

# Developing Self Compassion

Working in health and social care means that we are often caring for others, sometimes to the detriment of ourselves. To care well for others, however, we also need to care well for ourselves.

*"Self-care is not selfish or self-indulgent, we cannot nurture others from a dry well" (Jennifer Louden).*

Consider for a moment how we all accept the instruction before a flight to put on our own oxygen mask, before we help someone else with theirs. Self care and self compassion are based on the same principle.



*"Being kind to yourself is one of the greatest kindnesses," said the mole.*

**Self-compassion has three main elements**  
(ref. Kristen Neff):

1. Self-kindness or having the ability to refrain from harsh criticism.
2. The ability to recognise your own humanity or the fact that each of us is imperfect and each of us experiences pain.
3. The ability to maintain a sense of mindfulness or non-biased awareness of experiences, even if they are painful. When we are able to bring more self compassion into our lives, it can have a positive effect: reducing getting "caught up" in self critical internal thoughts, recovering more quickly from our mistakes and learning from them, realising that we are all human. Accepting this about ourselves also makes us more supportive and accepting of other people.

Being more compassionate to ourselves is very individual, however it might include:

- ◆ Drinking plenty of water
- ◆ Getting sufficient sleep - 7-8 hours
- ◆ Eating as healthily as possible
- ◆ Taking regular physical activity
- ◆ Connecting with the natural environment
- ◆ Finding fun and laughter
- ◆ Listening to music
- ◆ Expressing emotion with a trusted person
- ◆ Finding creative activity

**Here are some other links you might find helpful:**

- ◆ Compassionate Mind Foundation  
<https://www.compassionatemind.co.uk/about-us>
- ◆ Three Good Things  
[https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/three-good-things?\\_ga=2.93152286.208046121.1592910398-2004827696.1589384364](https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/three-good-things?_ga=2.93152286.208046121.1592910398-2004827696.1589384364) Susan David  
TED Talk: The Gift and Power of Emotional Courage.

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**Local 1-1 wellbeing support is available for care home staff:**  
Call or text 07971 794 065 to arrange support  
(This is a dedicated line staffed Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm, or leave a voicemail 24/7)

**For immediate support 24/7:**

National Wellbeing Hub - <http://wellbeinghub.scot> - 0800 111 4191  
NHS Lanarkshire Staff Care and Wellbeing 24h Helpline  
- 01698 752000