

Caregiving with



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Self-Compassion

non-judgmental noticing of one's sufferings, recognizing it as a common human experience, and responding in a kind way toward the self (Neff, 2003)

1. Mindfulness versus over-identification (noticing)
2. Common humanity versus isolation (recognizing)
3. Self-kindness versus self-judgment (responding)



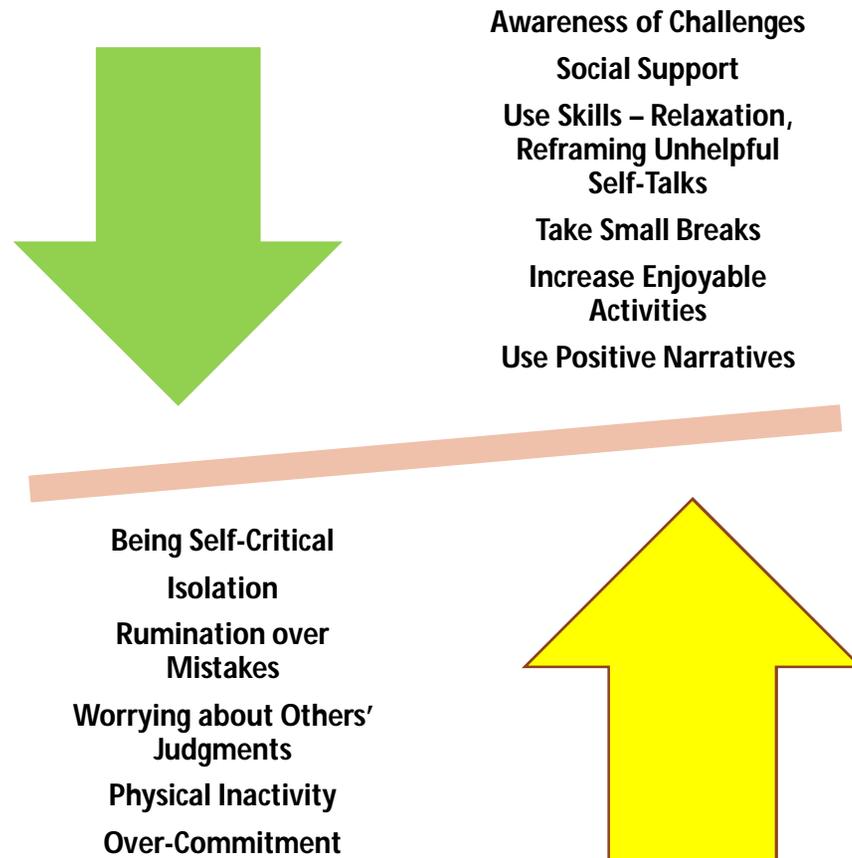
Why We Need Self-Compassion How Can It help with Caregiving?

- To Be Happier
- More Optimistic
- More Grateful
- More Resilient
- More Forgiving

Can Self-Compassion Improve Your Care Recipient's Quality of Life?

Note that it is NOT:

- Self-Pity
- Self-Indulgence
- Justification for undesirable behaviors



What Research is Telling Us

- **Strongly committed intergenerational caregivers** need support from both family and formal care services
- Self-compassion can **buffer anxiety and improve psychological health**
- We need strength and courage to acknowledge pain and suffering in others and ourselves, and **transform relationship to suffering through insight and emotion regulation**
- Caregivers' **fear of emotion** may affect how self-compassion develops - there may be **gender differences**

Caregivers are at Risk for Compassion Fatigue

Four themes were identified in a 2014 study :

1. Uncertainty

"The fear of the unknown, what's going to happen next, and will I pick up on it quick enough so she's not in danger..."

2. Doubt

"I'm more concerned I might say or do something that might upset her. And I don't want to do that..."

3. Attachment

"Oh yeah, this morning. We... crawled in bed together. Just because it made me feel like I was loved... and I missed not having her around like she used to be."

4. Strain

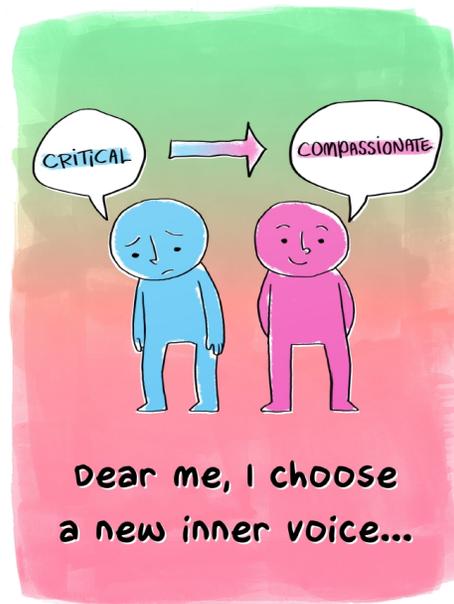
"I think I have reached a point where I felt resentful toward her. I used to love the weekends. I dread Fridays because that means that I don't have any relief at all."

What does this mean to you as a caregiver?

Caregiver Resources

www.self-compassion.org

**If your
COMPASSION
does not include
YOURSELF
it is incomplete.**
- Jack Kornfield



A moment of self-compassion
can change your entire day.
A string of such moments can
change the course of your life.
—Christopher K. Germer

Caregiver Resources

Audio:

- <http://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/>

(free online audio practices, including online self-test:

<http://self-compassion.org/test-how-self-compassionate-you-are/>

- www.healthjourneys.com

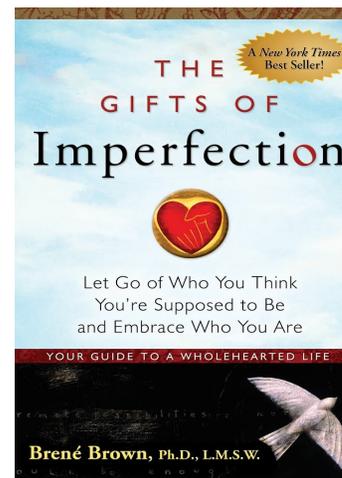
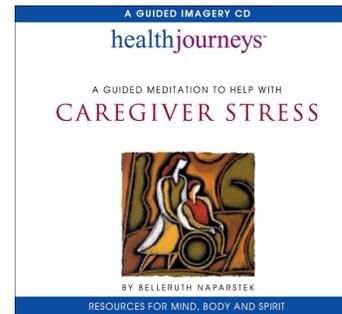
(listen to audio samples)

Books:

- Self-Compassion by Kristin Neff, PhD.
- The Gifts of Imperfection by Brené Brown, PhD., LMSW
- And many more...

Classes and Support Groups:

- **Caregiver Coping Class** at UCCS Aging Center
719-255-8002
- **Caregiver Support Center** at Area Agency on Aging
719-471-7080



References

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(Some images from online websites)

