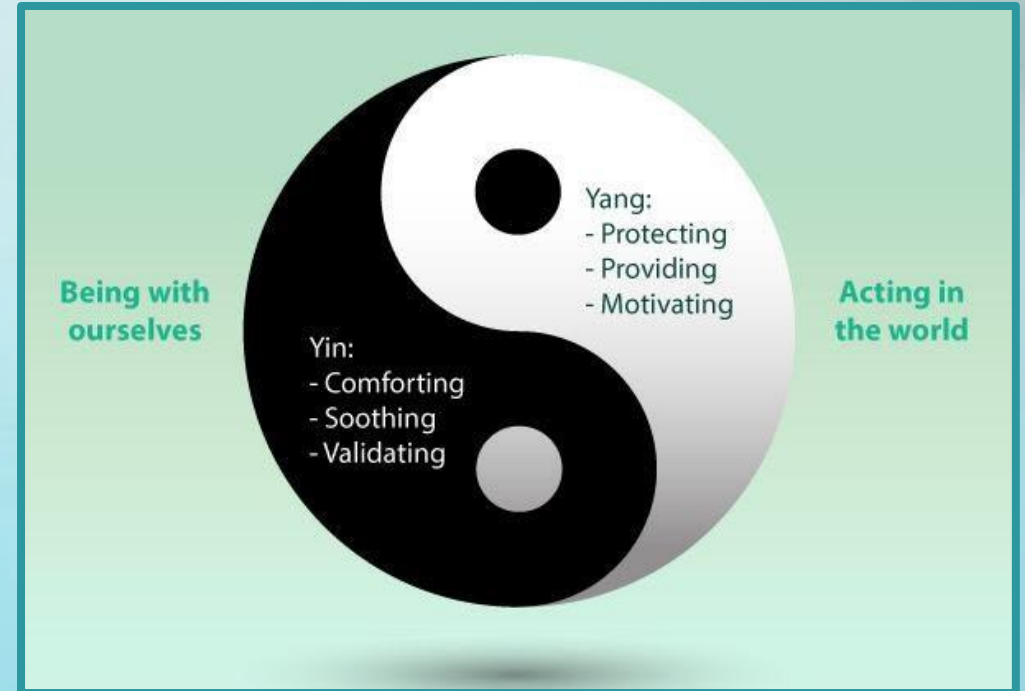


Self-compassion and stress

Stress response	Stress Response Turned Inward	<i>Self- Compassion</i>
Fight	Self-criticism	Self-kindness
Flight	Isolation	Common Humanity
Freeze	Rumination	Mindfulness

Yin and Yang of self-compassion

- **Yin:** “being with” ourselves in a compassionate way—
comforting, soothing, validating.
- **Yang:** “acting in the world” in a compassionate way—
protecting, providing, and motivating.
- Most of us have a default way of responding.



Five misgivings about self-compassion

- It is a form of self-pity.
- It entails being weak.
- It will undermine motivation.
- It will lead to self-indulgent behaviors.
- It is selfish.

Self-compassion and other concepts

<i>Self-Compassion</i>	Self-Criticism	Self-esteem	Self-care
Our response to our own suffering, similar to how we would respond to a friend's suffering.	Our judgement of our behavior, thoughts, or feelings, usually harshly.	Our evaluation of our overall value or worth as a person.	Actions we take in order to take care of our mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical health.

Wandering mind or “monkey mind”

- Our mind is trained to solve problems. When it doesn't have them, it tries to find or create them.
- Default mode network (DMN): an interconnected network of brain regions that is *active* when the mind is *resting* and inactive is engaged in a task.
- It includes structures that are located in the middle of the brain from the front to the back.
- These structures become active when we disengage and inactive when we engage.
- The DMN does three things:
 - Creates a sense of self.
 - Projects that self into the past and future.
 - Looks for problems.

“Monkey mind” or wandering mind

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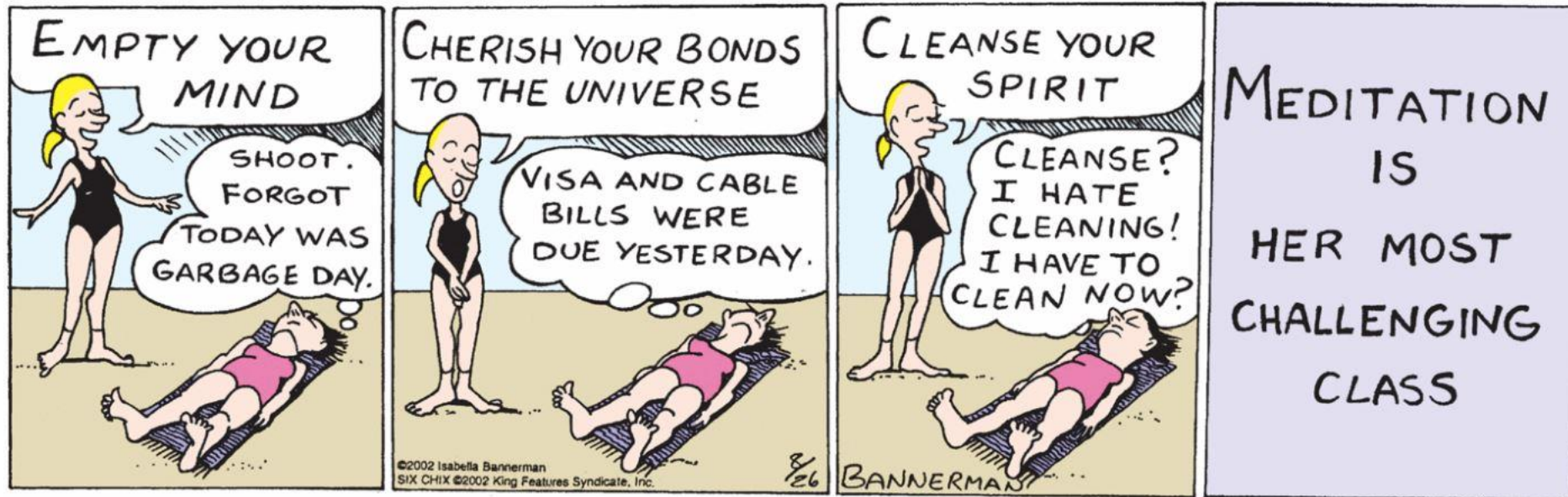
Bannerman, Gradisher, Konar, Lawton, Epstein & Piro

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◀ MONDAY, AUGUST 26, 2002 ▶ 📅

SEE LAST 7+



Wandering mind or “monkey mind”

- Mindfulness meditation, according to the research, deactivates the DMN when we are meditating and when we are in a resting state.
- Given this, our mind is simply doing what it's biologically wired to do when we meditate. The DMN gets activated and our mind wanders and tries to solve problems.
- [Sharon Salzberg](#) says “The moment you realize you've been distracted is the magic moment.”
- In MSC, we say that this moment of magic is an opportunity for self-compassion. When I realize my mind is wandering, I often say (in a soft and gentle voice) “Hello brain. I see you wandering and trying to do your job. Thanks for working so hard. Let's take a break for a few breaths” and then I try to resume my meditation.

Backdraft

- Defined as the “distress that arises when we give ourselves compassion” (Germer & Neff, 2019).
- Is a term that firefighters use to describe how a fire can intensify when fresh air is introduced through an open door.
- A similar effect can occur when we open the door of our hearts with self-compassion. Most of our hearts are hot with pain accumulated over a lifetime. In order to function in our lives, we needed to shut out stressful or painful experiences. However, when the door of our hearts opens and kindness flows in, old hurts are likely to come out. This is backdraft. The discomfort we feel is not created by self-compassion practice—it’s simply being re-experienced and transformed by the power of compassion.

Backdraft

- Backdraft can show up as any type of emotional, mental, or physical uneasiness. For example:
 - Emotionally: shame, grief, fear, and sadness.
 - Mentally: “I’m all alone.” “I’m a failure.” “I’m unworthy.”
 - Physically: body memories, aches, and pains.
- Responses to backdraft:
 - Ask yourself what you need right now and what you need to do to feel safe.
 - Allow backdraft to percolate in the background of their awareness and see if it dissipates on its own.
 - Slightly reduce whatever practices you are doing if backdraft remains strong, and see what happens.
 - If backdraft remains too distressing, then practice mindfulness to regulate emotions.
 - When all else fails, anchor your awareness in ordinary activities—do normal things you enjoy.



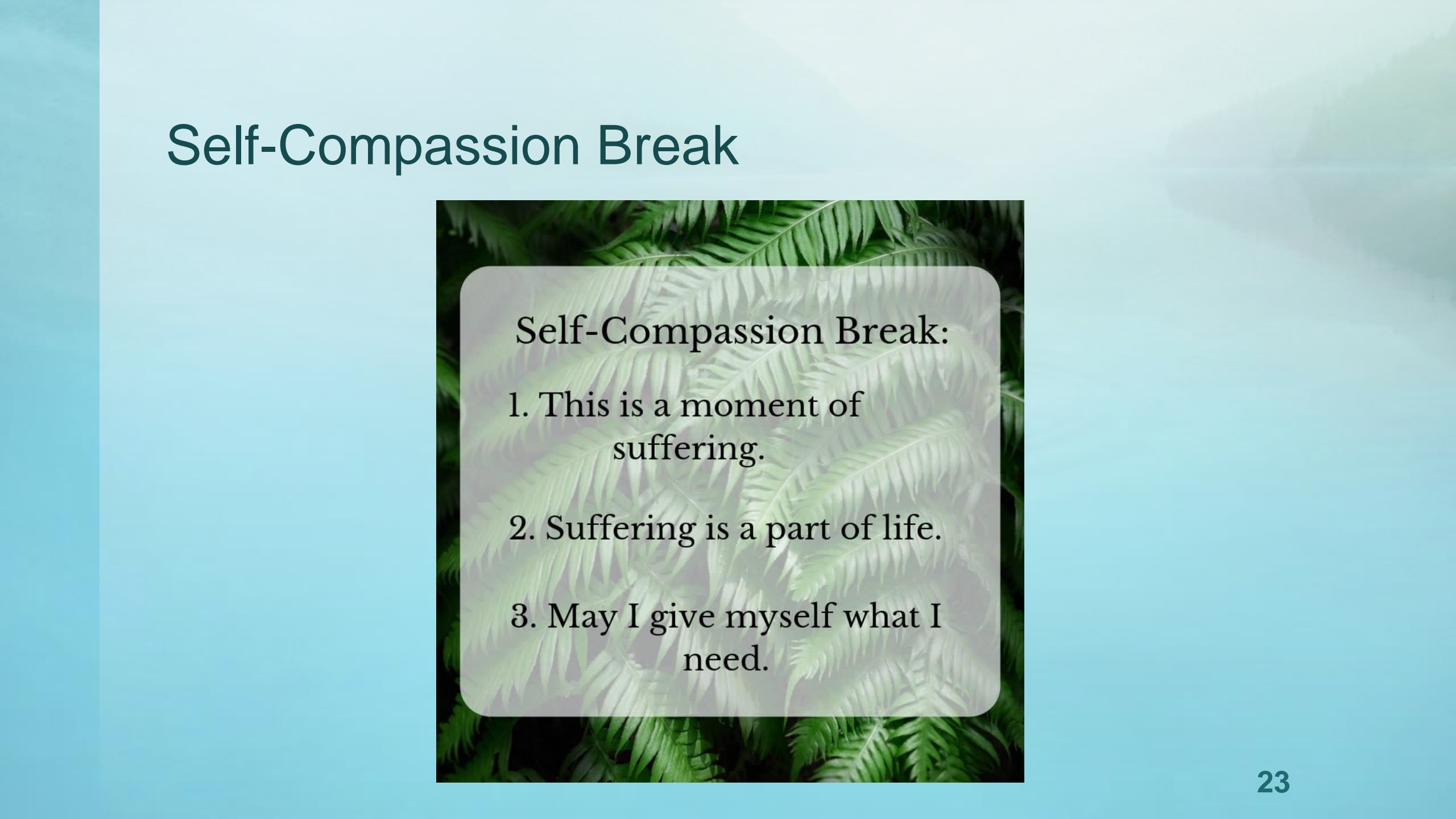
Experiential Exercises

The fun stuff 😊

Experiential Exercises

- “Soles of the Feet” practice (short version)
- “Soothing Touch”
- “Self-Compassion Break”
 - “Self-Compassion Break” (female voice)
 - “Self-Compassion Break” (male voice)
- “Affectionate Breathing”
 - “Affectionate Breathing” meditation (female voice)
 - “Affectionate Breathing” meditation (male voice)
- “Soothe, Soften, Allow”
- “Giving and Receiving Compassion”

Self-Compassion Break



Self-Compassion Break:

1. This is a moment of suffering.
2. Suffering is a part of life.
3. May I give myself what I need.

Just for now

by Danna Faulds

Just for now

Danna Faulds

Just for now, without asking how, let yourself sink into stillness.

Just for now, lay down the weight you so patiently bear upon your shoulders. Feel the earth receive you, and the infinite expanse of the sky grow even wider as your awareness reaches up to meet it.

Just for now, allow a wave of breath to enliven your experience. Breathe out whatever blocks you from the truth.

Just for now, be boundless, free, with awakened energy tingling in your hands and feet.

Drink in the possibility of being who and what you really are – so fully alive that the world looks different, newly born and vibrant, just for now.

MSC Journeys

- Catherine's journey
- Adrienne's journey in the class to date



MSC Resources

8-week MSC Class

- I am the only person in Arkansas formally trained by the Center for Mindful Self-Compassion to teach MSC.
- Class will be offered in the fall at a date, time, location, and cost TBD.
- Participants are asked to attend all sessions unless there is a significant scheduling conflict.
- To be notified about this and other MSC Workshops I teach, fill out the form [here](#). I will only use this info to notify you about MSC workshops and classes I offer.

Session	Topic
1	Discovering Mindful Self-Compassion
2	Practicing Mindfulness
3	Practicing Loving-Kindness
4	Discovering Your Compassionate Voice
5	Living Deeply
5R	Retreat (mostly silent)
6	Meeting Difficult Emotions
7	Exploring Challenging Relationships
8	Embracing Your Life

MSC Trainings

- [MSC Core Skills Workshop with Chris Germer and Kristin Neff \(Overland Park, Kansas: April 24-25, 2020\)](#)
- [Listing of courses throughout the country](#)
- [Live Online MSC Courses](#)
- [Self-Compassion Training for Men](#)

Websites and resources

- www.catherinecrisp.com (my personal website)
- <http://catherinecrisp.com/msc-workshops/nasw-ar-2019/> (website with resources for this presentation)
- [Center for Mindful Self-Compassion](#)
- [Chris Germer's \(co-founder of the MSC program\) website](#)
- [Kristin Neff's \(co-founder of the MSC program\) website](#)
- [Ultimate Courage: Men and Self-Compassion](#) (youtube video)
- [Insight Timer](#) (app with many guided MSC meditations)

MSC books and articles

Books

- [The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook: A Proven Way to Accept Yourself, Build Inner Strength, and Thrive](#) by Kristin Neff and Chris Germer (2018)
- [Self-compassion: the proven power of being kind to yourself](#) by Kristin Neff (2015)
- [The mindful path to self-compassion: freeing yourself from destructive thoughts and emotions](#) by Chris Germer (2009)

Articles

- [The transformative effects of mindful self-compassion](#) by Kristin Neff and Chris Germer (2019)
- [Why fierce women need self-compassion](#) by Kristin Neff (2018)
- [Why self-compassion trumps self-esteem](#) by Kristin Neff (2017)
- [What self-compassion is not](#) by Center for Mindful Self-Compassion (2017)
- [The five myths of self-compassion](#) by Kristin Neff (2015)

Please take my survey

Mindful Self-Compassion and Attitudes Towards Others: An Exploratory Study

Conducted by Dr. Catherine Crisp, Associate Professor,
UA Little Rock School of Social Work
clcrisp@ualr.edu; (501) 420-4614

Please go to <http://bit.ly/mscstudy1> or scan the QR code below with your smartphone camera to take the 20 minute survey.



All who take the survey are eligible to enter a drawing to win a copy of *The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook: A Proven Way to Accept Yourself, Build Inner Strength, and Thrive* by Kristen Neff and Chris Germer (2018).

Please share the link to the survey with your friends and colleagues and ask them to take it. Email me at clcrisp@ualr.edu if you want me to email you the link so you can forward it.

Walk Slowly by Danna Faulds

Walk Slowly

It only takes a reminder to breathe,
a moment to be still, and just like that,
something in me settles, softens, makes
space for imperfection. The harsh voice
of judgment drops to a whisper and I
remember again that life isn't a relay
race; that we will all cross the finish
line; that waking up to life is what we
were born for. As many times as I
forget, catch myself charging forward
without even knowing where I'm going,
that many times I can make the choice
to stop, to breathe, and be, and walk
slowly into the mystery.

~ Danna Faulds ~

Thank you

Compassionate Connections, LLC

Catherine Crisp, PhD, MSW

Mindful Self-Compassion Teacher-in-Training

<http://catherinecrisp.com/mindful-self-compassion/>



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