Center for Mindful Self-Compassion

About Mindful Self-Compassion Programs

The Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) program is a journey—an adventure in self-discovery and self-kindness. Self-compassion has the paradoxical effect of both soothing our emotional distress and opening us to pain we may have been holding inside, consciously or unconsciously, and often for many years. **Therefore, difficult emotions could surface during the program, including past traumas. MSC teachers are committed to helping participants feel safe and comfortable during the course. However, participants agree at the outset that they will take primary responsibility for their emotional well-being.**

MSC is therapeutic, but it's not therapy. The emphasis of the program is on building the resources of mindfulness and self-compassion. MSC is not a substitute for medical or mental-health care.

Participants should also be aware that MSC is mindfulness-based *compassion* training. Mindfulness and compassion go hand-in-hand, but our main purpose is compassion training.

In a randomized, controlled study, MSC significantly increased self-compassion, compassion for others, mindfulness, and life satisfaction, and decreased depression, anxiety, and stress. (For the full-text article, please click here.) Improvements were linked to how much a person practiced mindfulness and self-compassion in their daily lives. Participants will receive guidance about developing an ongoing "home practice," and information about various resources that are available to support and develop their practice after the course ends.

To create an optimal learning experience, intensives are usually taught only by certified MSC teachers (the highest level of training). All participants are encouraged to engage in the intensive to the extent that they feel comfortable, and not more. However, participants should consider in advance whether they ready for this kind of learning experience, or if a different MSC format might be preferable at this point. If you are unsure, please contact a teacher for further discussion.