

CAC Corner: Mindfulness and self-compassion | CPD

I want to encourage you to explore and learn about mindful self-compassion for yourself. Look at Kristen's website as a great start.

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By Claire Mantonya, Utah DD Council

I started off 2016 by attending a 5-day intensive at the Sedona Mago Retreat Center, learning and practicing mindful self-compassion. One of the teachers was Kristen Neff, Ph.D. (www.self-compassion.org), who is a professor at the University of Texas in Austin. Kristen's life work and research is focused upon self-compassion. Incidentally, Kristin is a mother of a young son with autism and it is very interesting to hear how she has used her work as both a mother and a mindful self-compassion practitioner and in helping her son manage feelings. A documentary was made about their journey as a family that premiered in 2009 as Sundance movie, The Horse Boy. (<http://www.horseboymovie.com/>)

Mindful self-compassion is learning how to treat oneself like we treat our friends and family members--with compassion. There is much scientific research behind these practices and I am interested in getting more people to learn about this to help **everyone**, including caregivers in the disability arena. I believe that learning mindful self-compassion should be taught to everyone as a basic skill. I wish I had learned about it at a much younger age.

A couple of the Utah Developmental Disabilities Council staff attended the National Leadership Symposium at the University of Delaware this month and they learned that several provider agencies are actually using 'mindfulness' as a practice to help their clients learn to manage their own behavior rather than focusing on the typical behavior plans used to support people with disabilities! Mindfulness teaches a person to manage their own behavior!