



Caring Safely™ Module Six – Video One

The Role of Compassion, How to Cultivate Compassion and Living this Work

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In this module

- Why compassion is important
- Why self-compassion is important
- Moving from critic to compassion for yourself and others
 - Compassionate curiosity
- How to cultivate compassion
- Your ideal life
- Passion projects
- Your one year plan

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In this video

- What is Compassion
- Attributes of Compassion
- Benefits of Compassion
- What is Self-Compassion
- Benefits of Self-Compassion
- Barriers to Compassion
- Barriers to Self-Compassion
- The Power of Compassionate Curiosity
- Practicing Compassionate Curiosity

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What is 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.

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What is 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 relieve it”

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

Compassion requires certain skills, abilities and qualities

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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

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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

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What is 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

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Benefits of Self-Compassion

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

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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

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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

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The Power of Compassionate Curiosity

- What a person is thinking/feeling/doing, at any given moment, is a result of all previous experiences to that time.
- Think about all previous experiences that could have led up to the moment in question.
- What could have contributed to what is happening with that person? Wonder. Be Curious. Knowing that genetics, nurturing, experiences, opportunities and support have all contributed.
- What would be most helpful in the moment?

•Moving from judgment/critic to compassion
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Practice Compassionate Curiosity

Each day, for one week, practice compassionate curiosity, at least once.

Either on yourself, with a colleague/friend/family member or with a client

Think of what could be behind their present behavior/comment/feeling

Think about what could be the most nourishing/helpful thing you can do in that moment

Personalize and Integrate with the Handout

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Review of Video One

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