



Compassion: Conceptualisations, Research and Use in Psychotherapy

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What is compassion, how does it affect the quality of our lives and how can we develop compassion for ourselves and others?

Humans are capable of extreme cruelty but also considerable compassion. Often neglected in Western psychology, this book looks at how compassion may have evolved, and is linked to various capacities such as sympathy, empathy, forgiveness and warmth. Exploring the effects of early life experiences with families and peers, this book outlines how developing compassion for self and others can be key to helping people change, recover and develop ways of living that increase well-being.

Focusing on the multi-dimensional nature of compassion, international contributors:

- explore integrative evolutionary, social constructivist, cognitive and Buddhist approaches to compassion
- consider how and why cruelty can flourish when our capacities for compassion are turned off, especially in particular environments
- focus on how therapists bring compassion into their therapeutic relationship, and examine its healing effects
- describe how to help patients develop inner warmth and compassion to help alleviate psychological problems.

Compassion provides detailed outlines of interventions that are of particular value to psychotherapists and counsellors interested in developing compassion as a therapeutic focus in their work. It is also of value to social scientists interested in pro-social behaviour, and those seeking links between Buddhist and Western psychology.

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