



Episode #231

**Author and Self-Compassion Researcher Dr. Kristin
Neff on the Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself**

October 20, 2020

Debbie: Hello, Kristin, welcome to the podcast.

Kristin: Hello, Debbie, happy to be here.

Debbie: As I was saying, before I hit record, this is a conversation I've actually been wanting to have for several years. I know you had spoken at the Shift Your Thinking conference a few years ago, I'm friends with those guys and have learned about your work many years ago and self compassion. And I think now more than ever, for what we're all experiencing, you know, in the world, and what so many families are experiencing with remote learning in this new landscape that this conversation is so timely. So thank you.

Kristin: You're welcome.

Debbie: So I would love it if you wouldn't mind taking a few minutes and just tell us a little bit about your story of how you got into the work of self compassion. I know, you don't have to give us the whole story. You've shared it in many different ways and in videos and things that I'll share for listeners, but if you want to just briefly tell us how that became your focus?

Kristin: Yeah, well, it was really a personal journey. You know, I was under a lot of stress more than 20 years ago. And I have learned mindfulness meditation, hoping to deal with my stress. And the woman leaving the course, I talked about the importance of self compassion, you know about being actively warm and supportive and kind to yourself. And so I started trying it and I was just blown away by the difference it made. And then I did some research on self esteem and my postdoctoral work. I'm always learning all the problems with self esteem like that, we had to be special and above average, and you know, it's it fairweather friends, self-esteem is there for us when we succeed, but what happens when we fail, you know, deserts us. And so I really realized that self compassion was a really perfect alternative, because it's a source of support, and strength and stability, and motivation, you know, constantly in good times and in bad. And so yeah, I've really devoted my, my life's work to this topic. And it's been about 20 years now.

Debbie: And are you still, you know, is this still where the crux of your work is focused on? Are you still passionate about this topic?

Kristin: Absolutely. I mean, it's the life's work, right? So self-compassion, you know, means, how do we relate to our suffering, and suffering is endless. So there are more and more applications of self compassion. So when I do research, but I've really been into training, like how do we help people learn to be more self compassionate, so I've developed programs and, you know, for for regular people, also, for healthcare workers, parents of special needs, kids, you know, educators, athlete, basically, you name it, if you're a human being, then you suffer, but you know, you're suffering, suffering might take a different form,

depending on who you are. And so I'm really excited about tailoring the practice of self compassion to help people really when they need it most.

Debbie: I love how you talked about self esteem, that was something that struck me. I used to write books for teenage girls, kind of self help, empowering, confidence boosting books for girls. And, you know, back in the maybe early 2000s, there was this conversation going on around actually self esteem as externally focused. And really, we want to be looking at self respect and other ways that we actually have control over. But I hadn't thought of self compassion as a piece of that. And so I really loved the way you connected those two things.

Kristin: Yeah, yeah. So there's a pretty big literature now showing that you know. So, you know, self esteem is the source of self worth, if you define self esteem as judging yourself positively or good. And if you do, then the sense of self worth, but when you fail, you have no more self worth, or self compassion is an unconditional source of self worth. It's not about judging yourself positively. It's just acknowledging that you're a human being, doing the best you can like everyone else. So it's really you don't have to earn self compassion. It comes simply from the fact that you're a human being. And so for that reason, it's much more stable over time.

Debbie: So interesting. So I would love if you would take a few minutes to share a story. I've seen you give the story and talks and I've also read this in your book. And it's something that I know my listeners are going to relate to, you know, when you were on the playground with your young child who is autistic, and you had this kind of comparative suffering, I guess, a moment. Could you talk to us about that?

Kristin: Yeah, right. So what happens normally, even though logically, we know that everyone's imperfect and everyone needs an imperfect life, what happens is in the moment, when we fail, we struggle. We think, you know, this shouldn't be happening. You know, it's not logical, but that's a reaction. This should not be happening, things are supposed to be going better, as if everyone else in the world is leading this normal, perfect life. You know, and it's just me who's struggling. And as an autism parent, you know, you certainly feel that and then Of course, there's a lot of autistic children out there. But and we know that but what happens? So So the story was I was at the playground with my, my son Raul when he was about five. And he was he was really in the depth of his autism there. You know, there are all these other parents and kids on the playground, and it was a sunny day, and they were playing, and the kids are playing with each other and interacting with their parents. And here's the role and just, you know, banging the slide stimming away, you know, self stimulatory behavior that goes with autism. And I started to go down the path of self pity, you know, why me, I can have a normal, unproblematic relationship with my child like all these other parents, but I caught myself because I've been doing self compassion practice for a long time. And I realized, well, hey, you know, maybe it's not autism. But everyone struggles with their children, you know, maybe other physical issues, or mental health issues, or at the very least, all parents have conflicts and challenges with their children. And in fact, that's what it means to be a parent. And so the moment I made that reframe, you know, instead of feeling isolated

from everyone else, or on the playground, I felt really connected to everyone. And so that's one of the powers of self compassion. And there's also a differentiate self compassion from self pity. You know, self pity is poor me, self compassion, as well, everyone struggles. And when you remember that, you feel much less alone, and you feel much more empowered by the fact that, you know, your brothers and sisters are going through a similar thing. And so it's a really important aspect of being self compassionate.

Debbie: Yeah, and it's something you know, when I read this, I totally related to it. One of the things I used to say, when my son was little to my husband, I'd say, Gosh, I would be such a good mom if I had a typical kid, you know. And, of course, that was a ridiculous thing to believe. But, you know, I think that experience is certainly what I hear. Within my community, many parents are really at that place where they're discovering more and more how neurodivergent their child is, and they're maybe going through a period of mourning, you know, the life that they thought they were going to have, or whatever that looks like. And so I think that, that story, and that idea that this shouldn't be happening, this is harder for me than it is for everyone else is really where so many people are right now.

Kristin: And by the way, it is harder for you. Yeah, right. Everyone suffers, but not everyone's suffering is the same. So it's gonna be harder for you, if you're a parent of a, you know, a neurodiverse child, or if you're, you know, subject to systemic racism, or you've got a trauma history, I mean, so it's not that all suffering is the same, or that all suffering is equal. And so we need to acknowledge that, and we need to have compassion for a particular form of suffering, you know, and in a way, we're the only ones who know who know it from the inside out, we need to give that to ourselves. At the same time, we have to remember that it's not abnormal to suffer. That's the thing that gets us, you know, when we think that somehow we aren't supposed to suffer. But that is actually what being human is largely about. And but people do suffer different amounts and in different ways, and we need so we need to hold the pain of that. At the same time, we really need to remember, we aren't alone. You know, like evolutionary psychology, they say, a lone monkey is a dead monkey. When we feel alone, we feel so cut off and frightened from our, you know, fellow human beings, it really adds insult to injury. So we need to remember that, yes, you know, we aren't alone. And that's why it helps to bond with like other autism parents or other other people who share, you know, a similar form of suffering to you. And so, you know, both are true. Suffering is different. suffering comes in different amounts as different causes. But the universal truth is everyone suffers. And it's normal as part of being a human being to struggle.

Debbie: Yeah, there's a quote, in your book, actually, where you're discussing your son and questioning what normal is, the quote is, "Being human is not about being any one particular way. It is about being as life creates you with your own particular strengths and weaknesses, gifts and challenges, quirks and oddities." And I highlighted that...I loved it. And I think that idea that to suffer is human that there is no one way that life is supposed to look for any of us is just so powerful.

Kristin: Yeah, right. Yeah. Yeah, it is. And it's true, right? But again, that doesn't mean we don't want to use this as a way to belittle our own suffering or to say, well, then why am I complaining, right? Everyone suffers. It's not that it's really opening our hearts to ourselves exactly as we are in the moment. So if we feel like this shouldn't be this way, then what happens is we resist what is and we just make it worse. So not only are we suffering, we feel alone, we feel frustrated, we feel angry about it. Whereas if we open our hearts to what is, you know, and really we're really there for it. In terms of what's happening for us, man, it gives us actually more resources to cope. And by the way, you know, sometimes it's not like we just want to accept our suffering, sometimes we need to take action, right. So if there's like a yin and yang element to self compassion, the Yin is acceptance. And we accept that this is how things are, we accept ourselves as we are. But there's also a yang element, which is we, you know, just kind of in Chinese philosophy, yang is more powerful, forceful energy, says we need to change how things are at least try our best to do it. You know, so maybe we need to advocate for our child in school, or you know, you need to fight for social justice, you need to try to make it or you need to change yourself in some way, if you're doing some behavior that's unhealthy. So it's both Yin and Yang. But ironically, it's by accepting ourselves and accepting the fact that it hurts and accepting the fact that we're flawed human beings, that actually gives us the emotional resources needed to try to change things. So the two go hand in hand, they aren't, they aren't opposites.

Debbie: So how do we then accept, again, I mentioned, I have a parent community and on Facebook, I, I'd say every day, there's half a dozen posts from parents who are really just in the thick of it, right? They've got explosive kids, or their relationships are suffering, and they're just burned out. So you know, you talk about being with your suffering, what does that actually look like? And how can we build those muscles?

Kristin: Right. And so when we talk about being with our suffering, which is like the Yin type of self compassion, it takes, there's actually three elements to self compassion. And it's useful to know because they're almost like a recipe book for what we need to add to the ingredients so that we can have this stable self compassionate mindset. So the first is mindfulness, which is the ability to see what's happening to be present with what's happening. Like if we ignore our pain, or we stuff it down, or conversely, if we just like, run away with it, we'll get lost in it, we have no perspective that we don't have the perspective needed to turn to herself and say, Wow, you're really having a hard time, you know, what can I do to help? So we need that perspective, we need that space, we need to be aware of our pain, but not lost in it. And so that because of this presence, and then again, we need to react with kindness, as opposed to harsh judgment, you know, saying, Well, it's because you aren't a good enough parent, or, you know, some people I know a lot of parents feel like some irrational shame. You know, is it? Is it that, you know, glass of wine I had in my second trimester? Or is it something to do with my genes? Or is it something I did, there's like an irrational shame and guilt about having a special needs kid. And so it's really about remembering that you aren't alone. You're not not judging yourself. So that's the kindness piece. And then we could remember that we're connected to others.

And when you put these three together, when you put mindfulness, kindness and common humanity together, it feels like loving, connected presence. And so what it feels like when we, when I say hold our pain with compassion, it means using loving, connected presence, being present with what is remembering that we aren't alone, and being kind to ourselves something as simple as thinking, What would I say to a dear friend that I really cared for who's going through the same situation I'm going through, and then saying that to yourself, and it makes a radical difference in your ability to hold what is. But again, remember, that's only half the story, then you also may need to make a change, maybe you need to protect yourself, you know, maybe you're maybe your school district isn't doing enough for your child, you need to go in and fight for the services they need, you know, or you need to, you know, maybe you're doing some sort of parenting behavior that's making things worse. And so you need to look at that and try to change. So accept and change constantly this dialectic between the two.

Debbie: And I imagine that change and that action, we can be much more effective when we are in that place of self compassion, as opposed to reacting from fear or anger.

Kristin: Absolutely, absolutely. And the research, you know, there's almost like 3,000 research articles down on the benefits of self compassion, and really beyond a shadow of a doubt. It makes us stronger. It makes us more resilient. You make better decisions, we're more motivated. You know, we're healthier both in mind and in body. So it's really worth asking yourself, Can I be self compassionate to myself in this moment? Because it'll make a big difference. There's also research with parents that helps with parenting, including with parents of you know, neurodiverse children, it helps them cope, makes them stronger, you know, makes them less stress. It really makes a huge difference.

Debbie: Yeah, and you talk about actively, self comforting. I read about that and that seems to be a foreign concept for so many of us like we were not most of us were not raised knowing how to even just hug ourselves right or pat ourselves or take care of ourselves in a physical way to bring comfort to ourselves.

Kristin: Yeah, exactly. So in some ways, that's one of the unique aspects of self compassion, because we're raised to be nurturing and caring and supportive to others, you know, a mother and most of us have learned that pretty well, especially, especially women, you know, and especially parents, we know how to use our tone of voice in a warm way. We know how to use touch to communicate care. I mean, the first couple years of our kid's life, they didn't have language. So we communicated our care and our love and support through touch through holding by all those things, actually, we've learned to do pretty well, we're most of us are compassion experts. And so when we give ourselves permission, and a lot of it is just permission to turn that lens inward, in some ways, because we're acting towards ourselves, or we might normally act towards another person, that gives us that space that gives us that perspective. So again, instead of being lost in the pain or lost in the trauma, it's like we step outside of ourselves. And we can say, we can be a little more objective and say, Wow, you know, I'm really having a hard time, what can I do to help myself in this moment, in that perspective, is

very useful. And again, we know how to do it. And the body doesn't really know you know, so if you put your hand on your heart, or on your chest or on your face, and you say some more words, your mind, your brain might say, what's happening, this feels a little weird. But your body doesn't know the difference, your body is so reactive, and activates the parasympathetic nervous response, you know, it releases oxytocin, we calm down, we increase the heart rate variability, so we really can be there for ourselves to a remarkable degree. And that's why I'm so passionate about self compassion, because people don't even realize it is like we have this superpower in our back pocket. And we don't even know that we have this ability to take it out and use it. Um, so that's why I tell people to just try it. And you'll see for yourself, the difference it makes, you don't have to take my word for it, you don't have to believe the 3,000 studies. You know, try it, and you'll see the difference it makes.

Debbie: So I'm wondering if you know why there is resistance around this. I mean, I think about, especially parents with a typical kids, we tend to judge ourselves, as you said, Really harshly, we often feel guilt or shame, or we just beat ourselves up for choices, we may have made ways that we've parented, you know, is there a payoff in doing that? Like, what is it that prevents people from making this reframe, and changing how they think about their role on how they practice self compassion?

Kristin: All right, so So I think there's two main reasons one is actually physiological is our nervous system, and the other is cultural. So in terms of our nervous system reaction, when we feel threatened, right, we immediately go into fight flight or freeze mode, that's just as easily triggered response to danger. And so when we feel threatened by, you know, anything that goes wrong, so to speak, that could be our child acting out, or some mistake we've made. So we feel threatened. So we go into fight flight or freeze mode to try to control the situation to try to eliminate the danger. And we're just doing it naturally out of this desire to feel safe. What happens is we get reactive, but we're like in our sympathetic reaction, it's like, we're really reactive. We just fight the problem. Often the problem is us. Right? So we feel we've made a mistake, or we could do something differently. We beat ourselves up as a way of thinking, this is going to help us, this is gonna help me control my behavior. So I'll get it right next time. You know, or we're afraid of other people judging us. So we like to beat them to the punch, we kind of soften the blows of others by beating ourselves up first, right? Or we like to flee and shame, refreeze and rumination. We get stuck, we can unstick yourself. It's like, well, maybe if I just think about the danger for the 57th time it will go away, right? So these are natural reactions to try to feel safe. The only problem is they actually aren't very effective. Right? a more effective way to deal with danger is who we ask can feel safe through attachment through caregiving? No, when we help our children feel safe, for instance, by saying we're here for you, we support you, we give them a hug, we make them feel loved. And that helps our children feel safe. We know how to calm down a crying child, you know, of course it doesn't work the same way for our kids. But we know how to try to calm down a crying child through the force of love, you might say through the force of care. This is also a physiological system. We have this associated with parasympathetic reactivity. You know that things like oxytocin and heart rate

variability, so we can make ourselves feel safe this way, but it doesn't. It takes a little longer because we're used to doing it for others, but we aren't used to doing it to ourselves. And so when we learn to do that helps, so that's one reason and then the other reason is culture. Culture tells us that you know, it's selfish, to be self compassionate, we should be focused on other people, we should be sacrificing our needs. Women get that message particularly strongly, you know, you shouldn't be focusing on yourself, you shouldn't give yourself what you need. Or people are afraid that it's self pity wallowing in self pity. Actually, the number one fear is that it's going to undermine my motivation, I won't change if I'm kind of myself, you know, when in fact, it's the exact opposite, you're more likely to change. If you're kind to yourself, you're more able to accept responsibility, because it's safe to do so. And you're more likely to do something about it, you're more likely to be motivated to, you know, help yourself in some way. And so, you know, culture has just really gotten it wrong, sadly. And so that's partly why it's my life's mission to try to clear up these misconceptions about self compassion, you know.

Debbie: So, I'm wondering if in doing your work, do you notice differences in you know, you said, it's cultural so I imagine this is different in different countries or cultures? Have you found that in your work?

Kristin: Yes, so what we find is that basically, no matter what culture you're looking at self compassion is beneficial. You know, even if the culture encourages self compassion or discourages it. Those who naturally have more self compassion, have better well being, you know, mental and physical. But there are differences in levels. And it's not like an East West difference. So we found in some of our research, for instance, that Thailand, Natalia is very Buddhist, and they take meditation very seriously. And self compassion is kind of part of the culture. And they have higher levels, Taiwan, we found is very, very low. Because it's kind of the Confucian culture, the belief that you need to criticize yourself to achieve. Americans, we're kind of in between people in Britain are actually low. It's kind of that Puritan, you know, ethic of, you know, just don't complain, carry on, you know, soldier on. And so there are differences in levels of self compassion, partly based on the cultural messages we receive.

Debbie: Interesting. So let's shift gears and talk about kids. So I know that the things that we say to our kids becomes their inner voice. And so I'm wondering what thoughts you have on how we can ensure that we are contributing to that we're not contributing to having that inner critical voice as our kids grow up?

Kristin: Yeah. So first of all, just to say it's natural. So for instance, my son, Rohan, and you can imagine I've never criticized him, I've always talked about self compassion. And I still sometimes I overhear him, you know, autistic kids often talk out loud. I've been over here and beating himself up, but he's made a mistake. And I didn't think of that to him. And so part of it is just the natural fear reaction, right? He's afraid. And he seemed like in cartoons, well, bullies bully others to try to control their behavior. So bullies themselves to try to control things because he's afraid of making that mistake again. And so if we, as parents, we don't have to own all our children's self criticism, it also comes naturally,

again, it's a basic natural safety behavior. At the same time, the fact that I have talked a lot to him about self compassion is paying off. So then, you know, I'll catch him doing that. And then we can have a talk about it, we can talk about standing up to his inner bully. And that'll also at other times, really talk about the importance of being kind of supportive to yourself, and what we know about self compassion, what the research shows is that it's contagious. So if you talk in a self compassionate way, other people start being more self compassionate, like they get the message. Oh, okay, well, maybe that's a good way to talk to myself. So if you're a parent, and you make any sort of mistake, whether it's a mistake with your child, you know, apologizing, taking responsibility, but showing compassion. So instead of beating yourself up in front of your kid, like, you know, I'm so sorry, I'm such a bad mom, or I'm so stupid, thinking that your child's gonna like that's gonna help your child. It's actually you're modeling poor behavior for your child, you can admit a mistake, and talk about, well, you know, it's human. Here's what was going on for me, you know, and I understand why it happened. At the same time, I'm committed to try not to have it happen again, right. Or if you break glass, instead of like, an idiot, you can say, Well, you know, this happens. Remember that the three messages you're always trying to give is mindfulness. Acknowledging that is painful, not ignoring it, or exaggerating it. uncommon humanity, it happens as part of being human, and kindness, showing yourself out loud, if you say words that are kind of understanding and kind and supportive, then you will give that message to your kids. So that's one way and if you want to talk to them directly about it, a really good metaphor is friendship. Because by about the age of seven, you know, the kids started understanding what it means to be a friend or they start learning about what it means to be a friend. And that's just the time to slip in there. And remember to be a good friend to yourself as well, you know, and there's some good books out there for kids on how to be a good friend to yourself. Just and just one last thing, if you indulge me. Sure. empathic resonance. So for instance, you know, artistic kids, a lot of people say that they don't have a lot of empathy. It's actually not true. They don't have the ability to perspective take, it's hard for them to do theory of mind and do mind reading, but they're very sensitive to other people's emotions. And that's part of why they shut down because they get so sensitive, and they get overwhelmed. And so basically, you feed off your child's emotions, when they're upset and distressed, you feel upset and distressed, right? And they feed off your emotions. So if you're frustrated, upset with yourself, they're feeling that but if you give yourself compassion, you know, so long and you know, he was like a mirror for me. When he was younger, we'd have these earsplitting tantrums. And I would find if I got frustrated or overwhelmed, his tantrums would just ramp up. But if I could give myself compassion, if I can say, this is so hard for me right now, I'm feeling overwhelmed. I'd like, say kind things to myself, I put my hand on my heart, it kind of flood myself with this loving, connected presence, and he would calm down, because you know, empathic resonance goes both ways. So our kids are feeding off of not only what we say, but also our internal mind, state, human beings are designed to feel the emotions of others. That's how our brains work. So what you cultivate inside can actually directly help regulate your child's emotion. I'm not saying it's like magic, you know, sometimes there's still gonna have the tantrum and all that. But it really does help. So it's not just good for you. It can also be good for your child.

- Debbie: Yeah, I mean, and I've experienced that and varying degrees, depending on where I am in my life, and what's what's happening in my world. But you know, what you're saying it's just such an important reminder of, this is the kind of work I feel like so many of us think I don't have time to do this. Right now I'm dealing with all this stuff, I can add this on. But this is the work. Like taking the time to do this is perhaps the most powerful thing we can do.
- Kristin: Yeah, the good news is you don't have to sit and meditate for 30 minutes, you don't have to take any extra time, you do it in the moment, in the moment that your child is screaming their head off, you're feeling overwhelmed. You just hold whatever pain you're experiencing in this loving, connected presence. You know, it doesn't take any time to say to yourself, Wow, this is so hard, you know, how can I help myself in this moment? Or, you know, just kind of having that, that sympathy for yourself? Or just remembering this as part of the human experience? You know, I'm not alone doesn't take any extra time. The time you practice is when you're in pain, or you're suffering.
- Debbie: Right. So we have lots of opportunity. Lots of opportunity. Yeah. So all right, let me just ask one more question. I was talking with my son earlier, my son is 16. And I told him, I was interviewing you. And I said, she's written this really great book about self compassion. He's like, I could use some self compassion. And I'm like, Well, you know, you can read the book. But, but I'd love to know, especially right now, you know, as we're recording this, we are still in the kind of the midst of this COVID-19 pandemic, kids are mostly doing remote learning things feel so difficult for them right now. And so do you have any kind of specific thoughts on how we can support kids and start to play with this idea of self compassion? Maybe particularly teenagers?
- Kristin: Yeah, well, so. So you know, well, we've developed the mindful self compassion program, which is aimed at adults, there's actually a teen version on the program called making friends with yourself. And so if people go to the Center for Mindful Self Compassion, if you Google that you'll find the website. And there are programs people can take online. And there are workbooks again, so we have the workbook mindful self compassion workbook, which, as a parent, you could even go through some of the exercises with your kid. But there is also a version of preteens at teen workbook, and I'm blanking on the name, but you'll find it if you go to the resources page on my website, which is selfcompassion.org. So there are resources out there. That's the good news, we've really figured out. How do we teach this to others, it's not just a good idea. There are many, many well developed empirically researched practices that you can use. And I would really suggest doing it as a family. You know, it's not like you don't want to tell your kids Hey, you need self compassion. They're gonna react like, Oh, that's thanks. One more thing I gotta do is gonna seem like a chore. You don't want to force it down anyone's throat. But if you talk about how, you know why I really want to do this to help me, you know, and kind of come from a first person perspective. And then you can kind of invite your child into that, well, maybe you know, is this something we maybe should work together, you can do practices together, you can do meditations together. I have lots of guided practices on my website, for

instance, you listen to you together if you want, if your child's interested. And you had to be a little gingerly about it. Again, you don't want to shove it down someone's throat because they aren't going to accept it. I really think the best way is to talk about how it's helping yourself. And you could kind of say, what would you say that to, you know, your good friend or the good friend is? And they would probably say No what? Well, what do you think would happen? If you told your best friend what you just said to yourself? While they feel sad, I would heart? Do you think the same thing is happening to you? I mean, so this is like, basic logic that you can use.

Debbie: It's great. So for listeners who are listening to this conversation, and they, it's resonating with them, what is one, you know, after they're done listening to this episode, and they really want to hold on to something that they might take with him throughout the day applying a situation? Do you have the kind of one thing that they could start with?

Kristin: Yeah, yeah, well, it's a good to achieve slightly two things, but they go together. So the next time you're really stressed, or you're feeling overwhelmed, or you're feeling sad or worried, just try putting your hand on your heart or if the heart doesn't feel good on your face, or your stomach, some place that feels good to have your hand on your body. And just say, What would I say to a good friend to help a good friend, to comfort them and let them know I'm here for them in this moment? Just think about that? What would I say? And then try saying to yourself in the same tone of voice, that kind of warm, supportive tone of voice and see what happens?

Debbie: Wow, Kristin, thank you so much. So many things to think about. I feel calmer. So thank you for that. And you've shared lots of great resources, listeners, I will include those on the show notes. Are there any other places besides your website that people can connect with you?

Kristin: What my website really is the best place -- self-compassion.org. I've got tons of resources. And alternatively, if you want to get training and self compassion, everyone's doing anything, everything by zoom these days, you can get online training and self compassion through the center for mindful self compassion. And you can also get there from my website. But that's really the place to start. And I have my first book self compassion, where I talk a lot about my experience with my son Ron and his autism, so that if that appeals to you, I would start there. We also have the Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook, which has like 37 exercises you can do. And we also have a guide for professionals, if you're like a caregiver or therapist, and you want to integrate this stuff into your professional life.

Debbie: So great. Yeah. And I highly recommend your book. And I checked out the workbook and even just in your book itself, you have so many great exercises throughout and I'm one of those people who loves doing exercises and books very much. I love the practical, tangible takeaways. So thank you for that. So all right, well, thank you again, for this conversation is super interesting, and I'm really grateful that you shared all this with us today.

Kristin: Oh, you're welcome, Debbie. My pleasure.

RESOURCES MENTIONED:

- Dr. Kristin Neff's website
- *Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself* by Dr. Kristin Neff
- *The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook: A Proven Way to Accept Yourself, Build Inner Strength, and Thrive* by Kristin Neff
- *Teaching the Mindful Self-Compassion Program: A Guide for Professionals* by Kristin Neff and Christopher Germer
- Center for Mindful Self-Compassion

