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Kent, Surrey and Sussex  
Thames Valley and Wessex

# Developing the practice of self-compassion in Medicine – tools and techniques

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# **hello** my name is...  
😊



## In this session we will....

- Understand what we mean by compassion and self-compassion
- What this means in healthcare and medicine
- What it means to you – self-compassion
- Signpost you to resources and information for you and your trainees



*“The evidence is clear : leadership at every level – from frontline leadership in wards, primary care and community mental health teams to board leadership in trusts to national leadership in overseeing bodies – is influential in determining organisational performance”*

<http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2015/02/evidence-leadership-health-care>



**Leadership and leadership development in health care »**

The evidence base



**“A fundamental change in culture is required across the NHS”**



Robert Francis QC, chair of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Inquiry



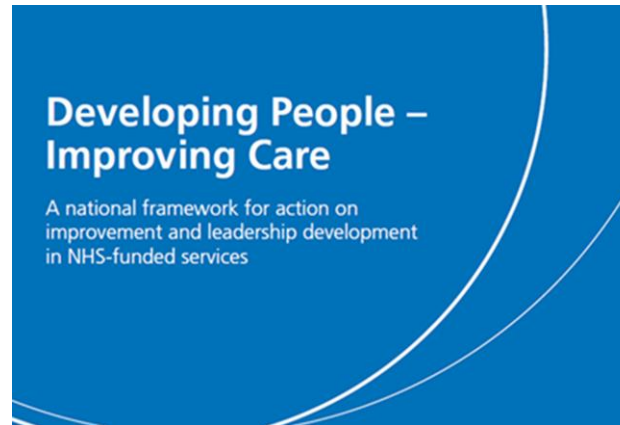
## Psychological Danger



## Psychological Safety



# Compassion is a cornerstone of excellent leadership



[http://www.tvwleadershipacademy.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/DevelopingPeopleImprovingCare\\_final011216.pdf](http://www.tvwleadershipacademy.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/DevelopingPeopleImprovingCare_final011216.pdf)





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## Caring to change

How compassionate  
leadership can stimulate  
innovation in health care



Authors  
Michael West  
Regina Eckert  
Ben Collins  
Rachna Chowla

May 2017

[https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/files/kf/field/field\\_publication\\_file/Caring to change Kings Fund May 2017.pdf](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/files/kf/field/field_publication_file/Caring_to_change_Kings_Fund_May_2017.pdf)





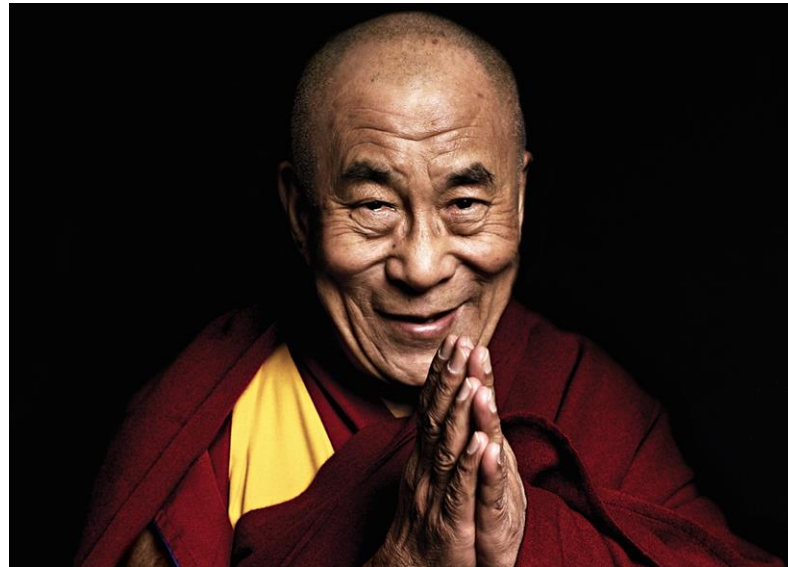
## A step change in how we care for our people

**Improve our leadership culture:** Positive, compassionate and improvement focused leadership creates the culture that delivers better care. We need to improve our leadership culture nationally and locally. (p.8, Interim People Plan, 2019)



# Compassion

*“Every human being has the same potential for compassion; the only question is whether we really take any care of that potential, and develop and implement it in our daily life”*





Jacinta Ardern – compassionate leadership in action





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<b>Self compassion</b>	<b>Compassion for patients</b>	<b>Compassion towards each other at work</b>
Being kind to yourself	Providing compassionate care, treating patients as people	Embody compassion in your leadership



# Power Diminishes Empathy

“It turned out that when people were in a ‘powerless’ mindset their mirror system was increased... They became more sensitive to external stimulus, whereas when people were feeling powerful, the mirror neuron activation was lower. Power it turns out diminishes our sense of empathy”

Hogeveen, Inzlicht and Obhi (2013)  
Journal of Experimental Psychology General



What would receiving compassionate leadership feel like from a colleague?

What do compassionate leaders do?

How do we develop compassion, self, team, local office level?



# Listening with Compassion



- Listen with fascination
  - Listen without judgement
    - Listen with curiosity
    - Listen with the heart
- (Michael West)

*In pairs, take turns to listen:  
How are you finding work at the moment?*



## Self-compassion

With self-compassion, we give ourselves the same kindness and care we'd give to a good friend.

(Dr. Kristin Neff; [self-compassion.org](http://self-compassion.org))

If we are promoting self-care for our patients  
how do we promote self-compassion for  
ourselves?







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When do you notice yourself being less  
compassionate for yourself?





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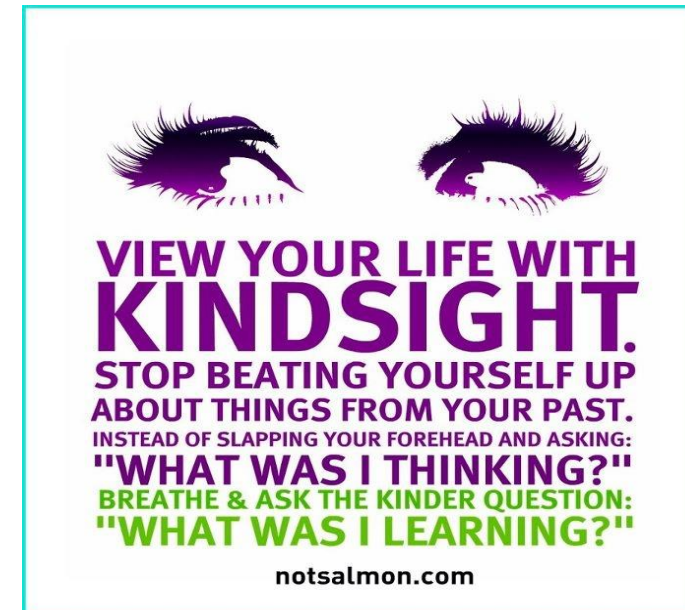
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What could you do to practice more self-compassion in these circumstances?



## 3 Elements of self-compassion

- Self kindness versus self judgement
- Common humanity versus isolation
- Mindfulness versus over-identification



# WHY PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION?

Research shows that people who are more self-compassionate are...

## HAPPIER

Practising self-compassion leads to more happiness, optimism, gratitude and better relationships with others.



## MORE RESILIENT

Self-compassionate people bounce back more easily from set-backs are more likely to learn from their mistakes



## LESS STRESSED

Self-compassion is a powerful antidote to the self-criticism and perfectionistic thinking that can lead to stress, anxiety and depression.



# Self-Compassion Manifesto

1. Get Comfy with pen and paper
2. Write out your situation, mind, chatter and frustrations
3. Write your best friend's name at the top
4. Write out your best, caring, most heart-felt advice for them
5. Re-read this letter to your friend. This is for you, your self-compassion manifesto



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## EI Resources

<http://www.londonleadershipacademy.nhs.uk/leadership-toolkit/managing-self/self-awareness-and-well-being>



## Increases Compassion



8 weeks of meditation resulted in people acting to relieve another person's pain by more than 5 times - even when there was social pressure to avoid doing so.

Condon, P., Desbordes, G., Miller, W. B., & DeSteno, D. (2013). Meditation increases compassionate responses to suffering. *Psychological science*, 24(10), 2125-2127.





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# Research on Mindfulness

<https://www.ashridge.org.uk/faculty-research/research/current-research/research-projects/the-mindful-leader/>







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# Professor Michael West speaks about Compassionate leadership

<http://www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/blog/leadership-todays-nhs/>



# Actions you can take today..

Practice mindfulness

Physical activity

Listening/ noticing/ ask the  
right questions

Mentoring/coaching

Sharing/ talking

Accepting and embracing  
risk-taking and failures

Be curious

Emotional Intelligent  
development

Get to know your colleagues

Bring your whole self to work

Build an effective and diverse  
team

Role model compassionate  
behaviours

Commit random acts of  
kindness

Be kind to yourself





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# Your Local Leadership Academy

**Locally run and focused leadership programmes and master classes contact us or see our website**

<http://www.tvwleadershipacademy.nhs.uk/>

**Funded Coaching and Mentoring**

<http://www.tvwleadershipacademy.nhs.uk/coaching-and-mentoring>

**Online information and resources; Knowledge Hub**

<https://www.tvwleadershipacademy.nhs.uk/resources>





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Thank you.....

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