

Practicing Self-Compassion

Patients living with chronic or rare diseases and their caregivers often carry a significant burden. Managing symptoms, appointments, treatments, and ongoing uncertainty can be stressful, alongside a sense of loss for the life they could have had. Balancing all of this with family, work, caretaking or caregiving, and everyday responsibilities can feel overwhelming, leaving little time or energy to care for themselves. **Self-compassion can play a key role in building positive emotional health.** Self-compassion is the act of treating yourself as you would treat a good friend.

3 Components of Self-Compassion

1

Self-kindness

Caring for and encouraging yourself as you would others, rather than being self-critical.

2

Common humanity

All humans are imperfect, experience difficulties and pain, and make mistakes. Give yourself a break.

3

Mindfulness

Being in the moment, present, open, and feeling emotions while they are happening.

Self-Compassion is NOT

- A form of self-pity
- What makes a person weak or vulnerable
- Self-centered and selfish
- An act of creating excuses

Benefits of Self-Compassion

- Improved happiness
- Good mental health
- A stronger immune system
- The secret to resilience
- Strength to face hardships
- A stronger ability to learn from mistakes

Put It into Practice

- Take a compassion break to practice self-kindness
- Forgive yourself
- Stop competing and comparing
- Practice positive self-talk
- Develop a self-compassion mantra
- Focus on your wins
- Use a soothing gesture, like placing your hand on your heart as you breathe