

Self-Compassion

The Resilience
Rucksack
project®



■ **Resilience** – being able to cope, or find help, when things get tough.

■ **Wellbeing** – feeling ok, healthy, and safe, or doing well and feeling good.

Self: every person has a self, which is uniquely them.

Compassion: kind feelings, thoughts, desires, and behaviours that can be directed towards us, another person, a group of people, a society, animals, and the environment.

Resilience and Wellbeing!

What is Self-Compassion?

Self-compassion is when we direct this compassion towards ourselves. This can be helpful when we come across challenges, where we feel difficult emotions. Self-compassion is when we accept that these emotions are normal in response to the challenge and then being kind and gentle with yourself. We should care for ourselves the way we care for others when they are hurt or upset. Having self-compassion doesn't mean that we can't take on challenges of course, but that we are nice to ourselves in the process.

Why is Self-Compassion important?

Self-compassion can help you to balance out your negative or distressful feelings with kindness and care. This helps you to be more resilient when you face challenges because you know that you will support yourself. This balance happens inside your body, when you activate your **Soothe System**.

The Science – Your Soothe System

Your body is full of systems, which helps it to function and to react to the environment around you.

Practicing self-compassion can activate your soothe system. This is a system within your mind and body to help you when you feel under threat.

When you feel threatened, your threat system is triggered, and this tells your body that you are in danger and need to protect yourself.

In order to protect yourself, your drive system is activated, this motivates you to act on this feeling of being threatened.

Without your soothe system, your threat and drive systems can be overactive, leading you to feeling stressed and overwhelmed.

By telling your mind that you are ok and showing your body that you are safe, you can activate your soothe system, to help your body to balance itself.

We have made two tools that will help you to activate your soothe system and practice self-compassion. These are the *Resilience Rucksack Stress ball* and the *Self-Compassion Journal*.

How can Self-Compassion impact your Wellbeing?

When you treat yourself with self-compassion, you can:

- Be happier.
- Judge yourself and others less.
- Have the confidence to try new things or try again if things don't work out as planned.
- Take responsibility for your actions.
- Get along well with others.
- Accept others and be more compassionate towards them.

Challenges: It is not always easy to practice self-compassion. Many people struggle with being kinder to themselves. It takes practice!

Bigger picture

Self-compassion is not a miracle cure for your resilience and wellbeing, there are many other things that can affect you too that are outside of your control. Research does show though that self-compassion can be a key 'ingredient' in improving our wellbeing and resilience .

The Wellbeing Tools

A very important part of our research was our co-production workshops with young people. In these workshops, our research team, professional artists, and young people all worked together to design our 'Wellbeing Tools' for the Resilience Rucksack. For this theme, '**Self-Compassion**', we talked about why it is important to show ourselves this compassion and how we can be kinder to ourselves. The young people in our workshops advised us on how to engage young people in the importance of self-compassion for our wellbeing. The final tools we designed are the Self-Compassion Journal and the Resilience Rucksack Stress Ball!

The Self-Compassion Journal

This is a space for you to express your thoughts and emotions and to help you to understand yourself. This journal invites you to explore your day by writing or drawing things that you find peaceful or relaxing; the choice is yours.



Click here to find out more about the Self-Compassion Journal tool!

Resilience Rucksack Stress Ball

This is a simple yet powerful tool that helps you in moments where you feel a lot of emotions at once. This can help you to activate your soothe system, to focus your body away from the difficult emotions and onto the simple action of squeezing this ball. You can squeeze this ball and feel your stress melt away to be replaced with a sense of calm. This may not work straight away but practicing this over time can really help!



Click here to find out more about the Stress Ball tool!



To find out more about our Resilience Rucksack Project and all the wellbeing tools, visit our website: [click here!](#)