

## Self-compassion



February is the month marked by Valentine's Day where we have the opportunity to pause and express our

affection for others. I encourage you to take that pause as connection with others and expressing your gratitude for them impacts those you care about, but can also positively impact your physical and emotional well-being. It also might be a good time to also consider engaging in self-compassion. Many of us can expend a great deal of emotional fuel being hard on ourselves about our performance in school, at work or in relationships. When we practice self-compassion, we are not ignoring that mistakes might have been made or goals not met. We are instead facing the disappointments with an acceptance and understanding for ourselves that can help us move forward with strength, confidence and hope. This self-compassion can help decrease the time that can be wasted in self-denigration that is rarely useful, works against our well-being, and in fact slows down our ability to work toward our goals.

Dr. Kristen Neff, a psychologist, has written a great deal about self-compassion. Dr. Neff encourages you to face your pain with the compassion that you would offer others:

*Think about what the experience of compassion feels like. First, to have compassion for others you must notice that they are suffering. If you ignore that homeless person on the street, you can't feel compassion for how difficult his or her experience is. Second, compassion involves feeling moved by others' suffering so that your heart responds to their pain (the word compassion literally means to "suffer with"). When this occurs, you feel warmth, caring, and the desire to help the suffering person in some way. Having compassion also means that you offer understanding and kindness to others when they fail or make mistakes, rather than judging them harshly. Finally, when you feel compas-*

*sion for another (rather than mere pity), it means that you realize that suffering, failure, and imperfection is part of the shared human experience....Self-compassion involves acting the same way towards yourself when you are having a difficult time, fail, or notice something you don't like about yourself. Instead of just ignoring your pain with a "stiff upper lip" mentality, you stop to tell yourself "this is really difficult right now," how can I comfort and care for myself in this moment?*

Dr. Neff emphasizes that self-compassion is not self-pity. In the latter, you can become focused on your own troubles and assume you alone are suffering, while self-compassion helps you accept your suffering without harsh judgment. Self-compassion reminds you that pain and disappointment are part of the human condition which in turn prevents feelings of isolation and disconnectedness. She also emphasizes that self-compassion is not self-indulgence. People can make the mistake that they need to beat up on themselves in order to grow. It is important to remember that self-compassion is not based on an evaluation of how good or accomplished you are. All human beings deserve compassion and your fallings should not be hidden but accepted and with that comes greater resiliency. <http://self-compassion.org/>

### Dr. Kristen Neff: 3 Elements of Self-Compassion



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## Wellness Events

### Work Life and Wellness Events

<http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/hr/wellness/index.html>

### UC Living Fit Forever

[http://intranet.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/clinops/resources/living\\_fit\\_forever.shtml](http://intranet.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/clinops/resources/living_fit_forever.shtml)

### Attending: Medicine, Mindfulness & Humanity

Ronald Epstein, MD, FAAHPM  
February 6, 2018 5:00 Reception; 5:30 Presentation UC Davis Cancer Center Auditorium  
RSVP [here](#).

### 8-Week Mindful Self-Compassion Course

2/12/18-4/2/18,  
Sundays 1-4pm, Full Day 3/12 9-5pm. For more info about the course, click [here](#).

### Therapy Dogs Are Back

February 15th 12-2pm  
Student Commons Education Building  
Student Commons BIMSON

## Wellness Tip: Three Aspects of Self Compassion

**N**ow consider for your wellness strategy for the month a self-compassion break:

Think of a situation in your life that is difficult, that is causing you stress. Call the situation to mind, and see if you can actually feel the stress and emotional discomfort in your body. Now, say to yourself:

### 1. This is a moment of suffering

That's mindfulness. Other options include:

- This hurts.
- Ouch.
- This is stress.

### 2. Suffering is a part of life

That's common humanity. Other options include:

- Other people feel this way.
- I'm not alone.
- We all struggle in our lives.

Now, put your hands over your heart, feel the warmth of your hands and the gentle touch of your hands on your chest. Or adopt the soothing touch you discovered felt right for you. Say to yourself:

### 3. May I be kind to myself

You can also ask yourself, "What do I need to hear right now to express kindness to myself?" Is there a phrase that speaks to you in your particular situation, such as:

- May I give myself the compassion that I need*
- May I learn to accept myself as I am*
- May I forgive myself*
- May I be strong.*
- May I be patient*

This practice can be used any time of day or night, and will help you remember to evoke the three aspects of self-compassion when you need it most.

<http://self-compassion.org/exercise-2-self-compassion-break/>

Please take a moment to visit Dr. Neff's webpage that contains great resources for how to engage in self-compassion including MP3 audio guided meditations.

<http://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/#guided-meditations>

## Monthly Recipe from the UC Davis Community

I have been eating plant-based for the past 3 weeks and this is one of my favorite recipes. I have never been a fan of peppers, however these peppers are absolutely delicious. The recipe is quick and easy to make with the bonus that it is high in protein. Finding a vegan meal that provide enough protein to sufficiently sustain an active body can be challenging, this recipe pairs veggies and high protein into a super savory dish. This is so good, my son who is nine loved it.

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[https://www.purplecarrot.com/plant-based-recipes/black-bean-stuffed-peppers-with-vegetable-rice-jalapeno-queso?plan=tb\\_12](https://www.purplecarrot.com/plant-based-recipes/black-bean-stuffed-peppers-with-vegetable-rice-jalapeno-queso?plan=tb_12)



## Wellness App: Think Up: Positive Affirmations

When it comes to Apps and maintaining resiliency, it seems like you need to tackle it through different avenues. For example, one step in building resiliency, is maintaining a healthy balanced mindset. This App helps you "Build your own self improvement program to develop the motivation and the positive mindset you need to succeed, using personal affirmations in the most professional and effective way."

