



DIALING DOWN EMPATHY



Dialing Down the Empathy

We can take steps to rectify empathic distress fatigue as well as our negative mind states by first practicing self-compassion and kindness to ourselves. Some techniques of practicing self-compassion include:

- **Give yourself encouragement.** Think of what you would say to a good friend if he or she was facing a difficult or stressful situation. Then, when you find yourself in this kind of situation, direct these compassionate responses toward yourself.
- **Practice mindfulness.** Even a quick exercise, such as meditating for a few minutes, can be a great way to nurture and accept ourselves while we're in pain.
- **Forgive yourself for your mistakes.** Forgiveness is vital for self-compassion. We all make mistakes, but not all of us forgive ourselves for them. Depending on the mistake, this can be a very daunting task, but keep in mind that you cannot go back (no matter how badly you might want to), so the best thing to do is to choose forgiveness and forward motion
- **Find common ground with others.** While self-compassion is about the way you care for yourself, one of the best ways to cultivate it is to create connections with others. When you open yourself up to sharing who you are with others, you'll soon see that you're not alone. *We all* struggle to treat ourselves with kindness, and recognizing this can make the struggle more manageable.

