

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1



### INTRODUCTION

In this toolkit we will explore ways to maintain a compassionate presence in our interactions with our children, family members, and those we count on to support us. Throughout this toolkit we will explore our role in alleviating our family members' distress while maintaining our own wellbeing. In other words, we will focus on growing our compassion resilience.

Our first focus in the toolkit is to outline the content covered in the Parents and Caregivers Compassion Resilience groups, discuss group agreements, family goals and give participants a chance to get to know each other.



### APPLICATIONS

#### Circle Agenda

##### [Circle Agenda for Section 1, In-Person](#)

Use this agenda if you are leading your group in a session in-person.

##### [Circle Agenda for Section 1, Virtual](#)

Use this agenda if you are leading your group in a session virtually.

#### Handouts to Support Content Covered in Circle Agenda

##### [Full Content Outline](#)

##### [Value's List](#)

##### [Self-Compassion Visual](#)

##### [Self-Compassion Scale](#)



### LINKS

##### [Dr. Kristin Neff's Website on Self-Compassion](#)

##### [Online Self-Compassion Scale](#)

This assessment is referenced at the end of the circle agenda for Section 1. Scoring is easier when completed online, so it is recommended you send a link to this assessment to your participants following the group. If you are leading your group virtually, you can put this link in your chat box during this session, and if time allows, participants can complete it during group.

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1

Parent & Caregiver



Circle Agenda

Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<p><b>Purpose of Circle</b></p>	<p><b>Today you will:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop shared agreements, informed by group values, to guide the circle process throughout the compassion resilience group experience.</li> <li>2. Introduce the link between compassion and reaching our family's goals.</li> <li>3. Invite all to consider the positive impact of self-compassion.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Time/Materials/Preparation</b></p>	<p><b>Time:</b> 90 minutes</p> <p><b>Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flipchart paper</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Notecards</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Markers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pens</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Name tags</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Talking piece (such as a small stuffed animal)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Centerpiece (such as decorative flags or bouquet of fake flowers)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A few fidget toys (such as stress balls, pipe cleaners, and fidget sticks)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Handouts: <a href="#">Content Outline</a>, <a href="#">Values List</a>, <a href="#">Self-Compassion Visual</a>, and <a href="#">Self-Compassion Scale</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Set-up:</b> Arrange chairs in a circle without furniture in the middle. Write definition of Compassion Resilience (included in agenda below) on flipchart paper for all to read – save for future sessions too.</p> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>It is recommended your group size be between five and 10 participants for the circle format. Having additional people makes it challenging to hear from all participants and keep the group engaged during full group sharing. A group smaller than three puts too much pressure on the few participants to share and reduces the opportunity to build community often found as a benefit to these groups.</i></p>



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## Section 1

Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
Welcome/Check-In (5 minutes)	Welcome the group to the first meeting for Parent and Caregiver Compassion Resilience. All facilitators should introduce themselves, why they have decided to facilitate these circles, and what this topic means to each of them.

Opening and Check-in (20 minutes)	<p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At the beginning of our sessions, we will always start with a short centering practice to help ground us in this space. We will do that practice now.</li><li>• I invite everyone to get into a comfortable position with your eyes closed or looking towards the ground. We are going to take a moment to pause. Take a few slow breaths. <i>(Pause)</i> Name in your mind what you want to let go of to be present in this circle and your personal reason for being here. <i>(Pause for 10 seconds)</i> I invite you to bring your attention back to the circle.</li></ul> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As you've noticed, we have our group set up in a circle. In many cultures, coming together in a circle has been as natural as sitting around a fire and reflecting on shared concerns. During our time together we will learn with and from each other. Sitting in a circle helps us see everyone in the group and shows that no one person is the expert in this content.</li><li>• There are some core components of our circle setup that will be consistent each time we meet.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Circle shape: We will always have similarly heightened chairs set-up in a circle formation with limited to no furniture in the middle. This provides us the opportunity to see everyone in our group and represents that we are all learning when it comes to building our compassion resilience when caring for others.</li><li>– Centerpiece: While sitting in a circle provides us the opportunity to see everyone else in our group and learn from their wisdom, it can be uncomfortable to look at others for a long period of time. We have placed this object (<i>point to object</i>) in the center of our circle as a focal point to rest your eyes. Throughout our sessions, we will also display visuals for the content we are covering in the center of our circle.</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>If you are offering fidgets for participants, point them out and share their purpose at this time (to give our hands something to-do while sitting to help us stay mentally present).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Go-around: To ensure that one person speaks at a time and is heard by others, we will use this talking piece (<i>show talking piece to group</i>). The person holding the talking piece is the one permitted to speak. The rest of the group is tasked with just listening, giving their full attention to what the person is sharing. The exception to this is if the facilitator needs to make a comment or ask a clarifying question. Sometimes we will pass the talking piece around the circle and everyone will have the chance to share. Other times the talking piece will be used to gather two or three responses to a question, tossed between participants interested in sharing. You always have the right to pass when the talking piece is passed to you.</li></ul>
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Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<p><b>Opening and Check-in (20 minutes) – continued</b></p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Shared agreements: These are behaviors the group agrees to that support each other’s values. We will generate these as a group in a few minutes.</li> <li>– Circle keeper/facilitator: At every session you will have the same circle keeper/facilitator(s). I/we will lead the process and help participants keep to the shared agreements.</li> </ul> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are going to use the talking piece to introduce ourselves. I will ask a question and pass the talking piece to the person next to me. As a reminder, when someone is sharing our only task is to listen to what they are sharing, and you always have the right to pass when the talking piece is passed to you. After you answer, please pass the talking piece to the person next to you.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Go-around) We are going to do two rounds of questions. First, please introduce yourself, who the kids are in your life that you care for, and something you really enjoy about your children.</li> <li>• (Go-around) For our second round, what is something you read or heard about this group that made you want to join?</li> </ul> <p><i><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> Scribing the things each participant hopes to get from the group will help you keep track of the group’s needs so you can tailor future content when appropriate. Depending on what is shared – you can connect what participants share to the course overview shared next.</i></p> <p><i><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> To minimize deep sharing by participants, facilitators can answer the question first as a way to model the kind of response you are looking for. Also share with participants that they will have additional opportunities to share their story throughout the eight sessions and right now you are asking them to share just a small piece.</i></p> <p>Handout the overview visual and briefly explain the content that will be covered during these groups, connecting to what participants hope to get out of the group when appropriate.</p> <p>Also, remind the group of meeting logistics – when and where the future sessions will be (ideally in the same location).</p>
<p><b>Guiding Questions (15 minutes – Values and Agreements)</b></p>	<p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a group is using the circle process to meet on a continuous basis it is important to develop some shared agreements for how we will interact with each other. These are things we need from ourselves and others in the group to feel comfortable fully participating in the group.</li> <li>• It is important to try to keep these agreements to a number we can all remember, usually between 4-6.</li> </ul>

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Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<p><b>Guiding Questions (15 minutes – Values and Agreements)</b> <i>continued</i></p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One agreement I want to add is confidentiality so that people know what is said here, stays here. <i>Write Confidentiality or What is Said Here, Stays Here on a flipchart paper labeled Group Agreements.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>If mandated reporting laws apply to you, it is important to issue an exception related to confidentiality. If someone shares harm or neglect being done to a child, you will need to share that information with someone outside the circle. You also may want to inform the participants of your duty to report.</i></p> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Open mic) What agreements do you need from yourself and others to feel comfortable fully participating in the group?</li> </ul> <p>The facilitator should write each agreement requested on flipchart paper and when complete put the paper in the middle of the circle where all can see it.</p> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <p>I want to gather feedback from the group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can you follow these agreements? Indicate your level of agreement by holding up 0 (shown as a first) to 5 fingers, 0 being not able to follow the agreements, 5 being able to follow the agreements with no reservations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>If anyone shows fewer than three fingers, more conversation about needs and shared agreements is required.</i></p> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank you for generating this list of agreements. We will have them visible at every future session.</li> <li>Two other things that we'd like to keep visible at all our sessions is your values and family goals. These serve as a guiding star in our caregiving and are helpful to reconnect with, especially when we are feeling drained and struggling with tapping into our compassion. Connecting back to these things can help us feel more centered and fulfilled.</li> </ul> <p>Pass a notecard, marker or pen, and the Values List handout to each participant.</p> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Think about 2-3 core values of importance to you that you try to model for your family. Write these values on your notecard. Feel free to reference our values list if it helps you generate your top 2-3 values.</li> </ul> <p>Give participants a few minutes to generate their answers.</p> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Go-around) What values did you write down and who influenced one of your values?</li> </ul> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please put your notecard in the middle of the circle. We will include these values in the center of our circle at every future circle.</li> </ul>

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1

Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<p><b>Guiding Questions</b> (15 minutes – Goals for our Family) <i>continued</i></p> 	<p><b>Our goals for our family</b></p> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next, we want to identify what goals we want our families to work towards and how these connect to compassion resilience.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Go-around) What are some goals you have for your family? Write responses down on flipchart paper.</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>While there may be some overlap with values and goals, goals are typically more specific – for example, a goal for my family is for each family member to be supportive of one another, or, a goal for my family is that we eat dinner together on a regular basis. If a goal is too general or philosophical, you can help participants get specific by asking “what does that look like in practice?”</i></p> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As we work towards these goals, we can encounter barriers that prevent us from being successful.</li> <li>• As parents and caregivers, we have a desire to lessen barriers for our children and ourselves, and the pain that they cause. Our desire to lessen such pain, and to alleviate the challenges of those barriers, is compassion.</li> <li>• Often, alleviating those barriers can be very frustrating and leave us in a place of compassion fatigue – worn out, less kind, and less optimistic. The goal of this workshop is for us to build our compassion resilience, for the long haul, as we face the multiple challenges of parenting.</li> </ul> <p>Show definition of compassion resilience written on flipchart paper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>“Compassion resilience</b> is the power to return to a position of empathy, strength, and hope after the daily experience of the challenges our children face and those we face as their caregivers. It requires us to be able to find optimism in an imperfect world.”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Check for understanding</b> (15 minutes)</p> 	<p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Open mic) How does building your compassion resilience relate to you reaching your family’s goals?</li> <li>• (Open mic) In the last month, how has being too tired or frustrated to act with compassion (you or another adult in your child’s life) impacted your ability to reach your family goals?</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>An example of this question may be, because I was up most of the night with a sick child, I was too tired to be as supportive or patient as I wanted to be to my family member who was struggling the next day. Your goal here is to help participants connect their family goals to compassion and the impact compassion fatigue has on parenting.</i></p>

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1



Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<p data-bbox="118 384 367 451"><b>Self-care and Closing</b> (20 minutes)</p> 	<p data-bbox="451 384 521 411"><b>Share</b></p> <ul data-bbox="451 426 1500 541" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each session will end with something for our own self-care. Today we will look at self-compassion.</li><li>• The first step to being compassionate to others is being compassionate to yourself. You will never speak to anyone more than you speak to yourself in your head. Be kind to yourself.</li></ul> <p data-bbox="451 569 846 596"><b>Hand out Self-Compassion Visual.</b></p> <ul data-bbox="451 621 1354 800" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• According to Dr. Kristen Neff, self-compassion includes these three components:<ol data-bbox="488 667 1354 800" style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Being kind to ourselves vs judging ourselves.</li><li>2. Seeing our common humanity when we make a mistake vs isolating ourselves.</li><li>3. Being mindful of our emotions vs over-identifying with them.</li></ol></li></ul> <p data-bbox="451 827 1101 854"><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> You can learn more about Dr. Neff's work <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p data-bbox="451 884 500 911"><b>Ask</b></p> <ul data-bbox="451 936 1474 1073" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Individual Reflection) Think to yourself, when you made a mistake last, did you go to a place of self-kindness or self-ridicule... did you remember that you are human and that all humans make mistakes, or did you isolate... were you aware of the negative emotions and let them pass, or did you cling to them?</li></ul> <p data-bbox="451 1102 521 1129"><b>Share</b></p> <ul data-bbox="451 1146 1468 1173" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Neff has a Self-Compassion Scale to help you get a read on your level of self-compassion.</li></ul> <p data-bbox="451 1203 1507 1304">Hand out Dr. Neff's <a href="#">Self-Compassion Scale</a> for parents to complete at home. Also send the electronic link for the scale to participants post-session. Completing the scale online will calculate the score for you.</p> <p data-bbox="451 1333 500 1360"><b>Ask</b></p> <ul data-bbox="451 1377 1425 1444" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Open mic) If you were able to increase your self-compassion, what would be different in your life?</li></ul> <p data-bbox="451 1474 521 1501"><b>Share</b></p> <ul data-bbox="451 1518 1495 1585" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Between now and our next session, take some time to reflect on self-compassion and how your level of self-compassion impacts your ability to be compassionate to others.</li></ul> <p data-bbox="451 1614 500 1642"><b>Ask</b></p> <p data-bbox="451 1650 1211 1680">Every group we will end with a closing question. Today we'd like you to:</p> <ul data-bbox="451 1696 1338 1724" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Go-around) Share one word or phrase about your experience in the circle today.</li></ul>

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed



Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<b>Self-care and Closing (20 minutes)</b>	<b>Share</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thank you for joining our Parent and Caregiver Compassion Resilience group. Our next meeting will be (<i>share next session date and time here</i>).</li><li>• The facilitation team will be sending out a pre-read before our next session. It is not mandatory to read this piece but will give you some additional context for what we will be covering at our next group.</li><li>• We look forward to seeing you next time.</li></ul>

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1

Parent & Caregiver



Virtual Circle Agenda

Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<p><b>Purpose of Circle</b></p>	<p><b>Today you will:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop shared agreements, informed by group values, to guide the circle process throughout the compassion resilience group experience.</li> <li>2. Introduce the link between compassion and reaching our family's goals.</li> <li>3. Invite all to consider the positive impact of self-compassion..</li> </ol>
<p><b>Time/Materials/Preparation</b></p>	<p><b>Time:</b> 90 minutes</p> <p><b>Documents to Share During Session:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Content Outline</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Values List</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Self-Compassion Visual</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Self-Compassion Scale</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Items to Place in Chat During Session:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Definition of Compassion Resilience (<i>included in agenda below</i>)</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>It is recommended your group size be between five and 10 participants for the circle format. Having additional people makes it challenging to hear from all participants and keep the group engaged during full group sharing. A group smaller than three puts too much pressure on the few participants to share and reduces the opportunity to build community often found as a benefit to these groups.</i></p>
<p><b>Welcome/Check-In (10 minutes)</b></p>	<p>Welcome the group to the first meeting for Parent and Caregiver Compassion Resilience. All facilitators should introduce themselves, why they have decided to facilitate these circles, and what this topic means to each of them.</p>



# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1

Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<p>Opening and Check-in (20 minutes)</p>	<p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At the beginning of our sessions, we will always start with a short centering practice to help ground us in this space. We will do that practice now.</li><li>• I invite everyone to get into a comfortable position with your eyes closed or looking towards the ground. We are going to take a moment to pause. Take a few slow breaths. <i>(Pause)</i> Name in your mind what you want to let go of to be present in this circle and your personal reason for being here. <i>(Pause for 10 seconds)</i> I invite you to bring your attention back to the group.</li></ul> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To assist us in gathering via this virtual format, we want to outline some etiquette guidelines.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Please mute your microphone when you are not sharing.</li><li>– Share your video with the group if you are able.</li><li>– Utilize the “chat” box if you are having difficulty with your audio.</li><li>– For the sake of others learning, please be discreet if you need to move around your surroundings during our groups.</li><li>– If you have problems connecting, please let us know.</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We are going to take a few minutes to introduce ourselves. I will ask a question and call on someone from the group to respond, eventually giving everyone in the group a chance to respond. As a reminder, when someone is sharing our only task is to listen to what they are sharing, and you always have the right to pass when your name is called.</li></ul> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Go-around) We are going to do two rounds of questions. First, please introduce yourself, who the kids are in your life that you care for, and something you really enjoy about your children.</li><li>• (Go-around) For our second round, what is something you have read or heard about this group that made you want to join?</li></ul> <p><i><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> Writing down the things each participant hopes to get from the group will help you keep track of the group’s needs so you can tailor future content when appropriate. Depending on what is shared – you can connect what participants share to the course overview shared next.</i></p> <p><i><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> To minimize deep sharing by participants, facilitators can answer the question first as a way to model the kind of response you are looking for. Also share with participants that they will have additional opportunities to share their story throughout the eight sessions and right now you are asking them to share just a small piece.</i></p>



# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1

Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<b>Opening and Check-in (20 minutes) – continued</b>	<p>Virtually share the <a href="#">overview visual</a> and briefly explain the content that will be covered during these groups, connecting to what participants hope to get out of the group when appropriate.</p> <p>Also, remind the group of meeting logistics – when and where the future sessions will be (ideally using the same online platform for each group).</p>

<p><b>Guiding Questions (15 minutes – Values and Agreements)</b></p>  	<p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a group is meeting on a continuous basis, it is important to develop some shared agreements for how we will interact with each other. These are things we need from ourselves and others in the group to feel comfortable fully participating in the group.</li> <li>• It is important to try to keep these agreements to a number we can all remember, usually between 4-6.</li> <li>• One agreement I want to add is confidentiality so that people know what is said here, stays here. <i>Write Confidentiality or What is Said Here, Stays Here on a flipchart paper labeled Group Agreements.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>If your online platform has a whiteboard function, this could be a good spot to record things you want all participants to see. If a virtual whiteboard is not available, you could share a PowerPoint slide where you scribe participants' responses or write them in a chat box.</i></p> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>If mandated reporting laws apply to you, it is important to issue an exception related to confidentiality. If someone shares harm or neglect being done to a child, you will need to share that information with someone outside the circle. You also may want to inform the participants of your duty to report.</i></p> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Open mic) What agreements do you need from yourself and others to feel comfortable fully participating in the group?</li> </ul> <p>Write each agreement requested somewhere all participants can see (virtual whiteboard, PowerPoint slide, group chat box).</p> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <p>I want to gather feedback from the group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you follow these agreements? Indicate your level of agreement by holding up 0 (shown as a first) to 5 fingers, 0 being not able to follow the agreements, 5 being able to follow the agreements with no reservations.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Guiding Questions</b> (15 minutes – Values and Agreements) <i>continued</i></p> 	<p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>If anyone shows fewer than three fingers, more conversation about needs and shared agreements is required. If someone is unable to share their video, you can have participants put their responses in chat.</i></p> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank you for generating this list of agreements. We will have them visible at every future session.</li> <li>• Two other things that we'd like to keep visible at our future sessions is your values and family goals. These serve as a guiding star in our caregiving and are helpful to reconnect with, especially when we are feeling drained and struggling with tapping into our compassion. Connecting back to these things can help us feel more centered and fulfilled.</li> </ul> <p>Share virtually the <a href="#">Values List</a> handout to each participant.</p> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about 2-3 core values of importance to you that you try to model for your family. Bring these to mind or write them down on a piece of paper nearby. Feel free to reference our values list if it helps you generate your top 2-3 values.</li> </ul> <p>Give participants a few minutes to generate their answers.</p> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Go-around) What values did you choose and who influenced one of your values?</li> </ul> <p><b>Share</b></p> <p>As participants share their 2-3 values, write these on some virtual shared space. Also keep these for Session 8 to reference again during that agenda.</p>
<p>(15 minutes – Goals for our Family)</p> 	<p><b>Our goals for our family</b></p> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next, we want to identify what goals we want our families to work towards and how these connect to compassion resilience.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Go-around) What are some goals you have for your family? Write responses where participants can see, such as virtual whiteboard or chat box.</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>While there may be some overlap with values and goals, goals are typically more specific – for example, a goal for my family is for each family member to be supportive of one another, or, a goal for my family is that we eat dinner together on a regular basis. If a goal is too general or philosophical, you can help participants get specific by asking “what does that look like in practice?”</i></p>

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Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<p><b>Guiding Questions</b> (15 minutes – Goals for our Family) <i>continued</i></p>	<p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As we work towards these goals, we can encounter barriers that prevent us from being successful.</li><li>• As parents and caregivers, we have a desire to lessen barriers for our children and ourselves, and the pain that they cause. Our desire to lessen such pain, and to alleviate the challenges of those barriers, is compassion.</li><li>• Often, alleviating those barriers can be very frustrating and leave us in a place of compassion fatigue – worn out, less kind, and less optimistic. The goal of this workshop is for us to build our compassion resilience, for the long haul, as we face the multiple challenges of parenting.</li></ul> <p>Place definition of compassion resilience in chat box and read aloud.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>"Compassion resilience</b> is the power to return to a position of empathy, strength, and hope after the daily experience of the challenges our children face and those we face as their caregivers. It requires us to be able to find optimism in an imperfect world."</li></ul>
<p><b>Check for understanding</b> (15 minutes)</p> 	<p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Open mic) How does building your compassion resilience relate to you reaching your family's goals?</li><li>• (Open mic) In the last month, how has being too tired or frustrated to act with compassion (you or another adult in your child's life) impacted your ability to reach your family goals?</li></ul> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> <i>An example of this question may be, because I was up most of the night with a sick child, I was too tired to be as supportive or patient as I wanted to be to my family member who was struggling the next day. Your goal here is help participants connect their family goals to compassion and the impact compassion fatigue has on parenting.</i></p>
<p><b>Self-care and Closing</b> (20 minutes)</p> 	<p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each session will end with something for our own self-care. Today we will look at self-compassion.</li><li>• The first step to being compassionate to others is being compassionate to yourself. You will never speak to anyone more than you speak to yourself in your head. Be kind to yourself.</li></ul> <p><b>Share virtually the <a href="#">Self-Compassion Visual</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• According to Dr. Kristen Neff, self-compassion includes these three components:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Being kind to ourselves vs judging ourselves.</li><li>2. Seeing our common humanity when we make a mistake vs isolating ourselves.</li><li>3. Being mindful of our emotions vs over-identifying with them.</li></ol></li></ul> <p><b>Facilitator Tip:</b> You can learn more about Dr. Neff's work <a href="#">here</a>.</p>

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1

Circle Topic	CR Section 1: Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed
<b>Self-care and Closing (20 minutes)</b>	<p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Individual Reflection) Think to yourself, when you made a mistake last, did you go to a place of self-kindness or self-ridicule... did you remember that you are human and that all humans make mistakes, or did you isolate... were you aware of the negative emotions and let them pass, or did you cling to them?</li></ul> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Neff has a Self-Compassion Scale to help you get a read on your level of self-compassion.</li></ul> <p>Share the virtual link to Dr. Neff's <a href="#">Self-Compassion Scale</a> for participants to complete after group, unless time allows, in which case you can have participants complete the scale during group and share a take-away from the scale with the full group.</p> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Open mic) If you were able to increase your self-compassion, what would be different in your life?</li></ul> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Between now and our next session, take some time to reflect on self-compassion and how your level of self-compassion impacts your ability to be compassionate to others.</li></ul> <p><b>Ask</b></p> <p>Every group we will end with a closing question. Today we'd like you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Go-around) Share one word or phrase about your experience in the circle today.</li></ul> <p><b>Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thank you for joining our Parent and Caregiver Compassion Resilience group. Our next meeting will be (<i>share next session date and time here</i>).</li><li>• The facilitation team will be sending out a pre-read before our next session. It is not mandatory to read this piece, but will give you some additional context for what we will be covering at our next group.</li><li>• We look forward to seeing you next time.</li></ul>



## Compassion Resilience for Parents and Caregivers

# Content Outline



1. **Understand what it means** to act with compassion.
2. **Identify stages of fatigue**, the underlying causes and what is within our control.
3. **Minimize** what leads to **compassion fatigue** and **maximize** what makes us **resilient**.
4. **Set clear, realistic, and aspirational expectations** for ourselves and others.
5. **Set personal and family boundaries** to support our ability to meet those expectations.
6. **Explore how we influence the behavior** of those we care for through the development of their knowledge and will.
7. **Put strategies into practice** that build and maintain our individual wellbeing.

# LIST OF VALUES

Accountability	Future generations	Power
Achievement	Generosity	Pride
Adaptability	Giving back	Recognition
Adventure	Grace	Reliability
Altruism	Gratitude	Respect
Ambition	Growth	Resourcefulness
Authenticity	Harmony	Responsibility
Balance	Health	Risk-taking
Beauty	Home	Safety
Being the best	Honesty	Security
Belonging	Hope	Self-discipline
Career	Humility	Self-expression
Caring	Humor	Self-respect
Collaboration	Inclusion	Serenity
Commitment	Independence	Service
Community	Integrity	Simplicity
Compassion	Initiative	Spirituality
Competence	Intuition	Sportsmanship
Confidence	Job security	Stewardship
Connection	Joy	Success
Contentment	Justice	Time
Contribution	Kindness	Teamwork
Cooperation	Knowledge	Thrift
Courage	Leadership	Tradition
Creativity	Learning	Travel
Dignity	Legacy	Trust
Diversity	Leisure	Truth
Environment	Love	Understanding
Efficiency	Loyalty	Uniqueness
Equality	Making a difference	Usefulness
Ethics	Openness	Vision
Excellence	Optimism	Vulnerability
Fairness	Order	Wealth
Faith	Nature	Well-being
Family	Parenting	Wholeheartedness
Financial stability	Patriotism	Wisdom
Forgiveness	Patience	
Freedom	Peace	Write your own:
Friendship	Perseverance	_____
Fun	Personal fulfillment	_____

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1

## What Is Self-Compassion?



### Self-Kindness

Be loving towards ourselves instead of self-critical.



### Common Humanity

Everyone suffers. You are not perfect. No one is. You are not alone.



### Mindfulness

Notice our struggle. Feel it, instead of being reactive. Be with it, avoiding self-judgment or overreaction.

When you feel like you have fallen short, how do you practice self-compassion?

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1

### Activity: Self-Compassion Scale

Used in this toolkit with permission from Dr. Kristin Neff

Please read each statement carefully before answering. To the left of each item, indicate how often you behave in the stated manner. You can also [take this self-scale online](#) with automatic scoring.

Almost never

Almost always

1	2	3	4	5
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				
23.				
24.				
25.				
26.				

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1

### Calculating Your Level of Self-Compassion

Please record the score you gave for each item in the scale, and then calculate your Grand Compassion Average as given below:

**Self-Kindness (SK) Items:**

#5 \_\_\_\_\_  
#12 \_\_\_\_\_  
#19 \_\_\_\_\_  
#23 \_\_\_\_\_  
#26 \_\_\_\_\_

SK Subtotal of items: \_\_\_\_\_  
SK Average (divide subtotal by 5): \_\_\_\_\_

**Self-Judgment (SJ) Items:**

#1 \_\_\_\_\_  
#8 \_\_\_\_\_  
#11 \_\_\_\_\_  
#16 \_\_\_\_\_  
#21 \_\_\_\_\_

SJ Subtotal of items: \_\_\_\_\_  
SJ Average (divide subtotal by 5): \_\_\_\_\_

**Common Humanity (CH) Items:**

#3 \_\_\_\_\_  
#7 \_\_\_\_\_  
#10 \_\_\_\_\_  
#15 \_\_\_\_\_

CH Subtotal of items: \_\_\_\_\_  
CH Average (divide subtotal by 4): \_\_\_\_\_

**Isolation (I) Items:**

#4 \_\_\_\_\_  
#13 \_\_\_\_\_  
#18 \_\_\_\_\_  
#25 \_\_\_\_\_

I Subtotal of items: \_\_\_\_\_  
I Average (divide subtotal by 4): \_\_\_\_\_

**Mindfulness (M) Items:**

#9 \_\_\_\_\_  
#14 \_\_\_\_\_  
#17 \_\_\_\_\_  
#22 \_\_\_\_\_

M Subtotal of items: \_\_\_\_\_  
M Average (divide subtotal by 4): \_\_\_\_\_

**Over-identification (OI) Items:**

#2 \_\_\_\_\_  
#6 \_\_\_\_\_  
#20 \_\_\_\_\_  
#24 \_\_\_\_\_

OI Subtotal of items: \_\_\_\_\_  
OI Average (divide subtotal by 4): \_\_\_\_\_

### Total Self-Compassion Score:

- Reverse-code (rc) the negatively worded subscales (SJ, I, and OI) by subtracting each average from 6.  
 $6 - \text{SJ average} = \underline{\quad}$        $6 - \text{I average} = \underline{\quad}$        $6 - \text{OI average} = \underline{\quad}$
- Add the six averages:  $\text{SK} \underline{\quad} + \text{SJ (rc)} \underline{\quad} + \text{CH} \underline{\quad} + \text{I (rc)} \underline{\quad} + \text{M} \underline{\quad} + \text{OI (rc)} \underline{\quad} = \underline{\quad}$
- Calculate Grand Self-Compassion Average (total average divided by 6) =  $\underline{\quad}$

# Why We Gather and Where We Are Headed

## Section 1

### What Your Score Means:

Average scores tend to be around 3.0 on the 1–5 scale, so you can interpret your total self-compassion score accordingly. As a rough guide, a score of 1–2.5 indicates you are low in self-compassion, 2.5–3.5 indicates you are moderate, and 3.5–5.0 means you are high. Remember that higher averages for the SJ, I, and OI subscales indicate less self-compassion before reverse-coding and more after reverse-coding.

### References

Neff, K. D. (2003). Development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity, 2*, 223-250.

Neff, K. D. (2003). Self-compassion: An alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude toward oneself. *Self and Identity, 2*, 85-102.

For more excellent resources on self-compassion go to [Dr. Kristin Neff's website](#).

