

Don't be so hard on yourself! The influence of mindful self-compassion on stress processing and well-being.

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Background: Recently in Positive Psychology, far eastern concepts have been investigated in search of factors that make life appear more valuable. Mindful self-compassion is one of these concepts that received increased attention especially in the exploration of well-being and a stressful life. This protective trait with buddhistic roots includes the facets self-kindness, common humanity and mindfulness. Thus, it describes an attitude to oneself in demanding life situations that is characterized by the openness to painful feelings with the intention to care for oneself instead of self-criticizing one's own mistakes or failures. To date, associations with increased mental health and reduced negative affect have already repeatedly been demonstrated. However, little is known about how these relations are mediated. Initial findings suggest that mindful self-compassion influences the choice of coping strategies and stress perception. Method: In this cross-lagged panel study (N= 702) we examined whether mindful self-compassion attenuates stress and leads to an increased use of adaptive coping strategies, which ultimately increases well-being. Results: The sample (500 females, 194 males, 8 others; age: M = 27.86, SD = 9.88) consists mainly of students (67,2%). So far, the cross-sectional data has already been evaluated by means of correlation and regression analyses. To evaluate the independent influence of mindful self-compassion on stress processing, all effects were controlled for neuroticism and conscientiousness as they are key traits in stress regulation. Discussion: Our results have already shown the importance of mindful self-compassion in stress processing. Further studies should additionally prove the stability of the construct in order to finally establish it as an independent trait in stress research.