Module 7

Self Compassion

Flourish

Self Compassion and Adhd

Self-compassion is like giving yourself a hug when you feel bad. Imagine treating yourself the way you'd treat a close friend. When you're upset or stressed, ask yourself, "What would be a nice thing to do for myself right now?" Then, do that.

Many of us learned to be hard on ourselves, thinking it's a good way to push forward.

But being kind to ourselves is better, especially for adhd women, who have likely faced criticism at every turn.

Researchers have found that being kind to yourself can help you handle stress better, make better decisions, and even feel less shame.

Self Compassion Research

✨ Emotions & Feelings

Self-compassion reduces feelings like sadness, guilt, and stress.

It boosts happiness and can help ADHD women with overthinking.

✨ Motivation & Self-worth

Some people think being kind to themselves makes them lazy. Not true! Research says you'll be more motivated when you're kind to yourself. You'll be less scared of making mistakes, which means you'll try new things and learn more.

✨ Health & Well-being

Self-compassion helps people feel better, even those with health issues like stomach problems or diabetes.

✨ Relationships

Being kind to yourself can make you a better friend, partner, or parent. It helps you forgive yourself and others when things aren't perfect.

Self Compassion Research

✨ Procrastination & ADHD

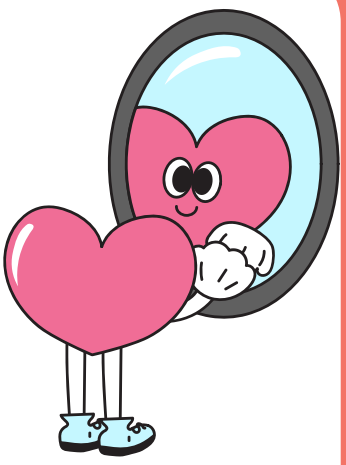
Procrastination isn't just about distractions; sometimes, it's because we're scared. Scared of messing up or of what others might think.

Research says that when we're hard on ourselves, we delay tasks even more. But, when we're **gentle and understanding**, we're more likely to get started and do the task.

Self compassion also helps with rumination, or getting stuck on difficult aspects of a situation or mistake we made and having trouble moving on from it.

Being kind to yourself is like giving your mind the love and support it needs to thrive. 🌟

Self Compassion and Adhd



🌸 The Importance of Self-compassion

✨ Kindness is Good for Us

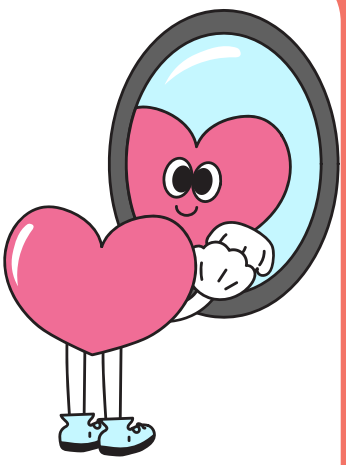
Practicing self-compassion is vital for both our **mental and physical health**.

When we're kind to ourselves, our body rewards us by making **oxytocin**. This hormone helps us feel safe, connected, and calm. It's a direct path to a happier mind.

✨ Self-criticism Harms

On the flip side, being our own worst critic can hurt us. It can trigger our body's **fight-or-flight** mode. This boosts our blood pressure and produces stress hormones like adrenaline and cortisol.

Self Compassion and Adhd



✨ Healing with Self-compassion

Good news! Self-compassion can turn things around. And you can start at any moment. Studies say it **lowers stress hormones** and makes our hearts more open and relaxed.

✨ Tapping into Natural Healing

By paying attention to how our body feels and activating its healing powers, self-compassion helps us **recover emotionally and physically**.

Remember, kindness towards ourselves is a powerful medicine for our mind and body. 🌟

The Three Components of Self Compassion

✨ 1. Mindfulness

Mindfulness is about being fully here in the moment, paying attention with genuine curiosity.

When tough emotions hit, we might **try to run, hide,** or even **lash out.**

But with mindfulness, we learn to face these feelings, understand them, and treat them (and ourselves) kindly and without judgment. Sometimes, this isn't easy!

The Three Components of Self Compassion

✨ **2. Common Humanity**

We're not alone in our struggles. Everyone faces challenges and feels pain. Recognizing this shared human experience allows us to connect with others and understand that it's okay to be imperfect.

The Three Components of Mindfulness

✨ **3. Self-kindness**

Instead of being hard on ourselves, we should show ourselves love and care, just as we would to a close friend. Being gentle and understanding toward ourselves is a big part of self-compassion.

Skill Building: Mindfulness

1

✨ **Skill for Building Mindfulness: Timer Check-ins**

To truly understand when you need a sprinkle of self-compassion, it's vital to be in tune with your emotions and experiences.

🔔 **Here's a strategy:** Set a timer to go off 1-3 times a day. When it rings, pause for a moment and dive deep into how you're feeling. Here are some pointers to guide you:

🖼️ **Thoughts & Mind**

Ask: What am I thinking? What is the content of them? Am I being hard on myself?

📸 **Images & Memories**

- **Reflect:** What images or memories are flashing through my mind? Do they bring distress or sadness?

Skill Building: Mindfulness

1

🫀 Physical Sensations

- **Feel:** How is my body responding? Is my heart racing? Are my muscles wound up tight?

🚶 Urges & Movements

- **Observe:** Am I restless? Am I tapping my foot or fidgeting?

🌈 Emotions

- **Name Them:** Am I sad? Anxious? Angry? Try and label your feelings.

🧎 Behaviors

- **Notice:** Are there things I'm avoiding? Situations I'm not dealing with?

✨ Spotting Red Flags: When Times Get Tough

Sometimes, our behaviors shout that we're struggling. Here's what to look out for:

🥊 Fight or Flight

- **Check:** Am I hiding away? Shutting down? Or maybe getting short or confrontational?

Practicing Self Compassion.
Skill Building: Mindfulness

⏳ **Procrastination**

- **Reflect:** Am I delaying things? Could this be because I'm feeling overwhelmed or anxious?

By being alert and understanding these signs, patterns will emerge. It'll become clear when you need to be self compassionate. 🌟

Skill Building: Mindfulness
Non Judgement and Validation

✨ **Skill for Building Mindfulness of Your Experience**

Non-Judgment & Welcoming Emotion: **"Of course you feel that way."**

Recognizing and labeling your feelings is a foundational pillar of self-awareness and self-trust.

This is especially crucial for neurodivergent women who have often felt INVALIDATED when experiencing their emotions. Acceptance and non-judgement is a key part of mindfulness.

📖 **Self-Validation Technique:**

Try this.

When you notice you have an emotion don't judge yourself.

Ay to yourself out loud, "Of course you feel this way."

Understand that it's human to feel emotions like sadness, fear, or anger based on specific situations.

When you allow yourself to fully feel, without a shade of judgment or self-blame, it's tranformative.

Skill Building: Mindfulness
Non Judgement and Validation

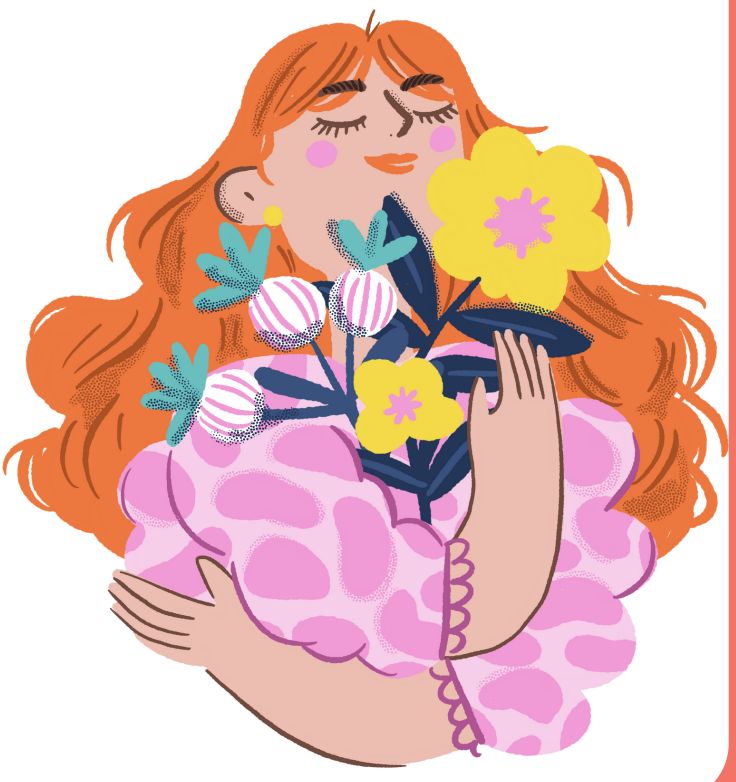
2

🌺 VALIDATE Every Feeling

As an ADHD woman, past experiences might have made it difficult for you to fully trust or understand your emotions.

Naming your emotions and accepting them is extremely helpful. This is where you nurture a compassionate relationship with yourself. Always remember: Your feelings are valid, and you deserve to be embraced with understanding and love.

There are no good or bad ways to feel.



Skill Building:
Common Humanity

3

✨ **Skill for Building Common Humanity**

It's common to retreat into isolation during diffiuclt moments, amplifying our feelings of shame. Whether you prefer to ponder silently, voice your feelings, or write down, take a moment to truly reflect.

1. **Ask & Relate**: Pose this question to yourself - "Have others gone through this or are others going through this now?" This might include mistakes you've made, difficult feelings you are having, or anything you are struggling with. Perhaps other women in your community or group have navigated similar challenges.
2. **Connect & Commune**: Close your eyes and visualize a world where you're connected to other adhd and neurodivergent women, all of whom have their own battles, feelings, and dilemmas. This shared experience serves as a powerful reminder that you're never truly alone.

Understanding and harnessing the power of shared experience can be a profound source of strength and self-compassion. 🌟

Self Kindness

Aspects of Self Kindness

1. T**reat Yourself Like a Friend** 💐

If you recognize you are struggling it can be hard to be self compassionate. One strategy is to think about how you would treat someone else.

Think about the kindness and support you give to friends. Now, try offering that to yourself.

2. Everyone makes mistakes 🌟
Every single one of us makes mistakes. When people you love make mistakes, what do you say to them? A big part of self kindness is exploring the language we use and swapping it out for more loving language. What does the chatter look like in your mind when you make mistakes? What if you spoke to others that way?

3**. Taking action.** In addition, being kind to yourself means taking action to make yourself feel better, such as taking care of yourself physically and emotionally,setting boundaries, and doing things that bring you joy.

We will look at self kindness practices of touch and talk in this module.

Skill Building:
Using phrases of Self-Kindness

4

Self kindness phrases are phrases you can use to help you when you feel you need a little self compassion. Try them on and find one you like. Then practice it when you notice you are struggling.

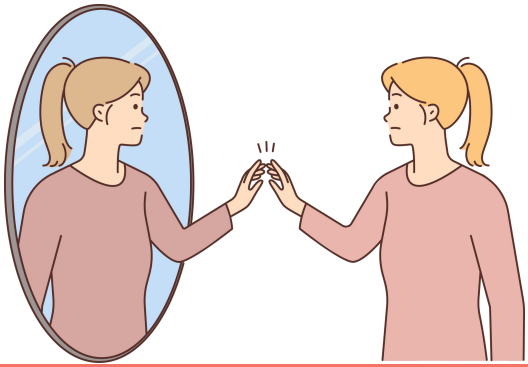
Building Self-Compassion: Self-Kindness

1. Affirmations for Difficult Days:

- Today is tough for me, and that's okay.
- I'm not a robot; I need rest.
- It's okay to feel this way, to feel tired, to need rest.
- I'm learning every day.
- Everyone makes mistakes, and that includes me.
- I don't have to be perfect; I'm doing the best I can under these circumstances.

2. Soothing Phrases for Self-Comfort:

- I'm in pain, but I'll breathe through it.
- I deserve kindness just like everyone else.
- This hurts, but I hope I can learn to be kind to myself when this happens.



Skill Building:
Using Phrases of Self Kindness

4

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3. Wishing Yourself Well:

- May I:
  - Be healthy and safe.
  - Have contentment and peace in my heart.
  - Believe in myself and be free from shame and fear.
  - Accept the circumstances of my life and remember we're all human.
  - Know that others, too, struggle alongside me.
  - Cherish myself and be free from suffering.
  - Have the courage to accept myself just as I am.

Experiment with these phrases when you notice you might be having a hard time. Anything you can muster up is fine, don't be hard on yourself if phrases don't come easy. 💖

Skill Building:
Using Soothing Touch

5

🌸 Building Self Kindness Through Soothing Touch 🌸

1. 🖐️ The Power of Physical Touch

Physical touch is Healing.
Notice you are having hard time?

Give yourself a hug, gently caress your arm, or rock a little. These actions can help. What feels right for you?

Soothing touch is great because even if you're around others, there are discreet ways to comfort yourself.

2. 🔄 Past Experiences with Stimming

For some neurodivergent women, especially those on the autism spectrum, stimming is a lifesaver. It's a way to handle overwhelming emotions and sensations.

Yet, many were discouraged or punished for stimming as kids, which can lead to feelings of guilt or shame later on.

3. 🎈 Embracing Stimming as Self-Care

If you've faced criticism for stimming before, **remember this:** It's perfectly okay for you to comfort yourself this way.

Skill Building:
Using Soothing Touch

6

If you've been shamed for stimming or moving differently because of your neurodivergence, there might be a disconnect between your mind and body. Masking can also cause this disconnect. However, strategies like soothing touch can help you reconnect with your body.

❤️ **Soothing Touch**

Using touch to soothe yourself might feel strange at first but it's a valuable way to comfort and show kindness to yourself.

Touch releases oxytocin – a hormone that calms the heart and mind.

Exercise 📝:

For a week, try this. Whenever you notice you need comfort, are stressed or are being self critical put a hand or two over your heart.

☁️ The Hand-on-Heart Technique

Take a few deep breaths.
Gently place a hand over your heart. Feel its rhythm.
Focus on your breathing and the warmth from your hand.
Stay with it's beating and pulse as long as you'd like.
Focus on the in and out of your breathing and the beating of your heart.

Don't like this strategy?

Stroke your arms, touch your cheek, or even cradle your face. Find what feels right for you.

🔑 In Essence:

Experiment with kind touch. t's a surprisingly simple way to show kindness to yourself.

Optional extras

6

IReflection: Weekly Action Steps 🌟

- 🕐 Experiment with Timer Check-ins: Set periodic timers to check in with yourself during the day.
- 💬 Practice Kindness Phrases: Use affirming words or phrases when you're feeling down or self-critical.
- 🤲 Engage in Soothing Touch: Find a touch or gesture that brings comfort when you're stressed or facing challenges.
- 🌍 Reflect on Your Connection with Common Humanity: Remember, during tough times, that you're not alone in your experiences or feelings.