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SELF-COMPASSION

The holiday season is typically viewed with joy and cheer, providing an abundance of hope for a new year to come. However, for many people, this can also be a stressful time. One tool to help navigate the holiday season is self-compassion.

We are often told to have self-compassion, but what exactly does that mean? Self-compassion is giving yourself the same kindness and care you would provide for someone you love. It entails recognizing that all people - oneself included - are worthy of compassion. This can be challenging for many people. Although it can be natural to comfort and take care of a friend, it is not as easy to extend that same courtesy to ourselves. In a world that encourages us to push forward, achieve, and persevere it may feel counterintuitive to take that pause. However, failure to take care of ourselves, especially when we need it most, causes more harm than good.

The act of showing compassion to oneself creates an emotional safety that allows us to see the self clearly without fear of condemnation. This can help us to identify patterns of thinking, feelings, and behaviors that we may not be aware of. A variety of psychological benefits can be associated with self-compassion including decreased depression, lower levels of anxiety, less perfectionism, and a greater sense of fulfillment in life. Overall, self-compassion means facing our own suffering and not avoiding or disconnecting from it.

“ We cannot ignore our pain and feel compassion for it at the same time. ”

When we struggle, fail, or feel inadequate, self-compassion allows us to be warm and understanding towards ourselves rather than ignoring our pain or berating ourselves for it. Self-compassionate people acknowledge that being imperfect, failing, and experiencing difficulties in life are a part of a human experience. With this acceptance we can be gentle towards ourselves rather than getting angry when life falls short of our expectations. This can be particularly important during the chaos of the holiday season when many things do not go the way we anticipated. We encourage you to practice self-compassion this holiday season.

Source: Neff, K.D. (2003). Self-Compassion: An Alternative Conceptualization of a Healthy Attitude Toward Oneself. *Self and Identity*, 2, 101 - 85.

Tips for Surviving the Holiday Season

Traditions

- Take part in traditions with your loved ones, or potentially create new ones
- Gentle reminder: as circumstances change, traditions too
- Recognize when you feel stuck in old traditions

Check in with your emotions

- What are they?
- What are they telling you?
- Feel them: Express them in a way that is beneficial for you (cry, journal, confide in someone, take time to think)

Give yourself a present

- We deserve the same care we give to others. Giving yourself a present is a valid form of self-care.

Practice Gratitude

- Send holiday cards to loved ones
- Volunteer time to others: giving back can lift our own spirits

Mindfulness using Holiday Tradition

- Decorate a tree in a mindful manner
- Pay attention to the light reflecting off glass ornaments
- Textures and smells of Christmas trees and holiday scents
- Savoring the taste of a cup of hot chocolate or cider: pay attention to how it looks, how it tastes, and the feeling it brings you

Mitigate Financial Stress

- Find unique, inexpensive ways to gift give...
- Bake some treats for loved ones or create homemade gifts

Prepare yourself

- Mentally prepare yourself for stressful social events by reminding yourself of beneficial supports like boundaries and communication skills
- Take a break for restoration: Give yourself a moment away from social interaction
- Let your loved ones know what they can expect from you this holiday season
- Demonstrate courage by finding your trusted people and communicating how they might support you

Holiday Activity Ideas

- Cookie decorating
- Games nights
- Build a snowman
- Decorate gingerbread
- Watch holiday movies
- Go for a midnight ski
- Holiday light tours
- Skating
- Make snow angels
- Sing Christmas carols
- Have a snowball fight
- Make your own ornaments
- Roast marshmallows
- Go on a winter scavenger hunt
- Have a holiday photoshoot
- Go sledding
- Do holiday colouring pages
- Complete a puzzle
- Create a music playlist
- Have an ugly Christmas sweater contest
- Make a homemade gift

WORKSHOPS

Our training includes skills training, healthy coping, communication, peer support, and education to prevent and respond to crisis and suicide.

COPE

- This workshop uses the principals of mindfulness to help students in grades 5,6, & 7 achieve better mental wellness and cope with issues like anxiety, overthinking, stress, self-harm, sleep loss, and social media use.

Lifelines

- Lifelines is an evidence-based program for grades 5,6, & 7 designed to integrate youth suicide prevention into both the culture and mission of the school, which is to provide a safe learning environment for its students. Classes emphasize help-seeking behaviours and are aimed at students who encounter peers who may be thinking of suicide.

Reaching Out

- This workshop introduces the topic of suicide to youth and teaches about warning signs, that it's okay to talk about suicide, how participants can respond to suicide, and advises participants it is okay to ask for help and to connect with a safe adult.

Self-Care 101

- A central goal of this workshop is to invite youth to see that each of us has mental health and, similar to caring for our physical health, we can learn to nurture and improve our mental health through our actions, experiences, and lifestyle choices.

GRASP

- This 12-hour skill building program provides youth from Grades 9-12 with self-awareness, communication, and coping skills that will aid them in their personal growth as well as contribute to an overall plan for ongoing youth suicide prevention programs within schools and communities.

ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)

- Living Works' two day, interactive workshop that prepares caregivers to provide suicide life-assisting first-aid intervention.

safe (Suicide Awareness For Everyone) TALK

- Living Works' three-hour workshop which prepares helpers to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first-aid resources.

suicideTALK

- Ranging from 90 minutes to a half a day, Living Works' suicideTALK invites all participants to become more aware of suicide prevention opportunities in their community.



Contact our **Community Education Coordinator** at community.education@crisis-centre.ca or 778.693.2765 for more information!

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **UPCOMING TRAINING:** ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Volunteer Training

It gives you a new perspective and a new way of looking at your own problems when you have a chance to understand others.

The training is invaluable for your own communication skills and relationships.

The Crisis Centre is conducting our next volunteer training session in **January**. Mandatory portions of the training will take place on **January 23th, 26th, and 30th** from **6pm-9pm**.

Please contact Liam Moberg at program.coordinator@crisis-centre.ca to apply or for more information.

Connect with us online!



@crisiscentrenbc

contact us at
information@crisis
centre.ca and let



@crisiscentrenbc

us know your
thoughts on this
newsletter!



Crisis Prevention,
Intervention, and Information
Centre for Northern BC



A COLD WINTER NIGHT

BY CYNTHIA ANDAL

This morning,

Outside cold and dark

But this body is warm from slumber

Today, I think

Today I will rise when I wish

Today I will say yes

Only when I feel the yes in my very bones

When I can sing the yes from the roof tops

When the yes resonates like music in my heart

I will say yes to the joy

And yes to the peace

And when the sun sets and the cold creeps in

And I am wrapped again in warmth

I will say yes to rest

And when tomorrow I wake

And it is cold and dark

And this body is warm from slumber

I will start again

My yes will have meaning

It will mean that I have listened

To what makes my heart beat

And I have said yes

OUR FIVE PILLARS

The Crisis Centre for Northern B.C. has Five Pillars that are the foundation of our work. Follow Dial North over the next few editions to read about each one:

1. HUMILITY

2. INTEGRITY

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

4. COLLABORATION

"We work to share knowledge, break down professional silos, and act with transparency."

Collaboration is foundational to the live-saving work we do, and it begins with working alongside our service users. Mental health and suicide are stigmatizing subjects, and the Crisis Centre provides a safe environment for people in crisis to talk about anything on their mind. We hold space and gently invite our service users to work on a plan that makes sense to them. If someone is not ready to collaborate yet, we seek to understand what they need to be at a point where collaboration is possible.

Our goal at the Crisis Centre is to also share knowledge of the best suicide prevention practices with as many people and communities as we can. Our workshops on mental health and suicide prevention are designed to empower individuals to help their communities become suicide safer communities. We work with individuals, schools, and other northern agencies to provide workshops and services to all residents of Northern BC.

5. SERVICE

Crisis Centre for Northern B.C. Resources

- Northern B.C. Crisis Line: **250-563-1214, 1-888-562-1214**, 24/7
- Northern B.C. Youth Line: **250-564-8336**, 24/7
- BC Suicide Line: **1-800-784-2433**, BC-wide, 24/7
- 310-MENTALHEALTH: **310-6789**, BC-wide, 24/7
- Talk Suicide: **1-833-456-4566**, National, 24/7



Crisis Prevention,
Intervention & Information Centre
FOR NORTHERN BC

We are here for you 24-7

Crisis Prevention, Intervention, & Information Centre for Northern B.C.

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