



# Self- Compassion

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# *Definition*

American psychologist Dr. Kristin Neff has defined self-compassion as being composed of three main elements:

1. Self-kindness
2. Common humanity
3. Mindfulness.



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Somewhere along the way in our lives we recruit a pretty tough critic or bully. That critic/bully can say some *pretty awful* things about us...



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**Even if that's something you've never noticed, I'd encourage you to listen to your thoughts in moments where you've made a mistake.**

**Repeat them out loud to yourself. People are often surprised to hear the severity of the criticism they give themselves!**



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There's a common belief that this critic/bully's role is to motivate us to be better.

Research has found that it actually has the *opposite* effect.



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**Originally derived from aspects of  
Buddhism. Dr. Kristen Neff  
pioneered the self-compassion  
movement.**

**What Kristen and her team found  
was that people who were highly  
critical of themselves:**

1. **Have a heightened fight or  
flight response**
2. **Have higher levels of stress**
3. **Have higher levels of shame**
4. **Are more likely to be depressed**



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A mixture of those 4 components combined make people feel *less* motivated and *less* likely to make positive change.



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**They found that practicing self-compassion releases hormones that help foster feelings of emotional safety.**

**More compassionate people were less likely to feel stress, anxiety, and depression and were *more* motivated.**

**They also concluded that self-compassion is *strongly* related to mental well-being.**



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*So try and be your own best mate!*

Not only does it feel nicer, it's  
scientifically proven to improve your  
wellbeing and help you make  
positive change.



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If you are interested in learning more, visit Dr. Kristen Neff's website at [www.self-compassion.org](http://www.self-compassion.org)

Kristen also delivered an informative Ted Talk that explains aspects of this post in further detail. You can find it on YouTube by searching “The space between self-esteem and self compassion”.



Dr. Kristen Neff

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