



Self-Compassion in Psychotherapy: Mindfulness-Based Practices for Healing and Transformation

Tim Desmond LMFT

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Applying the art and science of self-compassion to day-to-day therapy work.


This lucidly written guide integrates traditional Buddhist teachings and mindfulness with cutting-edge science from several distinct fields—including neurobiology, cognitive neuroscience, psychotherapy outcome research, and positive psychology—to explain how clinicians can help clients develop a more loving, kind, and forgiving attitude through self-compassion.

The practice of self-compassion supports effective therapy in two vital ways: (1) It helps clients become a source of compassion for themselves; and (2) it helps therapists be happier and generate more compassion for their clients.

Researchers now understand that self-compassion is a skill that can be strengthened through deliberate practice, and that it is one of the strongest predictors of mental health and wellness. The brain's compassion center, which neuroscientists call the Care Circuit, can be targeted and fortified using specific techniques.

Filled with illuminating case examples, *Self-Compassion in Psychotherapy* shows readers how to apply self-compassion practices in treatment. The first two chapters illuminate what self-compassion is, the science behind it, and why it is so beneficial in therapy. The rest of the book unpacks practical clinical applications, covering not only basic clinical principles but also specific, evidence-based techniques for building affect tolerance, affect regulation, and mindful thinking, working with self-criticism, self-sabotage, trauma, addiction, relationship problems, psychosis, and more, and overcoming common roadblocks.

Readers do not need to have any background in mindfulness in order to benefit from this book. However, those that do will find that self-compassion practices have the capacity to add new layers of depth to mindfulness-based therapies such as Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT).

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