

MINDFUL SELF-COMPASSION

A Psychoeducational Skills Training Workshop
Led by Christopher Germer, PhD

The Arlington Center
369 Massachusetts Ave.
Arlington, MA 02474
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Wednesdays, 7:30-10:00 PM
March 3-April 21, 2010

How would you feel if somebody told you that you were “average”—average looking, average intelligence, average talent? Most probably it would hurt your feelings and affect your self-esteem. In our culture, we’re taught we need to be exceptional and we’re hard on ourselves when we’re not: “You’re so stupid!” “What a loser!” “No one will love you.” Sound familiar? We all do that to some extent. But what would happen if you were *kind to yourself*—at least as kind as you are to others—when you notice the ways you’re less-than-perfect?

And how do you respond to life’s problems—work pressure, illness, rejection, overdue bills? In difficult situations, it’s easy for us to become overwhelmed with strong emotions such as fear, anger, sadness, or shame. Then we amplify our stress by telling ourselves: “This is not supposed to be happening to me!” But what if you took a different approach, accepting that “this *is* happening” while reminding yourself that all people have their struggles? What if you took a moment to soothe and comfort yourself when life becomes difficult, rather than troubling yourself further. In other words, what if you learned the art of mindful self-compassion?

Self-compassion is a skill that can be learned by anyone. It involves generating kindness and respect toward ourselves as imperfect humans, and learning to be present with the inevitable struggles of life with greater ease. This workshop will provide simple tools for responding in a kind, compassionate way whenever we suffer, fail, or feel inadequate. We all want to avoid pain, but letting it in—and responding compassionately to our own imperfections without judgment or self-blame—are essential steps toward living happier, more fulfilling lives.

This program is being developed by Kristin Neff, PhD, a pioneering researcher in the field of self-compassion (www.Self-Compassion.org), and Christopher Germer, PhD, a clinical psychologist who specializes in the integration of mindfulness and psychotherapy (www.MindfulSelfCompassion.org). It consists of eight, weekly, 2 ½ hour sessions in a classroom/discussion group format, plus a 6-hour mindful self-compassion retreat on April 24.

The workshop is based on the therapeutic principles and practices described in Chris Germer’s book, *The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion*, and Kristin Neff’s soon-to-be-released *Self-Compassion: How to Let Go of Self-esteem and Find True Happiness*. You’ll learn:

- how to stop being so hard on yourself
- how to handle disturbing emotions with greater ease
- how to motivate yourself with kindness rather than criticism
- how to transform your relationships, both old and new
- mindfulness and self-compassion exercises for everyday life
- the theory and research behind mindful self-compassion
- how to become your own best teacher

All participants are expected to attend in the entire course and to practice mindful self-compassion at least 30 minutes per day for the duration of the program. Since this is a pilot project, the fee is substantially reduced to \$200. In exchange, participants will be asked to complete a few outcome measures at the beginning and the end of the program, and to provide written feedback after each session. The workshop is open to anyone over 18.

If you’re interested, please contact Chris Germer at ckgermer@gmail.com or call 781-641-2744