SELF-COMPASSION

- A CORNERSTONE OF MENTAL WELL-BEING

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IF I FAIL AT SOMETHING, MAKE A MISTAKE, FEEL OVERWHELMED OR ANXIOUS, THEN:

- I tend to treat myself as well as I would treat a good friend in a similar situation.
- I tend to treat myself more harshly than I would treat a good friend in a similar situation.
What is self-compassion?

Why self-compassion?

How to awaken self-compassion in the moment

How S-C relates to the bigger picture of life

How to strengthen your S-C like a muscle
SELF-COMPASSION = "TREAT YOURSELF AS YOU WOULD TREAT A GOOD FRIEND"

1) Noticing inner pain

2) turning towards the pain

3) Finding the motivation and skills to alleviate the pain
LETS THINK…

• Think back to a moment in time when you were going through a hard time, could be related to work or your personal life.

• What helped you get through that difficult time?

• What helped you charge your batteries?

• Turn to your neighbour for a moment. Introduce and share a strategy you came up with.
RESEARCH ON SELF-COMPASSION

- **Higher degree of self-compassion:**
  - Less propensity towards anxiety
  - Less depression
  - Less stress
  - Lower degree of procrastination
  - Higher satisfaction with life
  - Higher satisfaction in relationships
  - Greater ability to bounce back after setbacks
  - More likely to take responsibility for mistakes and learn from them
  - Better quality of sleep
If you can sit quietly after difficult news;
if, in financial downturns you remain perfectly calm,
if you can see your neighbors travel to fantastic places without a twinge of jealousy,
if you could happily eat whatever is put on your plate,
if you can fall asleep after a day of running around without a drink or a pill,
if you can always find contentment just where you are,

you are probably a dog.

(Jack Kornfield)
AWAKENING SELF- COMPASSION

- THE INTELLECTUAL UNDERSTANDING
- Catastrophizing
- Worry and rumination
- Self-criticism

Experience of threat
THE LOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF S-C

• We have tricky brains

• Life circumstances

• Genes

• The impact of a person’s learning history

• Western culture in particular emphasize compassion for others and high demands for ourselves.
AWAKENING SELF-COMPASSION

- THE EMOTIONAL PIECE
- How do I solve this?
- Who could I ask?
- I can understand myself...
- What do I want to focus on?
- What would help?

- What if something bad happens?
- I can't stand feeling like this
- I'll fail
- Why can't I get started?
POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

• What would you say to a good friend if he/she were in your shoes right now?

• Imagine, that a person you consider to be warmhearted, friendly, wise was here with you right now. What might that person say to you at this moment?

• How would I treat myself / What would I decide now / if I could step into the most courageous and wise version of myself?

• How can I help myself right now? What can I call upon at this moment?
THE BIGGER PICTURE
TOWARDS

- Leave work at 5.30pm today and go to the gym with a friend.

AWAY

- Cancel the meeting with my friend
- Work non-stop with the help of energy drinks.

CHOICE POINT

- "You can’t leave work today, you have so much to do.”
- If you leave, it shows you are lazy and you’ll never make it.
- Do you have work ethic or not?
- Feeling pressure in the head

- Notice and stop
- Take a couple of deep breaths
- Straighten my body
- ”What advice would I give to Tero in a situation like this?”
**AWAY**

- Get stuck in my self-critical thoughts about being a fraud.
- Don’t call the companies.
- Feeling distressed.
- ”People might find out how little I know if I step out.”
- ”I don’t really know anything.”
- ”They don’t care about me! Who am I to call these people?”
- ”I’ll be ridiculed. Forget it.”

**TOWARDS**

- Notice and stop
- Imagine my mentor
- ”This feel difficult for you and it is understandable because you’ve never done this before. Just focus on the next step now, then it’ll get easier.
- Call the companies that I’ve intended to contact.
IF
I feel anxious
Going towards the fridge
THEN
STOP
Hug grandma
what next?
EXERCISE SOME

SELF COMPASSION
• Essentially wishing people well
  • Someone you hold dear, yourself, a neutral person, a larger group.

• Studies:
  • 7 weeks of daily practice significantly lowers self-criticism and depressive mood while increasing satisfaction with life. The results are stable three months later.
  • 7 weeks of practice increases satisfaction with life and decreases depressive mood. (Fredrickson et. al. 2008)
  • Decreases stress, migraines, chronic pain, increases empathy, gray matter related to emotional regulation….
LETS TRY IT OUT – THE PRACTICE
DISCUSSION

• Turn to your neighbor and discuss the following:

• We have talked about self-compassion today:
  • What stands out for you?
  • What was most important or maybe useful to you?
  • What might you try out?
CONCLUSIONS

• S-C ultimately means treating yourself like a good friend.

• Self-compassion is a mental skill that we can strengthen

• Many ways to approach S-C
  • You can use it in the moment when you need it the most
  • You can plan for it in advance
  • You can train it like you would train a muscle in the gym

• Do what works for you – creativity is allowed and encouraged 😊
THANK YOU!

Contact info

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- Decide to work from home in the morning like I usually do.
- Feeling anxious, distressed.
- ”I don’t feel like going to work yet.”
- ”I don’t feel good about it today.”
- ”I’ll start this tomorrow.”
- Notice and stop
- Imagine my mentor
- ”This feel difficult for you and it is understandable because you are breaking a habit. Focus on the next step now.
AWAY
- Mind full
- Non-stop working - Avoidance
- Distraction
- Stimulants, drugs

TOWARDS
- Things that matter most +
- The kind of person I want to be.
- The basics: