



HEALTHY@HARRIS
Caring for ourselves so we can care for others

HARRISHEALTH
SYSTEM

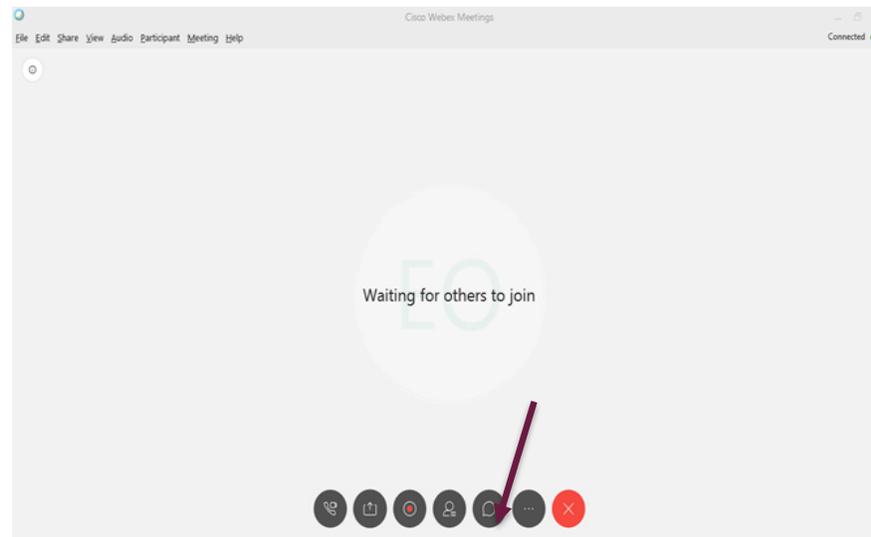
The Power of Compassion

Taught by Harris Health System Employee Wellness Team

Engage and Interact

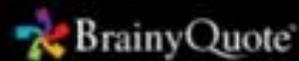
Questions – Type questions, thoughts, examples, in the chat box, the more interaction the better.

Premium Points - You can only receive credit for one Wellness Workshop per day. Confirm your employee ID is entered correctly when registering for Employee Wellness activities. Please allow up to 4 weeks for 50 Premium Points to be reflected in MyCigna.



**If you want others to be happy,
practice compassion. If you want
to be happy, practice compassion.**

Dalai Lama



Learning Objectives

- The biology and benefits of compassion
- Understand the role of self compassion in well-being
- Barriers that can get in the way of being compassionate
- Explore ways to develop a more compassionate mindset

Unpacking Compassion

Feeling

kindness warmth

tenderness sympathy

love empathy

care pity humanity

Response

understanding forgiveness

charity lenience tolerance

consideration commiserate

sensitivity benevolence

**Recognize suffering. Feel concern. Understand everyone struggles.
Avoid judging or being overwhelmed. Be motivated to relieve suffering.**

“Compassion is a verb.” Thich Nhat Hanh

A Biological Blueprint

- Bonding is a survival instinct; compassion acts as a social “glue”
- Compassion triggers pleasure and reward centers of the brain
- Compassionate responses propel more – even just seeing others do them
- Chosen as one of the most desirable traits in a mate by men and women



The Power of Compassion



What happens when we act with compassion?

- **Physical:** Speeds healing, reduces pain and inflammation, may positively impact life span
- **Emotional:** Boosts happiness, gratitude, resilience, self-esteem, see lower rates of depression, anxiety
- **Social:** Enhances trust, tightens connections, can start positive feedback loop of well-being
- **Professional:** EQ hallmark, workplace asset, positive effect on conflict resolution, burnout, ability to influence

Compassion switches off threat response in the body, reducing stress and the damaging inflammation that goes with it.

Q: Which aspect of compassion seems most difficult for you?

- A. Offering it to others**
- B. Accepting it from others**
- C. Offering it to myself**

Compassion For Others: What gets in the way?

- Failure to notice distraction, self absorption
- Feel we must triage resources for self
- Excuses fueled by biases and assumptions
- Cultural messages about weakness, power
- “Schadenfreude” – difficulties seem deserved



Find Empathy

Mindset

- Understand empathetic bias
- Reset to see common humanity
- Practice shifting perspective
- Remember taking action is key

“Instead of putting others in their place, put yourself in their place.” Amish Proverb

Spark Action

Response

- Try random acts of kindness
- Opt in rather than opt out
- Identify and tackle a need
- Work from the inside out



“Be kind; everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.”
Plato

Applying Compassion In Your Personal Life

Choosing a compassionate response can deepen and enrich connection

- Notice and release judgements
- Activate acceptance with empathy
- Give the kindness they need
- Maintain boundaries, avoid enabling



Compassion and Your Career

- Take the time to notice and invest in a compassionate response
- Help fuel a culture of compassion
- Understand what it means to lead with compassion

Use mistakes as learning opportunities

Collaborate Give a compliment

Lend a hand when deadlines loom

Share knowledge Listen to concerns

Use feedback to motivate not criticize

Treat others with dignity and respect

The Curious Case of Self-Compassion



“Compassion for others begins with kindness to ourselves.” Pema Chodron

What self-compassion is not:

- Giving yourself a pass
- Self-indulgence or self-pity
- Narcissism

What self-compassion is:

- Reality-based self-acceptance
- Recognizing our common humanity
- Driver of health, well-being, self esteem

Self Compassion: What Gets In The Way?

- Tend to bypass feelings, leap to solutions
- Fear of vulnerability
- Get self-worth from never needing help
- Learned messages of shame, blame, guilt
- Beliefs about self-criticism being a positive force

Changing the Script

Understand...

- The roots of your self-critical response
- Nurturing effect of self-compassion
- Compassion works better than criticism for growth
- It takes practice to change a self-critical mindset



Self-compassion strips away the pressure to be perfect and the shame of mistakes. It helps us remember that everyone struggles; we aren't alone. This kind support permits us to try new things and encourages us to believe in ourselves.

Practicing Self-Compassion

- Call out critical self-talk
- Rewire your response
- Shift your perspective
- Plan for difficult feelings

Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity.

Pema Chödrön

Resources

Stress Management, Depression and Counseling Services

- Employee Assistance Program
 - Online: www.feieap.com,
 - Username: hhs
- Well Powered Living 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0 coming soon!
- Employee Wellness Workshops: Mindfulness, Meditation, Stretching etc.
- Cigna Behavioral Health
 - Visit **myCigna.com** or call the toll-free number on your Cigna ID card.
 - Call Cigna Behavioral at **800.274.7603**.
 - Go to **Cignabehavioral.com** for extra resources.
- Coaching
 - Telephonic health coaching: 855-246-1873
 - Onsite health coaching: Contact Latecia Murphy
 - Office: 713-873-6407
 - Email: Latecia.Murphy@harrishealth.org

Contact Us!

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