

PETROS

Resilience for Life



Be Kind To Your Mind

Episode 6: Compassion and Mindfulness

A Petros Production

With

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Our Mission

To share the information and the skills we need to look after our minds in the same way we look after our bodies, so that no matter what life throws at us, we can (mostly) thrive!

The Episodes

Date	No:	Title	Facilitators
11.5.20	1	What is Resilience?	Jo and the team
18.5.20	2	Your brain and your mind – Not the same thing	Jo, Tracy and Ed
25.5.20	3	Emotion and Intuition	Jo and Maxine
1.6.20	4	The physiology of emotion	Jo, Ed and Mark
8.6.20	5	Emotional regulation and helping others	Jo and Di
15.6.20	6	The four sights	Jo and Di
22.6.20	7	Compassion and Mindfulness	Tracy, Mark and Jo
29.6.20	8	Cognitive Skills	Maxine, Tracy and Jo
6.7.20	9	Parents special – Helping your child with resilience	Jo and Di
13.7.20	10	A celebration of completion – Top Tips and moving forward	Jo and The Petros Team



The BKYM – The Process

- Each episode has an associated workbook that will be downloadable from www.petros.org.uk/be-kind-to-your-mind-cummins
- Use it however suits you best
- The idea is for you to create your own resource to refer back to whenever you need
- If you miss an episode, a recording of it will be available for a short period (roughly a month) for you to view again from www.petros.org.uk/be-kind-to-your-mind-episode-6
- Please be aware that each episode is recorded!
- We will be using Mentimeter, an interactive software that allows you anonymously participate.



E6: Compassion and Mindfulness

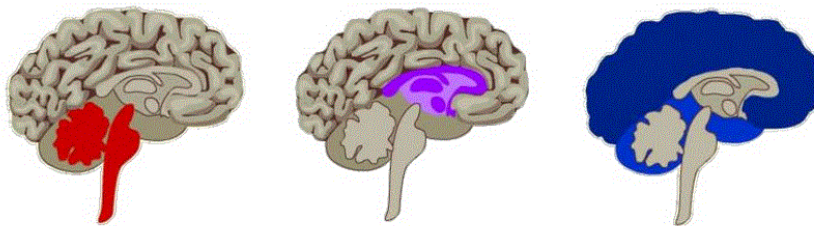
“A person who thinks all the time has nothing to think about except thoughts, so they lose touch with reality and live in a world of illusions”

Adapted from.. Alan Watts

Today's session is about getting out of your head
(No..... not in the way you are thinking)

Triune Brain Theory

Lizard Brain	Mammal Brain	Human Brain
Brain stem & cerebellum	Limbic System	Neocortex
Fight or flight	Emotions, memories, habits	Language, abstract thought, imagination, consciousness
Autopilot	Decisions	Reasons, rationalizes



The Triune Brain in Evolution, Paul MacLean, 1960

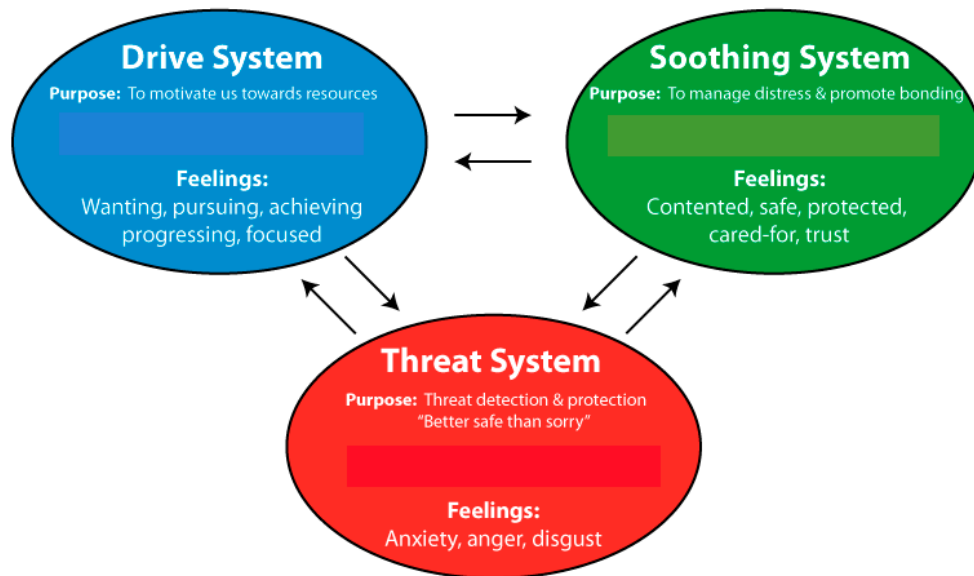
Notes



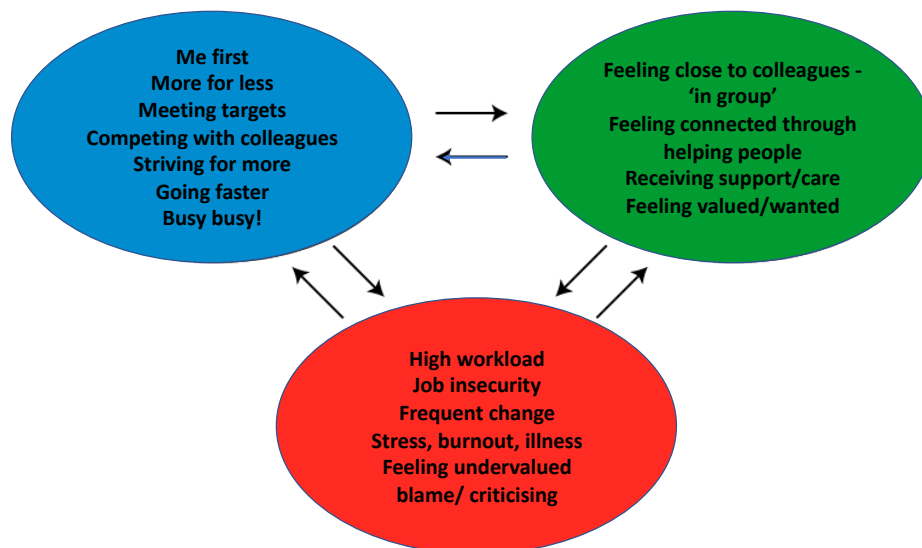


Notes. How did the picture and then the thought of the glass of saliva make you feel? What can you learn from this about your mind?





Adapted from: Gilbert, P. (ed) (2005). *Compassion: Conceptualisations, Research and Use in Psychotherapy*. Routledge.



Notes. What is your dominant system? What personal statements would you put in each of the above ovals?



An old Cherokee is teaching his grandson about life.
“A fight is going on inside me” he said to the boy “it’s a terrible fight between two
wolves. One is evil – it is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, arrogance, self-pity, guilt,
resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego”
He continued “The other is good – it is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility,
kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith. The
same fight is going on inside you – and inside every other person too”

The grandson thought about this for a minute and then asked his grandfather
“Which wolf will win?”

The old Cherokee simply replied “The one you feed”

It’s all well and good learning about the three
systems but how do I access my soothe system?

How can “I” create balance?



Mindfulness & Self Compassion

Mindfulness is the quality of being present and fully engaged with whatever we are doing at the moment; Free from distraction or judgement, and aware of our thoughts and feelings without getting caught up in them.

Self Compassion involves treating yourself the way you would treat a friend who is having a hard time.

Notes



Simple Mindfulness Exercises

Soles of the feet

Past and Future

Three Minute Breathing Space

The “Just worrying” technique

STOPP

Soles of the Feet

When you feel a strong emotion is taking hold or your mind chatter is getting out of control, shift all your attention to the soles of your feet.

Slowly, move your toes, feel your shoes covering your feet, feel the texture of your socks, the curve of your arch, and the heels of your feet against the back of your shoes. If you do not have shoes on, feel the floor or carpet with the soles of your feet. Connect with the breath and focus on the soles of your feet until you feel calm.

Do this for a few minutes then sit, quietly for a few moments, and then resume your daily activities.

Past and Future

This is a great practice to help us notice how our mind can wander off without us truly, consciously being aware of it.

Our mind is like an untrained puppy; easily distracted by anything passing by: squirrels, other dogs, sticks. In our minds these things are our thoughts. If you choose to do this practice regularly you will find that you are able to consciously become aware of these ‘puppy antics’ and start to direct your attention more.



Sit in a comfortable position, feet directly on the floor and in an upright position. Notice the places where your body is touching your seat and floor.

Now take your hand and point the index finger, as if you are about to point at someone or something. Place this hand in this position on your knee. This is going to act as your indicator.

No focus on your breathing...

You may notice thoughts coming in and trying to grab your attention. It's normal; this is what the brain does, however what we are doing is focusing on our breath so gently and without judgement bring your attention back to your breathing.

However, in this exercise notice if those thoughts are thoughts about the past, about the now or about the future. If they are thoughts about the past point your hand to the left, if they are about the future point to the right, and if they are thoughts about the now, point your finger directly at your knee.

Do this for 1 minute whilst trying to focus on your breathing.

At the end what did you notice?

Did you find that you didn't have any thoughts interrupting your attention on the breath?

Did you find it hard to let go of the thoughts of the past and future and come back to the breath.

Where were you pointing most?

Three Minute Breathing Space

Awareness

Firstly, take a very definite posture... relaxed, dignified, back erect, but not stiff, letting our bodies express a sense of being present and awake.

Now, closing your eyes, if that feels comfortable for you, connect with the breath and take your attention to wherever you feel it.

The first step is being aware, really aware, of what is going on with you right now.

Firstly, make a quick scan of your body from head to toe, becoming aware of what sensations there are.... Are there sensations of tension, of holding, or



whatever? Not thinking of them as good or bad, not trying to change anything, just simply noting them with a sense of curiosity.

And now, what is going through your mind; What thoughts are around? Here, again, as best you can, just noting the thoughts as mental events... just allow them to come and go, just observe and note.

Then, as best you can, ask yourself “what’s my underlying mood right now? What emotion am I feeling?”.

If you can label it, do so, if you don’t feel a specific single emotion, just get a general idea of how you feel right now. Again not thinking of it as good or bad, not wanting to change it, just note it.

Gathering

So, you have got a sense of what is going on right now. You have stepped out of automatic pilot and into the present. The second step is to collect our awareness by focusing on a single object—the movements of the breath. So now focus your attention on the movements of the abdomen, the rise and fall of the breath... spending a minute or so to focus on the movement of the abdominal wall... feel it rise and tighten, then fall and loosen, using the anchor of the breath to really be present.

Expanding

Now as a third step, allow your awareness to expand. As well as being aware of the breath, we also include a sense of the body as a whole. As best you can, try to get a sense of breathing with the whole body... as you breathe in, feel the breath go all the way down to your feet, to the tips of your fingers, to the top of your head, filling your whole body with breath.

Lastly, bring your attention back to wherever you felt the breath at the beginning of this exercise and stay with it for three or four breaths before relaxing and opening your eyes.

Just Worrying Technique

This technique involves no criticism or anger at yourself, just simple non-judgemental labelling of the thoughts you’re having. The ‘Just Worrying Technique’ simply involves you labelling worry (that means, giving it a name and describing it) as ‘just worrying’ and then bringing your attention back to your breath or to simply change the subject of your thinking.



It is important that you do not change the label from 'just worrying' to 'don't worry'!

This technique is very powerful and most people find that their worrying thoughts quieten down almost totally within a few days.

Then they usually start worrying about a week later because they have forgotten about the technique through lack of need to use it, so... accept that you have forgotten, don't beat yourself up, just start again until it becomes a habit.

**Stop!**

Just pause for a moment

Take a breath

Connect with the breath

Observe

What thoughts are going through your mind right now?

Pull back – get some perspective

Thoughts or facts? What's the bigger picture?

Practice what works - Proceed

What is the best thing to do right now?

Notes. Which of these can you utilise regularly? How can you use them? How will you fit them into your day?



WIN

What's Important Now?

Notes.

Loving Kindness Meditation Benefits

Less self-criticism

More positive emotions

Lesser self-destructive thoughts

Reduced pain symptoms

More resilience

Long-term benefits

Faster recovery



Less self-criticism

There is hardly any space left for self-criticism and self-harm once we commit to loving-kindness meditation. The method quietens our inner critic and makes us more self-accepting than ever (Frederickson, 2001).

More positive emotions

Studies have shown that regular practice of loving-kindness meditation increases vagal tone, a physiological marker of subjective well-being. The positivity loving-kindness meditation generates inside, attracts positive energy from the outside, and improves the quality of life and life satisfaction permanently (Kok et al., 2013).

Lesser self-destructive thoughts

Research has shown that seven weeks of unfiltered LKM practice induces joy, gratitude, care, and hope. Individuals with suicidal tendencies and borderline personality traits showed a marked reduction in their self-harming impulses and manifested an overall decrease in the negative symptoms (Fredrickson, Coffey, Finkel, Cohn, Pek, 2008).

Reduced pain symptoms

Pilot studies on patients with chronic back pain and migraine showed that when they practiced loving-kindness meditation for brief periods of 2-5 minutes per day, they showed a remarkable reduction in the pain symptoms and could accomplish their daily tasks with more ease and comfort (Tonelli et al., 2014, Carson et al., 2005).

More resilience

A study on people with long-term PTSD showed that engaging in deep, meaningful compassion and self-love meditations reduced the trauma and flashback episodes. Control studies showed that groups that received loving-kindness meditation scripts during their sessions could resume work sooner than participants who received other forms of guided instructions (Kearney et al., 2013).



Long-term benefits

Studies on the after-effects of loving-kindness meditation showed that individuals who attended the sessions felt positive and self-motivated for up to 15 months post-intervention. Compared with other meditation practices and self-help tools, loving-kindness reflection created more affection and empathy for strangers and social connections at work (Seppala and Gross, 2008).

Faster recovery

Clinical population such as people with schizophrenia and bipolar disorders manifested a marked reduction in negative symptoms such as hallucinations and delusions when they practiced loving-kindness meditation individually or in groups. Besides positivity and symptom reduction, the practice also improved their judgment towards others they live or work with (Johnson et al., 2011).

Notes.





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