

In recent years, researchers have aimed to better understand the relationship between compassion among University students and their self-care (Booker & Dunsmore, 2018). Identifying the adaptive ways in which individuals relate to themselves across successes and failures allows educators and practitioners to assess the levels of subjective well-being of people (Neff, 2003a). Neff (2003b) described self-compassion as, “being open to and moved by one’s suffering, experiencing feelings of caring and kindness toward oneself, taking an understanding, nonjudgmental attitude toward one’s inadequacies and failures, and recognizing that one’s own experience is part of the common human experience” (p. 224). Suffering, failure, and inadequacies are a result of the universal human condition, however, all people are worthy of compassion. Additionally, self-compassion is positively related to well-being and is needed in all environments. Studies indicate that self-compassionate individuals are more confident in admitting their mistakes, modifying unproductive behaviors, engaging in positive health behaviors, taking on new challenges, and display fewer depressive symptoms (Beaumont & Hollins Martin, 2016; Kelliher Rabon, Sirois, & Hirsch, 2018). For social workers engaging with individuals interfacing with a myriad of problems, self-compassion is needed for long term personal care and well being.

The goal of this research project is to measure the level of self-compassion as well as the self-care of BSW and MSW students in a Social Work Program at a regional University. We will be using the following two reliable and validated instruments to measure their level of self-compassion and self-care as they immerse themselves in the helping profession. We hope to see how the SC of the students correlates to other independent variables i.e. undergrad/grad program social work, age, education level, religiosity, spirituality, gender, etc.

1. The Self-Compassion Scale by Neff (2003)
2. The Gratitude Questionnaire 6

The purpose of our research is to study the perception of self-compassion in social work students and how it can link to self-care as well as success in the social work program and field. This will help provide students with self-care practices during their training to thrive in the profession in the future.