

Caring Safely®

Self-Esteem and Compassion: The Concepts

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Self-Esteem

- Self-esteem refers to the positive or negative feelings we have about ourselves
- Positive feelings and high self-esteem lead to belief that we are worthy, good and that others view us positively
- Negative feelings and low self-esteem lead to the belief that we are less worthy than others or are inadequate
- Self-esteem can change over time and there are ways to address negative self-talk and feelings as well as increase positive self-talk and self-esteem.
- Low self-esteem can lead to a belief that we are not worthy of the resources (time/energy/money/words) to attend to our own needs.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale provides a global score for self-esteem:

Optional use for baseline and changes in self-esteem overtime.

Rosenberg, M. (1965)

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Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SSES)

When taking the test below, choose one of the following for each of the 10 questions.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plan with others. ()
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. ()
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. ()
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people. ()
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. ()
6. I take a positive attitude towards myself. ()
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. ()
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. ()
9. I certainly feel useless at times. ()
10. I think I am no good at all. ()

Calculate your scores as follows:

For items 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7:	Reverse score items 3, 5, 8, 9, and 10:
Strongly Agree = 3	Strongly Agree = 0
Agree = 2	Agree = 1

State Self-Esteem Scale

The State Self-Esteem Scale provides three subscales for:

- Performance Self-Esteem
- Social Self-Esteem
- Appearance Self-Esteem

Optional use for baseline and changes in self-esteem overtime.

Heatherton, T.F. and Polivy, J.

State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES)

This is a questionnaire designed to measure what you are thinking at this moment. There is of course, no right answer for any statement. The best answer is what you feel is true of yourself at the moment. Be sure to answer all of the items, even if you are not certain of the best answer. Again, answer these questions as they are true for you RIGHT NOW.

When taking the test below, score each question from 1 to 5 according to the following:

Not at all = 1	A little bit = 2	Somewhat = 3	Very much = 4	Extremely = 5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Determine your 1 to 5 score for each of the 20 questions below.

1. I feel confident about my abilities. ()
2. I am worried about whether I am regarded as a success or failure. ()
3. I feel satisfied with the way my body looks right now. ()
4. I feel frustrated or rattled about my performance. ()
5. I feel that I am having trouble understanding things that I read. ()
6. I feel that others respect and admire me. ()
7. I am dissatisfied with my weight. ()
8. I feel self-conscious. ()
9. I feel as smart as others. ()
10. I feel displeased with myself. ()
11. I feel good about myself. ()

Compassion

“Compassion is defined as the emotional response when perceiving suffering and involves an authentic desire to help” (Seppala, 2013)

“Compassion...involves the recognition and clear seeing of suffering. It also involves feelings of kindness for people who are suffering, so that desire to help – to ameliorate suffering – emerges.” (Neff, 2011)

Two components: identifying with human suffering and a desire or motivation to do something to relieve this suffering.

Compassion

“It’s essence is a basic kindness, with deep awareness of the suffering of oneself and of other living things, coupled with the wish and effort to relive it”

Book Recommendation: The Compassionate Mind: A New Approach to Life’s Challenges by Paul Gilbert

Compassion requires certain skills, abilities and qualities

Attributes of Compassion

- **Sensitivity** – ability to be sensitive and open to what’s happening so we can notice when help is needed
- **Distress Tolerance** – ability to experience difficult emotions and regulate them within ourselves
- **Empathy** – recognize their feelings/motivations/intentions, connect with it and desire to help alleviate any pain or suffering
- **Non-Judgment** – not judging a person’s painful experience - accepting and validating

Gilbert, P. (2009)

Benefits of Compassion

- Caring releases oxytocin and opiates which lead to trust, soothing and calmness
- Improved mental health
- Improve immune system
- lower blood pressure and cortisol
- Improve general psychological well-being
- Speeds up recovery of disease
- Lowers anxiety and depression

Gilbert, P. (2009)

Barriers to Compassion

- Limited time
- Heavy workloads
 - Paperwork
- Reward systems
- Lack of resources
- Work with clients that may evoke strong feeling of hopelessness, inadequacy, self-doubt, grief, and fear that cause you to question your own professional competency – increased for people with perfectionist traits and who neglect own needs/self-care

Self-Compassion

- Recognizing the suffering in ourselves without judgment
- Feelings of kindness towards ourselves
- Doing something to ameliorate that suffering

Relating to ourselves with a greater awareness for our own suffering, without judgment, and taking a kind approach to relieve that suffering.

Treating/speaking to ourselves how we would treat and speak to a loved one

(Neff, 2011)

Self-Compassion Scale

- Kristin Neff has a free self-compassion scale, both a short form, which provides an accurate global score of overall self-compassion and long form, which will give more accurate information on the subscale.
- Optional use for baseline of self-compassion and changes in self-compassion over time.

Handout and Link

Benefits of Self-Compassion

- More empathic concern
- Improved relationship functioning
- Reduction in perfectionism, rumination and thought suppression
- Lower depression and anxiety
- Reduced emotional reactivity
- Less negative affect
- More acceptance

(Neff, 2011)

Barriers to Self-Compassion

- Feeling “selfish”
- Limiting core beliefs
- Low self-worth
- Negative thinking patterns
- Non-supportive work environments
- Non-supportive relationships
- Self-criticism instead of compassionate curiosity

Connecting the Concepts

- Personalize and integrate the concepts of this module, including:
 - Self-Esteem
 - Compassion
 - Self-Compassion

Handout