



MINDFUL SELF-COMPASSION – Full 8-week Course (MSC-FC)

“If your **compassion** does not include **yourself**, it is incomplete.” – Jack Kornfield

Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC-FC) is an empirically supported, 8-week, 24 hour training program designed to cultivate the skill of self-compassion. Based on the groundbreaking research of Kristin Neff and the clinical expertise of Christopher Germer, MSC-FC teaches core principles and practices that enable participants to respond to difficult moments in their lives with kindness, care and understanding.

The three key components of self-compassion are self-kindness, a sense of common humanity, and balanced, mindful awareness. Kindness opens our hearts to suffering, so we can give ourselves what we need. Common humanity opens us to our essential interrelatedness, so that we know we aren't alone. Mindfulness opens us to the present moment, so we can accept our experience with greater ease. Together they comprise a state of warm-hearted, connected presence.

Self-compassion can be learned by anyone, even those who didn't receive enough affection in childhood or who feel uncomfortable when they are good to themselves. It's a courageous attitude that stands up to harm, including the harm that we unwittingly inflict on ourselves through self-criticism, self-isolation, or self-absorption. Self-compassion provides emotional strength and resilience, allowing us to admit our shortcomings, motivate ourselves with kindness, forgive ourselves when needed, relate wholeheartedly to others, and be more authentically ourselves.

Rapidly expanding research demonstrates that self-compassion is strongly associated with emotional wellbeing, less anxiety, depression and stress, maintenance of healthy habits such as diet and exercise, and satisfying personal relationships. And it's easier than you think.

After participating in this workshop, you'll be able to:

- Practice self-compassion in daily life
- Understand the empirically-supported benefits of self-compassion
- Motivate yourself with kindness rather than criticism
- Handle difficult emotions with greater ease
- Transform challenging relationships, old and new
- Manage caregiver fatigue
- Practice the art of savoring and self-appreciation

What To Expect

Program activities include meditation, short talks, experiential exercises, group discussion, and home practices. MSC-FC is a workshop rather than a retreat. The goal is for participants to directly experience self-compassion and learn practices that evoke self-compassion in daily life.

MSC is primarily a compassion training program rather than mindfulness training, although mindfulness is the foundation of self-compassion. MSC is also not psychotherapy insofar as the emphasis of MSC is on building emotional resources rather than addressing old wounds. Beneficial change occurs naturally as we develop the capacity to be with ourselves in a kinder, more compassionate way.

Compassion is a positive, energizing emotion. However, it is said that “love reveals everything unlike itself.” While learning self-compassion, some difficult emotions may arise. MSC teachers are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for this process to unfold, and to making the journey enjoyable for everyone.

MSC-FC includes 8 weekly sessions of 2 1/2 hours each, in addition to a 4-hour retreat. Prior to registering, participants should plan to attend every session and practice mindfulness and self-compassion at least 30 minutes per day throughout the program.

Prerequisites

No previous experience with mindfulness or meditation is required to attend MSC. To ensure safety, participants are asked to provide background information when they register for the program.

The following book is required as a companion to the MSC-FC course

- *The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook* by Kristin Neff and Christopher Germer

Additional recommended books, before or during the course, are:

- *Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself*, by Kristin Neff
- *The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion*, by Christopher Germer

This program fulfills one of the prerequisites for becoming an MSC teacher. For more information on MSC and MSC Teacher Training, please visit www.centerformsc.org



MINDFUL SELF-COMPASSION – Short Course (MSC-SC)

The Short Course in Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC-SC) is a 6-week adaptation of the empirically supported 8-week Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC-FC) program designed to begin the cultivation of the skills of self-compassion. MSC-SC was developed by Kristin Neff, PhD, the pioneering researcher in the field of self-compassion and Christopher Germer, PhD, a leader in the integration of mindfulness, compassion, and psychotherapy. The MSC-SC 6-hour program was developed to allow participants to begin to learn a targeted set of MSC practices with less initial time commitment than the full 24-hour MSC program.

Most of us feel compassion for our close friends when they are struggling. What would it be like to receive the same caring attention from yourself when you needed it most? All that’s required is a shift in attention—recognizing that as a human being, you, too, are a worthy recipient of compassion. Self-compassion involves the capacity to comfort and soothe ourselves, and to motivate ourselves with encouragement, when we suffer, fail, or feel inadequate. Self-compassion is learned in part by connecting with our innate compassion for others and including ourselves in that circle of compassion. The practice of self-compassion also helps to grow and sustain our compassion for others.

The MSC-SC program draws on the skills of mindfulness and focuses on developing the resource of self-compassion to enhance our capacity for emotional wellbeing. Burgeoning research shows that self-compassion is strongly associated with emotional wellbeing, coping with life challenges, lower levels of anxiety and depression, healthy habits such as diet

and exercise, and more satisfying personal relationships. It is an inner strength that enables us to be more fully human—more fully ourselves.

Fortunately, self-compassion can be learned by anyone, even those of us who did not learn these skills as children.

MSC-SC Objectives

At the completion of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Articulate the basic theoretical underpinnings and research findings related to self-compassion
- Develop and apply self-compassion practices to motivate themselves with encouragement rather than self-criticism
- Develop the capacity to contend with challenges and difficulties through awareness of self-kindness, common humanity and mindfulness.
- Apply core self-compassion practices into daily life

This program is designed for members of the public, based on the values of equity, diversity, inclusiveness and belonging. Meditation experience is not necessary to participate in SC-MSC. **All are welcome!**

Program activities include short talks, experiential exercises, group discussion, and home practices. MSC-SC is an opportunity to explore how we typically respond when difficulties arise in our lives and to learn tools for becoming a warm and supportive companion to ourselves.