

STRATEGIES FOR COPING WITH SOCIAL ISOLATION AND DESPAIR DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND BEYOND!

AB Korkor Foundation for Mental Health

Webinar Series

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Where we're going today:

- A Little About How Our Brain Works
- Despair and Suicide Prevention
- What can we do?
- Mindful Self-Compassion

A Little About How Our Brain Works

- Evolution
- Connection
- Negativity Bias
- Control
- Neuroplasticity



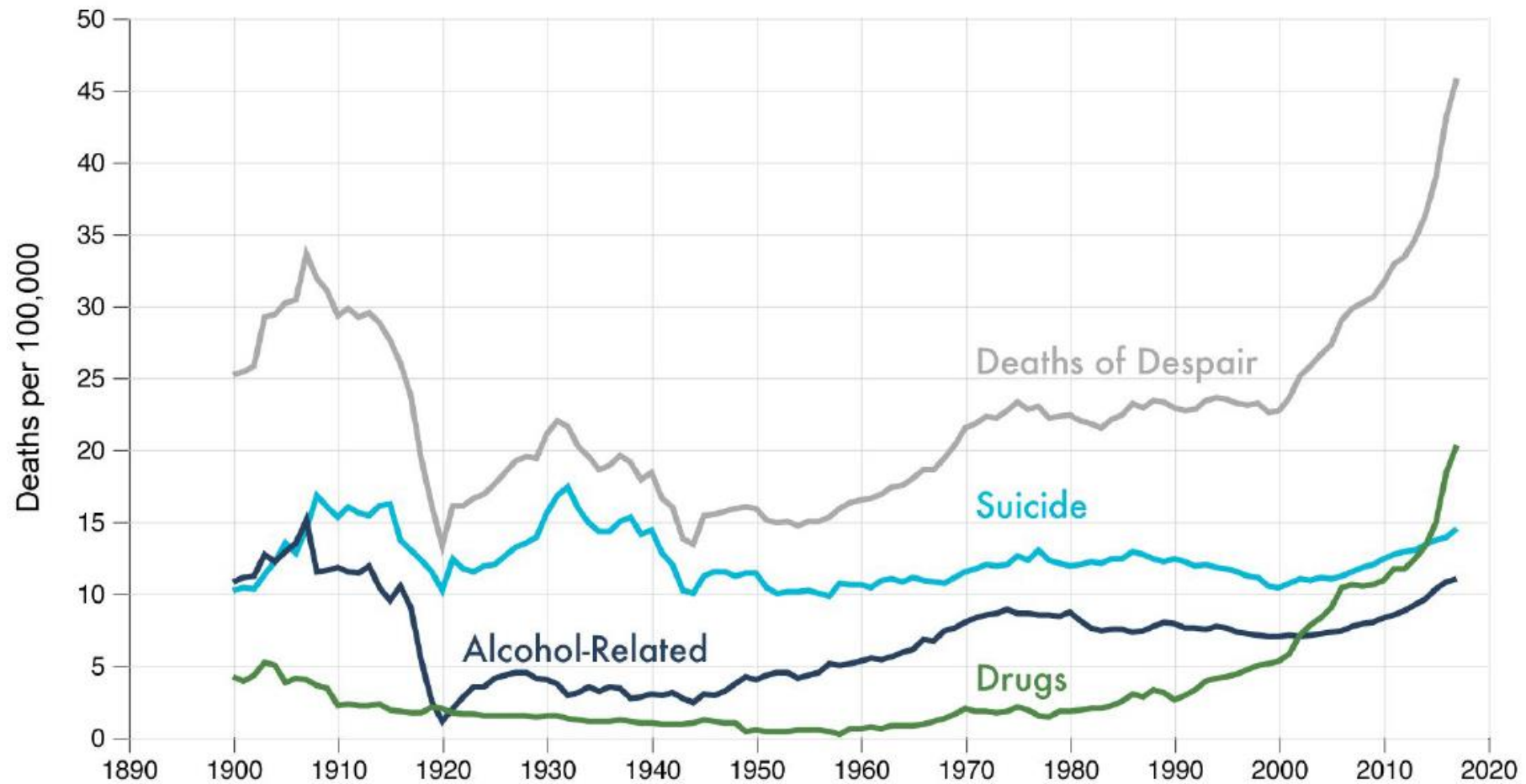
Context: COVID-19

- Isolation (decrease in physical touch)
- Loneliness
- Financial Stress
- Health Stress
- Family Stress (Home schooling, distancing, togetherness)
- Loss (Deaths, Health, Jobs, School, Financial Security, Events.....)
- Grief
- Alcohol
- Firearms (up 85% in March)

Despair and Suicide Prevention

Deaths of Despair

Figure 1. Deaths of Despair and Its Components, 1900-2017, Crude Rates



Source: Social Capital Project analyses of CDC data. For details, see the appendix.

Deaths of Despair: Suicide, Drugs and Alcohol

Selected Data

U.S. 2018 (Total 173,780)

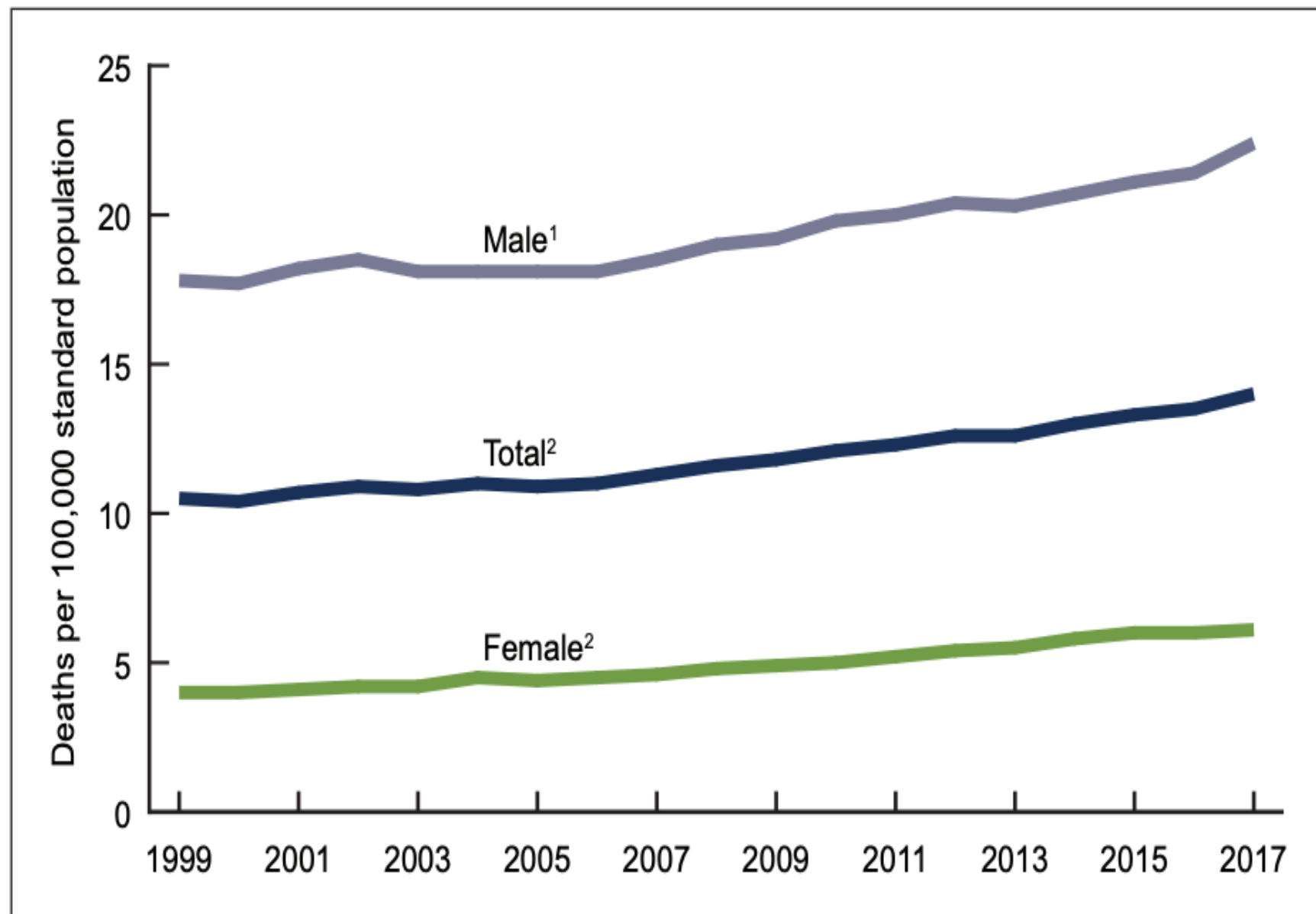
- Suicide Deaths: 48,344
- Alcohol (excludes accidents and homicides): 58,069
- Drug Overdose: 67,367

Wisconsin 2018

- Suicide Deaths: 886
- Alcohol: 2,461 (all alcohol attributable deaths)
- Drug Overdose: 1076 (all drugs), 839 (opioids)

Suicide Rates
Increased
33% Since
1999

Figure 1. Age-adjusted suicide rates, by sex: United States, 1999–2017



More than Suicide Deaths

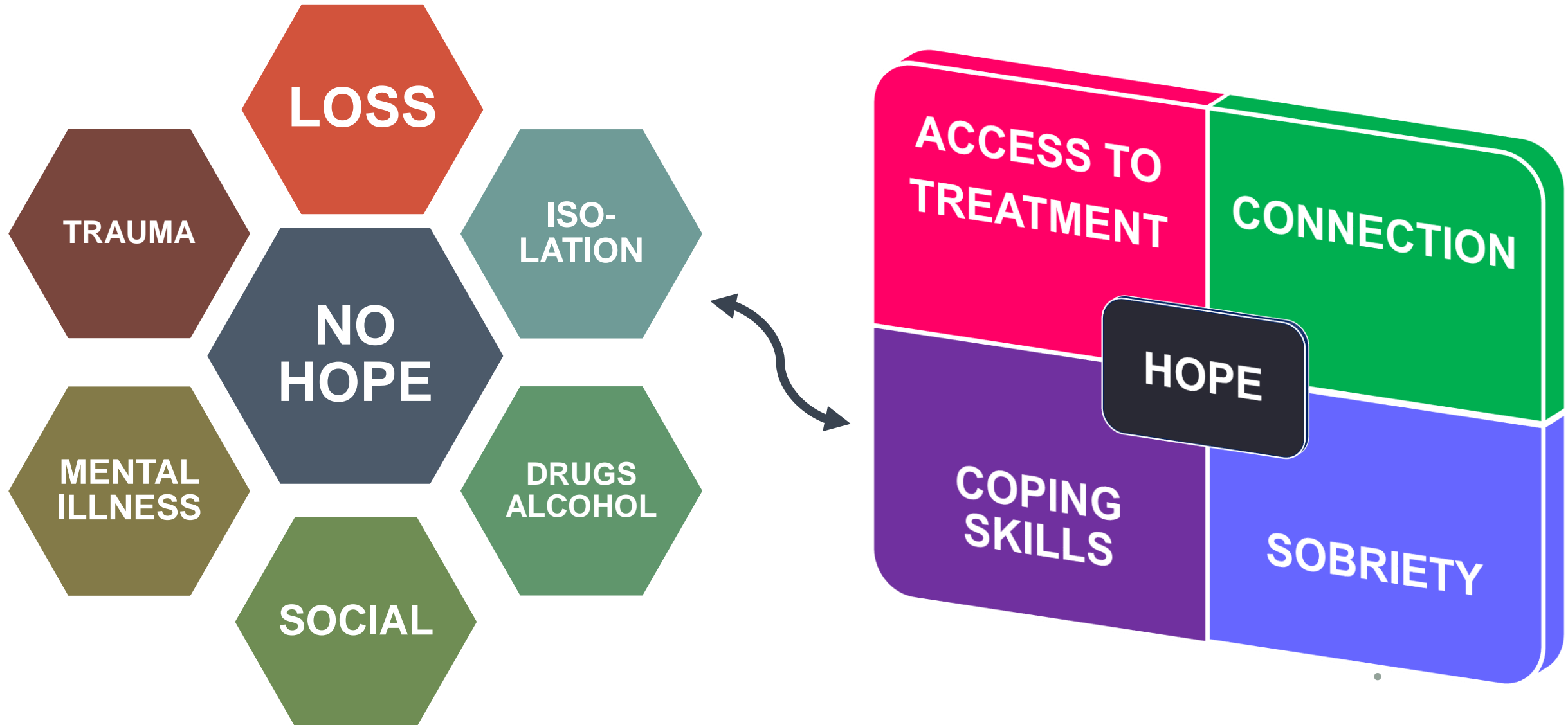
- Attempts
- Survivors of Suicide Loss



Suicide Risk

and

Protective Factors



Warning Signs-National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- Talking about **wanting to die** or to kill themselves
- **Looking for a way** to kill themselves, like searching online or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling **hopeless** or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling **trapped** or in unbearable **pain**
- Talking about being a **burden** to others
- Increasing the use of **alcohol or drugs**
- Acting anxious or **agitated**; behaving **recklessly**
- **Sleeping** too little or too much
- **Withdrawing** or isolating themselves
- Showing **rage** or talking about seeking revenge
- Extreme **mood** swings
- **Giving away** prized possessions or seeking long-term care for pets

#BeThe1To

If you think someone might be considering suicide,
be the one to help them by taking these 5 steps:

**ASK. KEEP THEM
SAFE. BE THERE.
HELP THEM CONNECT.
FOLLOW UP.**



Find out why this can save a life at
www.BeThe1To.com

If you're struggling, call the Lifeline at
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Inspiring



- ▶ What keeps you going every day?
- ▶ Who is important to you in your life?
- ▶ Who do you talk to about your struggles, being suicidal?
- ▶ What are you looking forward to in life?
- ▶ What has helped you cope with very tough times in the past?

Referral

Know local resources, ER's, emergency numbers. Resource list, crisis resource cards

Put these 2 in your phone:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8255 (TALK)

HOPELINE

Text "Hopeline" to 741741

A Friend
Asks

The
Jason
Foundation

GET HELP
NOW

HOW TO HELP A
FRIEND

SAMHSA
FACILITY LOCATOR

WARNING
SIGNS

RESOURCES
FOR HELP

Disclaimer: No program can guarantee to prevent suicide. Always call 911 for emergency situations.

Phone Apps

MY3



Ella
Morrison



Add
Contact



Richard
Cook

 **GET HELP NOW**

Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

 **CALL 911**

Learn More!

- QPR Institute
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
- American Association of Suicidology
- Prevent Suicide Wisconsin
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center

Activity: A Break for Breath

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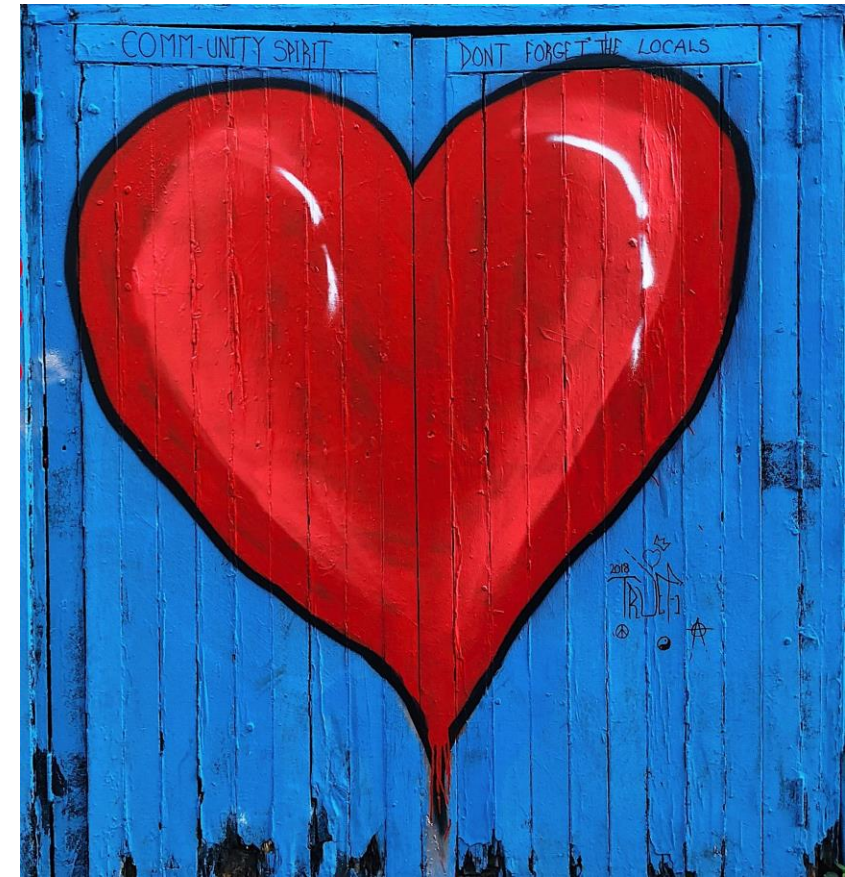
What Can We Do?

What is Going to Support My Well-Being Right Now?

Connection – to others and ourselves!

- What do I need?
- What does the other person need?
- Presence
- Compassion
- Listening
- Timing
- Tone
- Words

LOVE!



Compassionate Listening



What Can We Do?

What is Going to Support My Well-Being Right Now?

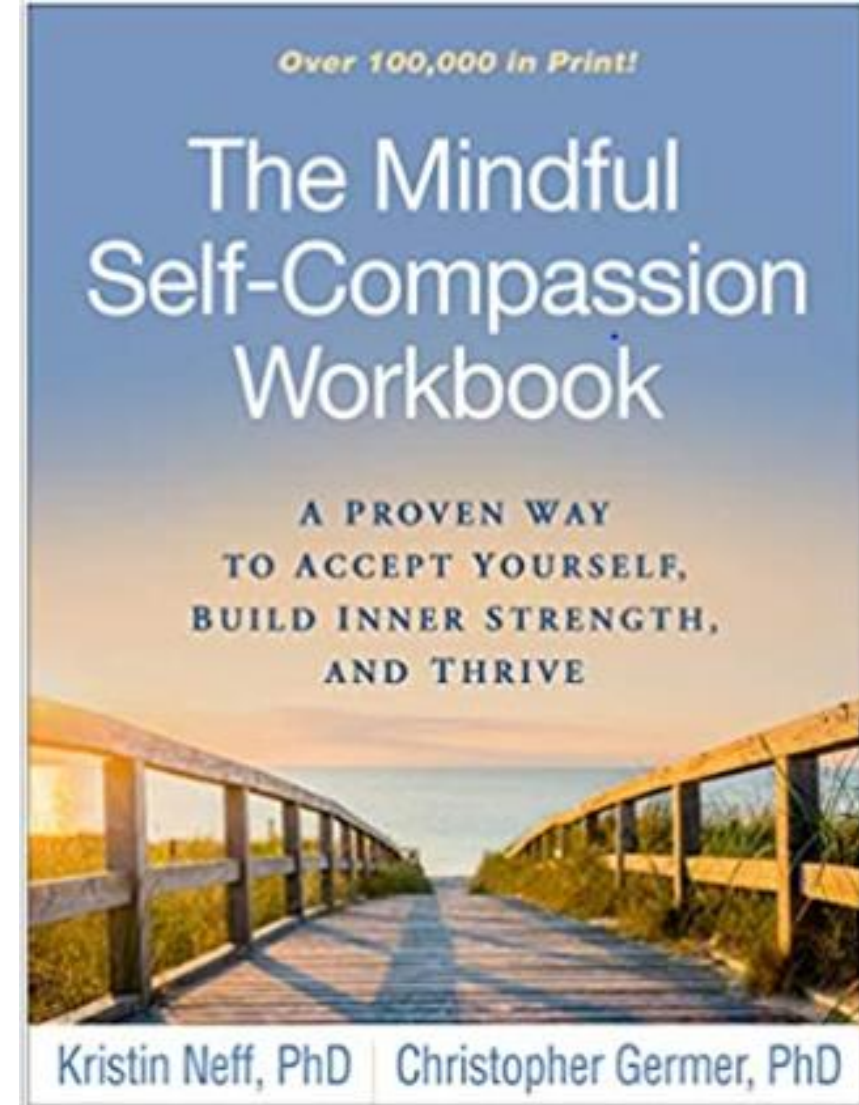
Mindfulness and Self-Compassion



Mindful Self-Compassion Program

Developed by Christopher Germer
and Kristin Neff in 2010

Neff, K., & Germer, C. (2018).
The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook.
New York: Guildford Press



**I'm too cold!
Am I smiling?
Will this picture
turn out OK?**



Mindfulness -

**Awareness of present
moment experience with
acceptance**

Breath, sounds, feet



Compassion:

Awareness of distress
and suffering in others
along with the desire
to relieve it.

Self-Compassion - 3 Elements

as defined by SC researcher Kristin Neff, PhD

- Mindfulness (vs. Over-Identification)
- Common Humanity (vs. Isolation)
- Self-Kindness (vs. Self-Judgment)



Self-Compassion: Research

↓ Depression, anxiety, stress and shame

↑ Happiness, life satisfaction, optimism, physical health

Learn More about the Mindful Self-Compassion Program and Practices:

- Center for Mindful Self-Compassion: <https://centerformsc.org/>
- Kristin Neff's website: <https://self-compassion.org/>
- Christopher Germer's website: <https://chrisgermer.com/>
- Neff, K. and Germer, C. (2018). The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook: New York, Guildford Press.

Mindfulness and Self-Compassion

What do I need right now?

We give ourselves compassion,
not to feel better,
but *because* we feel bad.



Activity: Self-Compassion Break

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“6 Daily Questions to Ask Yourself in Quarantine”

by Brooke Anderson, 3/24/2020, Greater Good Magazine

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/six_daily_questions_to_ask_yourself_in_quarantine

1. What am I **GRATEFUL** for today?
2. Who am I **CHECKING IN ON** or **CONNECTING WITH** today?
3. What expectations of “normal” am I **LETTING GO OF** today?
4. How am I **GETTING OUTSIDE** today?
5. How am I **MOVING MY BODY** today?
6. What **BEAUTY** am I either creating, cultivating, or inviting in today?

BE “CHOICEFUL”

After this Webinar ends >>>

1. Concerned that someone you care about is thinking of suicide? Act Now!
 - Ask, Keep Them Safe, Be There, Help Them Connect, Follow Up
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-8255
 - Hopeline-the crisis textline in WI 741741

2. Think of someone in your life who is struggling somehow - it doesn't have to be a big struggle - and connect with them in the next few hours.

Simply let them know that you are thinking of them or you love them, and that they matter to you.

3. Treat yourself as you would treat a dear friend. You matter too!

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Offering training, education, and consultation:
Mindful Self-Compassion, Compassion Resilience,
and Suicide Prevention in the Milwaukee area





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