

This handout covers information from the workshop held for community partners, parents, caregivers and others, living in York Region. The information and resources provided below is by no means an exhaustive list but can support your journey in advancing your understanding of the topic.

## Promoting and Practicing Self-compassion for Caregivers.

### What is Mindful Self-Compassion

- Treating self with kindness in instances of perceived failure and inadequacy rather than self-criticizing and judgement
- There are three components of self compassion; self-kindness, common humanity and mindfulness.

### What is Self-Compassion

- Acting the same way you do to others when you are falling short, failing or notice something you do not like about yourself
- Rather than ignoring your pain, you say, "This is really difficult right now, how can I comfort and care for myself in this moment?"



### Physiology of Self-Compassion and Self-criticism have a VERY different impact of body chemistry

- Threat=amygdala signals fight-or flight=increased blood pressure, cortisol and adrenaline
- Self-compassion changes body chemistry by raising oxytocin, lowering cholesterol and calming cardiovascular system

### Exercises

- Square box breathing
- 5-2-7 breathing
- Hand breathing
- Nostril breathing



### Self-Compassion Burnout and Caregiver Resiliency

- Will reduce anxiety and depression
- Improve well being
- Manage the aging process
- Improve social connection
- Reduce fatigue and burnout



## Tense and Release Body Scan

- Start from the toes by squeezing for a few seconds then releasing for a few seconds
- Continue next by squeezing the legs, stomach, chest, arms, shoulders/neck and finally head
- Repeat if necessary until you feel calmer

## Loving Kindness Meditation

For one minute, repeat 'May I be happy, may I be well, may I be filled with kindness and peace.' You can substitute "you" for "I" and think of someone you know and like, or just send love to all people.

## Resources

[Center for Mindful Self-Compassion Website](#)

[Chris Germer's Website](#)

[Dr. Kristin Neff - Self Compassion](#)

## Mindful Seeing

- Find a space at a window where there are sights to be seen outside
- Look at everything there is to see. Avoid labeling and categorizing what you see outside the window; instead of thinking "bird" or "stop sign," try to notice the colors, the patterns, or the textures
- Pay attention to the movement of the grass or leaves in the breeze. Notice the many different shapes present in this small segment of the world. Try to see the world outside the window from the perspective of someone unfamiliar with these sights
- Be observant, but not critical. Be aware, but not fixated
- If you become distracted, gently pull your mind away from those thoughts and notice a color or shape again to put you back in the right frame of mind.



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