



SOOTHE Group Glossary

Key terms, words, or concepts defined in alphabetical order

Blocks	When an individual would like to be compassionate but is unable to do so due to environmental constraints, such as lack of time, resources, or availability.
Commitment	Maintaining a motivation to be helpful and supportive over time.
Compassion	Sensitivity to suffering in self and others with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it.
Compassionate assertiveness	The ability to express your needs, feelings, or boundaries clearly and confidently while also being kind, respectful, and understanding toward yourself and others.
Compassion cultivation	On purpose we can choose to cultivate compassion which shapes what we feel, how we think and what we do so that we can live a life of meaning.
Compassionate voice	A kinder, supportive inner voice.
Compassionate wisdom	Moving away from blaming and shaming ourselves and simply recognising that, for whatever reason, we are struggling, but we want to find ways to help ourselves and others because, at the very core, it's not our fault if we're suffering.
Courage	The willingness to face painful thoughts, feelings, or experiences with kindness, rather than avoiding or fighting them.
Disappointment gap	The space that separates our ideal self from our actual self.
Drive system	Our system that detects and responds to opportunities for seeking resources (excitement, awe, wonder, joy, pleasure, pride, humour).
Empathy	The capacity to recognise, share, and understand another person's perspective and feelings, and why they might be feeling that way.
External shame	The fear of having a sense that we exist in the mind of other people as negative or inferior. Our attention is on what the other people are thinking and feeling, and what they might want us to do (e.g., avoid, attack, reject).
Fears	The avoidance or fear response that individuals can have to compassion. These may be related to seeing compassion as a sign of weakness, self-pitying, or that compassion is seen as unhelpful or rejected.
Flows of compassion	There are three flows of compassion: 1) Receiving compassion from others; 2) Giving compassion to others; 3) Giving ourselves compassion
Forgiveness	Loosening the grip of anger or hurt and choosing a more compassionate way of responding.
Guilt	A self-conscious emotion related to our desire to care and often arises when our intention is to be helpful and not harmful, but we end up being harmful.



Humiliation	A self-conscious emotion that we can experience when people criticise or treat us badly, such as if someone put you down unfairly. Our feelings are not ones of anxiety or wanting to appease or hide away (like we might in external shame), but rather a desire to attack.
Imagery	The human brain's capacity to produce images that effect different parts of our bodies and minds (e.g., if you imagine hearing the sound of nails scraping on a blackboard, it is likely that the imagined sound will stimulate an area of the brain that sends messages to your body leading you to tense your shoulders or clench your jaw).
Internal shame	The fear that we will reveal ourselves as truly negative, inferior, or bad. Our attention is focused inwards, on ourselves, and what we feel and think about ourselves.
Mindfulness	A way of paying attention and knowing that one is paying attention, in a non-judgemental way.
Motives	The reason we think, feel and do things.
Multiple emotions	The experience of different emotions due to our brains taking many different patterns relating to anger, anxiety, sadness, fear, disgust, joy, excitement, and so on.
Multiple selves	Based on the idea that each of our emotions represents a different "self." This means we all have an angry self, an anxious self, a sad self, an embarrassed self, a joyful self, and so on.
Parasympathetic nervous system	The part of our nervous system responsible for allowing us to slow down, feel calmer and have a lower heart rate.
Resistances	Those situations in which an individual could be compassionate but is not. This is not due to fear, but rather because the person sees no point to compassion or is focused on competitive self-advantage and therefore, holds onto their resources rather than sharing them.
Rhythm breathing	A type of breathing practice which helps to activate our soothing system and our parasympathetic nervous system, which is the part of our nervous system responsible for allowing us to slow down, feel calmer and have a lower heart rate.
Safeness	A set of positive, deep feelings that enable us to be open and warm. Safeness is not the same as the absence of threat, but rather, a presence of resources to cope with danger and exposure to threat.
Safety	The absence of threat or removal of danger. We might do this by staying away from anything that feels threatening. This leads us to avoid.
Self-compassion	Turning compassion inward toward yourself.
Self-conscious emotions	These emotions are linked to feelings about ourselves, and can be positive or negative. For example, pride can be linked to feeling that others admire you or like you, but can become harmful when we begin to depend on the approval of others. The two main self-conscious emotions we are focusing on are shame and guilt.
Self-critic	The part of us that judges, blames, or puts us down – often trying to protect us from mistakes, rejection, or harm, but doing so in a harsh or unhelpful way.
Self-forgiveness	Loosening the grip of anger or hurt and choosing a more compassionate way of responding to ourselves.



Shame	A self-conscious emotion related to a deep sense of self and is therefore linked with a negative self-identity (e.g., "I am broken").
Socially constructed	The environments we find ourselves in influences the person we become. There are many thousands of potential versions of us that we will never have a chance to live.
Social mentalities	Social life tasks (e.g., care seeking, care giving, cooperating, competing, sexual)
Soothing system	Our system that detects and responds to opportunities to rest and digest (settling, calming, contentment, peaceful, playfulness, social safeness)
The Big Three	The main emotions that usually create difficulties and lead to a bigger red (threat) circle. They include: anger, sadness, and anxiety.
Threat system	Our system that detects and responds to threats and losses (fear, anxiety, anger, disgust, 'shutdown')
Tricky brain	As human beings, we have evolved to fit in with certain societal standards. In doing so, our brains have also evolved and become quite 'tricky' due to many factors in our lives that we didn't choose or have control over - we did not choose our genes.
'Voice'	Many of us have different 'voices' or thought patterns, which might push harsh rules or criticism. This 'voice' is not who you are - it's a pattern of thoughts that you developed to cope. ■ It's a pattern your brain learned. And the good news is, if it's learned, it can also be unlearned.
Wisdom	Thinking carefully about what would be most helpful in a situation.