

Mindfulness, Self-Compassion and Coping Humour



PRESENTER
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Mindfulness – how and when you can practice it

MINDFULNESS

"The awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgementally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment"

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Reduces rumination and strengthens **attentional control**

How you sustain your attention and how you switch your focus from one thing to another



WHY FOCUS ON MINDFULNESS?

Reduces symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress

Improves memory and attention

For mothers: reduces anxiety related to childbirth by relating to pain differently

For parents: increases ability to attend to their infants without becoming drawn into negative or self-critical thought

At work: less likely to leave, better job engagement, helps foster fulfilling relationships, boosts creativity, better work-life balance

PRACTICE RESOURCES

- Smiling Mind: smilingmind.com.au
- Books by Dr. Russ Harris: The Confidence Gap, The Happiness Trap, The Reality Slap

Self-compassion – how you can be kind to yourself in trying times

ELEMENTS OF SELF-COMPASSION



Self-kindness

Warmth, support, understanding

VS

Harsh self-judgement

Shared human experience

Everyone fails and makes mistakes

VS

Our suffering isolates us from others

Balanced approach to negative emotions

Being aware of our challenges with clarity and balance

VS

Overidentifying with negative thoughts and emotions

SELF-COMPASSION IS:

A central mechanism by which mindfulness- and acceptance-based interventions impact psychological health.

It promotes adaptive emotional responding such as self-soothing and self-care.



HOW TO PRACTISE SELF-COMPASSION?

Ask yourself three questions

1 Am I being kind and understanding to myself?

Consider:

- Is it permanent?
- Is it pervasive?
- Is it personal?

2 Do I acknowledge shortcomings and failure as experiences shared by everyone?

3 Am I keeping my negative feelings in perspective?



Write yourself a letter in the third person, as if you were a friend or a loved one.

Coping humour

WHAT IMPACT DOES HUMOUR HAVE ON COPING?

More likely to appraise stressful situations in more positive and challenging terms, rather than focusing on the negative threat aspects

When stressful events increase, those with low sense of humour are likely to see greater levels of depression and anxiety

Better psychological wellbeing and resilience, reduced burnout and PTSD, stronger immune system, increased physical health

HOW DOES HUMOUR WORK?



Understanding

Changing an early interpretation so that a new and usually hidden meaning becomes clear ("frame shift")



Distraction

Emotions are regulated through humour, which then positively influences relationships



Problem-solving

Taking control over the problematic situation as a result of better coping



Change in perspective

Situation is looked at through a humorous lens

HOW TO CULTIVATE COPING HUMOUR:

Read funny books or listen to funny podcasts

Don't be afraid to embrace your inner child

Spend more time around funny people

Value the extremes

Don't allow others to dictate what you find amusing

Play with a pet

