

Therapy Chat Episode 311



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[00:00:00] **Laura Reagan:** Therapy chat podcast, episode 311.

[00:00:04] **Announcer:** This is the therapy chat podcast with Laura Reagan LCSW-C. The information shared in this podcast is not a substitute for seeking help from a licensed mental health professional. And now here's your host, Laura Reagan LCSW-C.

[00:00:32] **Laura Reagan:** thank you to sunset lake CBD for sponsoring this week's Episode use promo code chat for 20% off your entire order@sunsetlakecbd.com. Sunset lake CBD is a farmer owned, small business

that shifts crafts CBD products directly from their farm outside of Burlington, Vermont to your door. Sunset lake CBD has something for everyone.

[00:00:52] **Laura Reagan:** They offer tinctures edibles solves and coffee designed to help with sleep stress and sore muscles. Sunset lake CBD, customer support, regenerative agriculture that preserves the health of the land and creates meaningful employment in the community. Farm workers are paid a living wage and employees own the majority of the company.

[00:01:11] **Laura Reagan:** Remember use promo code chat to get 20% off your entire order@sunsetlakecbd.com.

[00:01:21] **Laura Reagan:** Hey everyone. It's me. Laura Reagan just wanted to make sure that you know about what I've got going on this summer. I don't think I've really talked about it much here, which is silly, but in case you didn't hear, I did start a second podcast called trauma chat. Which is really for anyone who wants to understand what trauma is and how it shows up in our lives.

[00:01:47] **Laura Reagan:** As you've heard me say, if you've listened to this show, I've mentioned a million times that people tend to think that. Something that happens to someone else, something horrific and unthinkable unspeakable. And that is true. Trauma is that, but it's also experiences that are very commonly shared among many of us, most of us. On trauma chat, I break down what trauma is. in hopefully understandable language. That's not stigmatizing. I know I couldn't have possibly captured every thought there is about trauma and every aspect of trauma and how it shows up, but I hope that trauma chat will be helpful to people who really don't understand what trauma is.

[00:02:35] **Laura Reagan:** And maybe wondering, do I have trauma, you know, or wanting to better understand what someone they care about is going through. And most importantly, how to get help. If you have experienced trauma, what to look for, how to describe your experiences or how to find the words that, that name, what you've been through so that you can then connect with whatever type of resource support, whether it's therapy or a podcast that you'd like to listen to, to learn more about it or.

[00:03:06] **Laura Reagan:** An article, another website. This is my hope in creating trauma chat. And the second part of that is the new trauma therapists network community that I'm creating. It's unbelievable to say this because I've been laboring behind the scenes. To bring this to you for a long time. Starting in around 2018 is when I first had the idea.

[00:03:31] **Laura Reagan:** And then the process of getting from there to here has been slow and with many twists and turns, but I'm creating a community for. People who have experienced trauma to find help for trauma therapists, to find other trauma therapists to network with and refer to, and gather and collaborate and share ideas and hopefully come together in person in, in gatherings that I don't know if there'll be able to happen in 2021, but maybe by 2022, we can have in-person gathering.

[00:04:06] **Laura Reagan:** Of trauma therapists to provide support to one another and combat the isolation of trauma work. Even if you work in a large agency or group practice, trauma work is so isolating. It's just part of the nature of it and connecting with other people who get it. It's so valuable. The participants in my trauma therapists, consult groups share how useful they find them to be because we're in our offices doing our work, and then we go home and it can be really hard to receive the same kind of support that you give to your clients.

[00:04:41] **Laura Reagan:** So I hope that trauma therapists network will be a useful resource for you, whether you are. Trying to find more information about trauma, or if you are a trauma therapist, yourself to learn more, please go to trauma therapist, network.com. The website is not live yet as of June 28th when I'm recording this, but it will be live by August 1st, if all goes well.

[00:05:07] **Laura Reagan:** And hopefully there may be even a soft launch before. A beta version. So please go to trauma therapists, network.com, where you can find a free download and sign up to be notified. As soon as it officially goes live, whether you are a therapist or just someone who wants to learn more about trauma, there's a download there for you, different ones for each group.

[00:05:31] **Laura Reagan:** And I hope that this resource that I've really created from the heart will bring healing to more people. I really. People who have experienced trauma to be able to find the right kind of support. And that's why I created the trauma therapist network. I hope you will join me there. Like I said, you can get more information by going to www dot trauma therapist, network.com, where you can sign up to be notified.

[00:06:00] **Laura Reagan:** As soon as the official website goes. Which will be in August of 2021. If you're hearing this after August, 2021, go there and hopefully you will find the site and you'll see everything that it has to offer. I cannot wait. This is such a labor of love, something that I've really poured my heart into. And I'm just so excited for you to see it.

[00:06:22] **Laura Reagan:** Thank you so much for your support.

[00:06:28] **Laura Reagan:** Hi, welcome back to therapy chat. I'm your host, Laura Reagan today, as we are recovering from the holidays and getting to think towards a new year, I'm bringing you a replay episode. My interview with Dr. Kristin Neff, the researcher who is responsible for making. Self-compassion a household name. And Kristin was my guest about 40 episodes back from 30 episodes back on episode 2 83.

[00:06:59] **Laura Reagan:** And she talks about fierce self-compassion, which is in contrast to the type of self-compassion she taught us about initially we call she calls gentle self-compassion. So gentle self-compassion is the yin and fierce self-compassion is the yang and we need both. So she explains this and I think this is an apt conversation to revisit as we move through the holidays and into the new year.

[00:07:28] **Laura Reagan:** And we're thinking about how we want to show up in life. So I hope you will enjoy this as much as I enjoyed interviewing her. Last reminder for 2021, haha. That if you're a therapist who specializes in trauma, or if you work with trauma survivors, hint, trauma survivors make up a huge portion of clinical population.

[00:07:50] **Laura Reagan:** So even if you don't think you work with trauma survivors, you probably do. But if you have the specialized skills to work with trauma survivors so that you can help them. Consider joining trauma therapist network. We have a directory where people can go to find a trauma therapist and the offerings are increasing, but the price won't for founding members.

[00:08:16] **Laura Reagan:** So if you lock your price in right now or before February 1st, 2022, you can subscribe as a founding member for \$33 a month to the trauma therapist directory, which is on trauma therapist network. Of course the network is free for anyone who wants to get information, but for a therapist to have a listing it's \$33 a month and the price is going up February 1st, starting March 1st.

[00:08:41] **Laura Reagan:** There will be weekly content updates for all members, including those who joined after February 1st at the higher price. Everyone who joins will get access to all of the past content that has been posted weekly, just for therapists. And this includes trainings, consultation calls, and we'll still have our community calls once a quarter as well.

[00:09:06] **Laura Reagan:** So I'm really excited to bring all of this to you. If you're trauma therapist, please do consider joining at trauma therapists, network.com. Happy new year to you all. And I'll catch it in 2022.

[00:02:57] My guest today is Dr. Kristin Neff. [00:03:00] Kristin, thank you so much for being my guest on Therapy Chat today.

[00:03:03] **Kristin Neff:** [00:03:03] I'm happy to be here, Laura. Thanks for having me. Yeah.

[00:03:06] **Laura Reagan:** [00:03:06] So happy too, and can we just start off by you telling our audience a little bit about who you are and what you do?

[00:03:12] **Kristin Neff:** [00:03:12] Yeah. So, uh, my son calls me the self-compassion lady. So I'm the self-compassion lady, right? So I started researching, well, I'm a, I'm an associate professor at a University of Texas at Austin. So I'm a researcher. And for almost the past 20 years, I've been researching self-compassion in particular. And then about the last 10 years, I've been developing ways to teach people how to become more self-compassionate. So that's really what I do. I research and I teach self-compassion.

[00:03:42] **Laura Reagan:** [00:03:42] Yes. And, um, so I just want to acknowledge what a difference you're making in the world by doing this because, uh, you know, I know for me, it's really changed my life and I know so many people, my clients, my family members, my husband said, if you get a chance to tell her I love her work, [00:04:00] so let's give the audience, would you please tell people a little bit about really what is self-compassion for anyone who hasn't heard of it?

[00:04:10] **Kristin Neff:** [00:04:10] Yeah, so self-compassion is really, you know, quite simply compassion turned inward. So, if we think of what compassion is, compassion is concerned for the alleviation of suffering, right?

[00:04:21] It's this kind of sense of, I care I want to help in some way. And so, we quite naturally do that for others. And I think we evolved to be compassionate to others because if we did that, you know, our DNA passed on or to our kids who survived, but it's not so natural to do it for ourselves. And so self-compassion is quite simply, it's just doing that u- turn and giving ourselves the same kindness, care, warm, support that we can naturally give to those we care about.

[00:04:50] **Laura Reagan:** [00:04:50] Yeah. And, and what I've experienced myself is that when I give myself more compassion, I have more compassion for others. [00:05:00] So, you know, it's easier to care for other people and understand what drives their behavior when I'm giving myself more compassion.

[00:05:08] **Kristin Neff:** [00:05:08] Right. Exactly. So, I mean, it's actually, doesn't appear to be true empirically that you have to have self-compassion before you give compassion to others, because a lot of people are actually truly compassionate to others, really kind and caring to others and aren't good to themselves. But what we find is when you increase in self compassion, not only does it increase your ability to give to others, but really importantly, it allows you to sustain giving to others without burning out. So, it provides more resources to be able to be compassionate and caring for others.

[00:05:40] **Laura Reagan:** [00:05:40] That's so important in the helping professions, which, you know, many people listening are therapists. And yeah. So, one of the things that I'm really curious about in this new fierce self-compassion paradigm as you talk about harnessing kindness to speak up, claim your [00:06:00] power and thrive. So, can you talk about how fierce self-compassion is different?

[00:06:05] **Kristin Neff:** [00:06:05] Yeah. So, there are different ways to alleviate suffering, right? So, one way is what I like to call tender self-compassion and this is really all about unconditional self-acceptance.

[00:06:17] Right? So, we accept that we're imperfect. Um, you know, we, we care for ourselves anyway. It's very different than self-esteem is kind of an unconditional sense of self-worth. It's more of a gentle, tender, nurturing energy. Um, but to alleviate our suffering, you know, although we need to accept ourselves, we don't want to accept all our behaviors.

[00:06:39] If our behaviors aren't healthy, it's not compassionate to accept those. And we also don't want to accept all our situations. You know, if we're in a toxic relationship or really unhealthy work situation, it's actually not compassionate just to let that slide. Right. So, so if we really care about ourselves, we're going to do whatever we can to change our behaviors under [00:07:00] situations so that we suffer less. Right. And I like to call this fear side of self-compassion. It's really the action-oriented side of compassion.

[00:07:09] And there's three main ways that it manifests, or there are probably more, but at least three that I've developed. One is a self protection, right? So

drawing boundaries, saying no, even getting angry when necessary to protect ourselves to speak up, to stand up for ourselves.

[00:07:25] That's a really important part of self-compassion. Uh, also providing for our needs, right. Instead of just always saying yes to others, you know. Yes, I'll do what you want actually saying, you know, my needs count too, and I'm going to take action. I'm going to spend time and energy and maybe even money if I need to, to actually meet my own needs.

[00:07:43] In other words, I count too. And then finally motivating change. I actually, the biggest barrier to self-compassion is people think that it will undermine their motivation. It's because they don't understand fierce self-compassion. Part of, part of caring for yourself is reaching your [00:08:00] goals, learning from your mistakes. But the thing is you do it not out of a sense of insufficiency, like beating yourself up if you fail or thinking I'm a failure, if I fail, no, you aren't a failure. You can still tenderly unconditionally, accept yourself for failing. And yet part of being compassionate is saying, but what can I learn from this failure? How could I do better next time? Because I care about myself and doing it with encouragement as opposed to harsh self-judgment.

[00:08:25] So this is really a fierce and tender self-compassion. And I wrote the book for women primarily, just because we need both, right. It's like yin and yang. We need both to balance, both energies to be healthy and whole. The traditional gender role socialization interferes with the ability to find balance.

[00:08:44] So for men, it actually, it makes it hard for men to be tender toward themselves. I mean, boys are called names if they're too sensitive or tender, and that really harms men because it cuts them off from this really efficient source of coping and resilience, which is unconditional [00:09:00] self-acceptance. Um, and, but for women, it's the opposite, right?

[00:09:03] Women are allowed to be tender at least to others, not themselves, but they aren't allowed to be fierce. Right. They aren't allowed to be too competent or too agentic or

too angry. And those harms women cause it actually disempowers them. And it means, they're always saying yes to others and a lot of women have issues, you know, getting angry because people don't like angry women or even too competent people don't like competent woman. Um, and so it's, it's so both men and women need to be in the center, but the way they're off balance is a little bit different depending on how you've been socialized. So that's why I wrote my

book for women in particular, but anyone can benefit from tender and fierce self-compassion.

[00:09:41] **Laura Reagan:** [00:09:41]

[00:09:41] Yeah. And mentioned that yin and yang. And I've heard you use that before talking about self-compassion, but can you explain what that is for anyone who's listening and doesn't know?

[00:09:50] **Kristin Neff:** [00:09:50] Yeah so yin and yang it comes from Chinese philosophy everyone's seen the symbol, dark and light, and they kind of form a non-dualism at their core, that they're kind of interrelated.

[00:09:59] So [00:10:00] Yin is traditionally more of a soft, yielding, gentle energy, of life. And yang is more of a, you know, hard, active action oriented, powerful energy of life. And from the perspective of Chinese philosophy, you need both and they need to be in balance and integrated and yin and yang map on really closely to fierce and tender self-compassion right. So fierce is more of the yang energy, uh, yin is more of the, um, tender energy. And again, even though we, we kind of intuitively know, we need both to be healthy and whole because we've gendered these things, we've actually made it almost impossible for people to be healthy and whole by saying, you could only really develop and express one side of this, um, you know, uh, duality.

[00:10:43] So, uh, that's really what the book is about is trying to help people find that balance.

[00:10:48] **Laura Reagan:** [00:10:48] That's beautiful. And I think the timing is perfect for this because we're in this time where people are saying the way things have been not working.

[00:10:59] **Kristin Neff:** [00:10:59] Yeah.

[00:10:59] **Laura Reagan:** [00:10:59] A [00:11:00] lot of people have been disempowered by

our culture, women, and many marginalized groups.

[00:11:05] And, you know, it's like, we can't just say, oh, that's okay. I understand you're human.

[00:11:14] **Kristin Neff:** [00:11:14] Yeah. Yeah. Right. Exactly. No, absolutely. I mean, one of the criticisms, I don't know if it's fair or not, but one

of the criticisms of the mindfulness and compassion movement, which is happening is that well, yeah, it's all very well for you to be happy and healthy on your meditation cushion.

[00:11:28] But meanwhile, the world's going to hell in a hand basket, right? What are you doing about it? And so, and again, that would be imbalanced, right? So too much, too much

acceptance and tenderness without enough fierceness becomes complacency and that's not good, but you know, we, we need to make change. We need to stand up.

[00:11:45] We need to speak up. On the other hand too much fierceness, it's all about like do do, do in some ways, our world, that's the problem. In the world so far, it's like exploding resources and doing it and achieving with no tender acceptance. That's not healthy either. So, we [00:12:00] really do need to attain balance.

[00:12:02] Um, and to do that I think we are going to have to confront things like patriarchy, you know, the systems that exist because the systems in place benefit some people more than others, right. Basically, benefit white men, you know, just say it out loud. Um, benefit men, benefit people in power. And so, in a way it's kind of, Ooh, I had a lot of fun writing the book because you know, the personal is political.

[00:12:27] Right. So, getting comfort, comfortable with your anger, with your fierceness, with being self assertive, all of those things in yourself also gives you the ability to change the world.

[00:12:38] **Laura Reagan:** [00:12:38] Yeah. Yeah. And I mean, I, I feel that so much with, um, the protest movements that have been happening over the past year in particular.

[00:12:50] Um, but you know, but obviously much longer than that too.

[00:12:54] **Kristin Neff:** [00:12:54] I mean, if you look, Martin Luther King or Ghandi, the way that, the way they advocated for social change [00:13:00] with compassion, they were all about the balance of yin and yang, you know, a fierceness and tenderness, and they were incredibly effective movements.

[00:13:07] And so I, you know, I didn't, obviously I didn't come up with this idea. That's not a new idea, but it needs to be spoken about over and over again, because I think it really is the only way forward.

[00:13:17] **Laura Reagan:** [00:13:17] Yeah. And you see the culture tries to squash dissent, even as we have freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, but, you know, it's, it's, there's a whole narrative about destruction that isn't really as destructive as it's being portrayed. And right now there's a lot of ways that voices are trying- are being disempowered and being disenfranchised.

[00:13:41] **Kristin Neff:** [00:13:41] And lot of these are internalized voices, right? And so I'm not going to, you know, there's a lot of different disenfranchised people like there's internalized racism and stuff.

[00:13:50] But so my book, I don't really go into that as much as I talk about the sexism. So in some ways, traditional gender roles, socialization is [00:14:00] internalized sexism because women are taught that they aren't powerful, that they aren't allowed to get angry. That, you know, people don't like them if they're too competent.

[00:14:08] I mean, the research literature is really horrible. If you look at you two exact same resumes, exact same qualification school and everything. People assume that the resume

with the name, Steve honored, as opposed to Susan, Steve is more competent and he should be paid more money, he's a better leader, you know, this isn't conscious.

[00:14:26] If you ask people who's more competent nowadays, people actually say that they think women are probably more competent, but unconsciously, all these stereotypes have been internalized. And the women do it to the other woman as well, unconsciously. And that's why I'm unpacking this and really making it conscious and consciously developing this fear side is important.

[00:14:48] And here's the thing. Um, it's true that people may not like us quite as much if we're fierce and we stand up for ourselves and we stop saying yes to everything people want, they may like, I don't know. I liked her better [00:15:00] before when she was totally compliant. And so, part of what self-compassion gives you is it makes you less dependent on other people's approval.

[00:15:06] And not that you want to be rude or mean or anything, but, you know, it's like, well, actually my approval comes from my self, I don't need to like subordinate myself to you just so that you'll like me, whether it's a husband or, you know, work, or whatever it is, uh, it really gives you a lot of power, self-compassion. I like to joke that it's a superpower that's in our back pocket that we don't even know it's here. Um, it was just like a moment away- treating yourself like you would treat someone you really cared about. And the other metaphor I like to use really resonates with woman, but again, it's for all people is tender self-compassion maybe metaphorically, like mother, the ideal gentle, nurturing, accepting energy and fierce self-compassion compassion is like mama bear, fierce mama bear. You know, you want to see someone fierce, you, you try to attack mama bears, Cubs. You know, you'll, you'll be, you'll be off. You'll be an odd, the power there.

[00:15:57] And we all have that inside of us. You know, and [00:16:00] sometimes it comes out with our children. It was allowed to come out in that context. So that's why I talk about harnessing kindness, harnessing that fierce, protective, loving, caring energy that we can show to our children or people we really love, and making that U-turn and using it for ourselves.

[00:16:17] **Laura Reagan:** [00:16:17] That's what seems so complicated because the, the mama bear idea, it is culturally sanctioned and encouraged. You fight for your children. You do anything. You have to do, if bus is coming towards your children, you step in front of that bus and stop it, you know? But, um, yeah. How do we do that for ourselves? Like that is so socially out of, out of line you know, to, to be like, no, And that's not okay with me and things like that.

[00:16:48] **Kristin Neff:** [00:16:48] Self-compassion is a practice, right? It's a practice. So, you know, you know, in the mindful self-compassion program, we've dealt a lot of exercises and meditations. And in the book, I have adapted a lot of those [00:17:00] specifically to develop more the fierce quality of self-compassion.

[00:17:03] So it's something you need to do consciously and practice it. And the nice thing is you'll probably get it wrong. And then you can use the tender self-compassion, it's okay to

get it wrong and everyone gets it wrong. So, I need to keep on trying. Right. Um, and it is, it is a path. It's a process. It's not like you get there.

[00:17:21] It's not like you ever arrive at some destination. You've got it all together. You'll continually get it wrong, but it's a really way of orienting toward life and having access to both our fierce and tender energy. It's going to help us be stronger, more capable, um, get through the difficult situations more easily.

[00:17:39] You know, it's it's and again, it's not rocket science, that's the thing. It's not, it's not even as complicated as meditation, or maybe you want to quiet the mind and all that. We have access to it more easily with that, that feeling of caring concern. So once we practice giving that to ourselves, then it starts to become more natural, even things like standing up for ourselves, [00:18:00] and being willing to take risks. Cause it is scary when you stand up for yourself. But when you, when the bottom line is, you know, if the person rejects me, it's going to be okay, because I'm there for myself. It gives you a lot of power to take more risks.

[00:18:13] **Laura Reagan:** [00:18:13] Yeah. That makes sense to me because obviously mindful self-compassion, the tender side that we're more used to, isn't just something you try one time and then you've got it and it's all figured out.

[00:18:27] **Kristin Neff:** [00:18:27] Yeah. Yeah. It is a practice. It is a practice. Um, and, and it is continual. On the other hand, it's, it's actually, it's easiest just relating to yourself, like a friend in that moment, again, you know, so in a way it's a practice, but it's not a difficult practice.

[00:18:42] Um, it's just something you need to choose to do. It's really about giving yourself permission. Um, and then once you give yourself permission, it's not that hard. Now for some people it's more challenging, like depending on early family history. Right? So it can be scary, more traumatic and that's why therapy is so, um, important.

[00:19:00] [00:19:00] In fact, I, what the research seems to be suggesting is what makes good therapy is the therapist who helps their client have more self-compassion, even if they don't use that word, even if they don't like do exercises, what you're trying to do is get, get the client, help the client be healthier outside of the office.

[00:19:17] Right. Which is really self-compassion. And so that is naturally what therapists do. Um, but when it's explicit, so the therapist helps the client do it explicitly, then it makes it even more portable that therapy when the client is on their own, you know, for some people it does really help to have a helping hand, especially if there's early family trauma, things like that.

[00:19:40] Um, you know, some people need to go a little more slowly than others, take baby steps, but it can be done. I mean, that's, that's what the research shows. Even people with really complex trauma, they can learn more self-compassion.

[00:19:51] **Laura Reagan:** [00:19:51] Yeah and I've seen it myself and, you know, I think something that you're bringing to mind when you say that is that I [00:20:00] know with my

clients and I've experienced it myself too, where doing mindful self-compassion practices because I'm feeling a lot. And then suddenly the feeling gets like bigger, kind of feels worse all of a sudden, I'm like, oh no, that's not what, that's not what I'm going for. Or clients will say, oh no, did I do it wrong? Is it, you know, why am I now having all these negative thoughts about myself?

[00:20:25] **Kristin Neff:** [00:20:25] Yeah. Yeah. Well, and that's natural. We actually have a term for it. Chris Grimmer, my colleague came up with this term. He calls it backdraft, right? It's like a pile's on fire. If you just fling open the doors of a house. And the fresh air rushes in. It's going to ignite with the fire, the flames inside, and may, may spew out really powerfully. And you know, many of us, the way we've gotten through life is closing the doors of our heart, we had done to survive.

[00:20:49] And then you start opening the doors of your heart and all this stuff comes out you had shoved down in there and it's actually a good sign. We want it to come out, right? Because it's affecting [00:21:00] you, even if you aren't feeling it, even if you're numb to it. But, if possible, in threesome firefighters have those pics, as they poke holes around the perimeter of the house, like to let the air in more slowly.

[00:21:09] That's what we want to do. We want to practice self compassion in a way that's compassionate. And that sometimes means going more slowly, you know, putting your toe in and taking it out and, you know, um, distracting yourself if it gets overwhelming, grounding your feet in the floor, really stabilizing yourself.

[00:21:27] Sometimes you put the stuff in a drawer to come back to later, you know, mentally, because it's just too much right now, all those techniques, which therapists do to help, you know, if traumatic memories come up or disassociation comes up, you do need to be aware, especially for a therapist to be aware of those techniques, because backdraft is natural.

[00:21:46] It's actually to be expected. It's a good sign that you don't want to overwhelm people, but it also doesn't mean that you have to like to say, well, then that's just too hard for that person. They have no hope of ever being kind to themselves because of their history, that's not the case. [00:22:00] Because someone just needs to maybe go a little more slowly, but I found once you tell people about backdraft, like, oh, that makes sense. And then they can have a better relationship with the backdraft, even, you know, when people realized that doesn't mean they're doing it wrong, it means they're doing it right, it really seems to help.

[00:22:16] **Laura Reagan:** [00:22:16] It does. And I'll say for me, when that happened with me, uh, one particular time, I stopped what I was doing, started making a grocery list, which brought me back to like, you know, analytical thinking and out of my emotions. But then I went straight to my therapist as soon as I could. And we started working with it and it actually gave me an opportunity to address and begin healing something that I hadn't known was affecting me. So that's actually, that's what we want. Right. You can never heal what you don't know is there.

[00:22:48] **Kristin Neff:** [00:22:48] You can't heal what you can't feel.

[00:22:50] **Laura Reagan:** [00:22:50] Yes. Right? Yeah. So, um, I think another point that I would love for you to talk about a little, if you can, is, you know, you said [00:23:00] like the imbalance of yin and yang in self-compassion and how well something you said that I saw on your website was, tenderness without fierceness can become complacency, but fierceness without tenderness can become force and aggression. Yeah. Um, so is, do you address that in your book? Like how to work with that?

[00:23:21] **Kristin Neff:** [00:23:21] I almost feel like at ad nauseum. [00:23:24] **Laura Reagan:** [00:23:24] That's the whole book!

[00:23:26] **Kristin Neff:** [00:23:26] But you have to say it over and over again, because any point you make is like, because you have to be careful that you don't take it too extreme.

[00:23:32] You know, you do need the balance. So, yeah, so I have practices like I have a breathing yin and yang meditation where you actually balance the energies. All the practices, which evoke this fierce energy, I usually end with the bringing in intentionally in the more tender energy to allow them to merge and mingle and integrate.

[00:23:50] So you do have to be intentional about it. Um, and that's what I really tried to do in the book is help people find concrete ways to do that.

[00:23:58] **Laura Reagan:** [00:23:58] Yeah, that's wonderful. And I [00:24:00] think one of the things that works really well in the way you teach mindful self-compassion just so, you know, for feedback for what it's worth is that the concrete exercises, sometimes it's a writing prompt or sometimes it's like, how would you treat a friend and things like that.

[00:24:16] It, it kind of brings it to where you can kind of be like an observer a little bit and, and a little less close to it. So, you can really think through it.

[00:24:25] **Kristin Neff:** [00:24:25] Yeah.

[00:24:26] **Laura Reagan:** [00:24:26] Yeah.

[00:24:26] **Kristin Neff:** [00:24:26] That's what we tried to do.

[00:24:30] **Laura Reagan:** [00:24:30] Well, I'm personally waiting for my copy that I hope will be delivered like as soon as it comes out, which is June 15th, right?

[00:24:39] Yeah. And I know that this book is it's the right time. It's really going to help so many people. So I'm so grateful to you for doing it.

[00:24:49] **Kristin Neff:** [00:24:49] Thank you, Laura. Yes. It's been a pleasure talking with you. Yeah.

[00:24:52] **Laura Reagan:** [00:24:52] Yes. I'm so grateful that you took the time to be with me today here. And where can people find everything, you're doing?

[00:24:59] **Kristin Neff:** [00:24:59] Well, so if you [00:25:00] just Google self-compassion, you'll find me, you know, self-compassion.org, but it doesn't matter how you spell it. You'll find me. And I have a new fierce self-compassion page and I have practices, fierce self-compassion practices, regulars, tender self-compassion practices, and I've got exercises.

[00:25:17] And if you're a research nerd, I got research there. You can, uh, a lot of therapists send their clients to my site because you can actually take the self-compassion scale and get a score, which can be useful. And it codes it for you and everything. So that's probably the best place to start selfcompassion.org.

[00:25:35] **Laura Reagan:** [00:25:35] Yeah. Okay. Wonderful. And one of the things that's so cool about that scale is it tells you about like self-kindness, self-criticism, self judgment...

[00:25:44] **Kristin Neff:** [00:25:44] Various sub- scales, right? It breaks it out for you by sub- scale yeah, it's useful.

[00:25:49] **Laura Reagan:** [00:25:49] Yeah. Yeah. Because you might think that you're high in self compassion, but it turns out you're also high in self judgment and it's like,

[00:25:54] **Kristin Neff:** [00:25:54] oh, right. Yeah. Yeah, exactly.

[00:25:57] **Laura Reagan:** [00:25:57] Well, thank you again, Dr. Neff for [00:26:00] being on

Therapy Chat today. I can't wait to share this with our audience.

[00:26:04] **Kristin Neff:** [00:26:04] Your welcome thank you so much Laura.

[00:33:31] **Laura Reagan:** Thank you to sunset lake CBD for sponsoring this week's episode, use promo code chat for 20% off your entire order@sunsetlakecbd.com. Sunset lake CBD is a farmer owned, small business that shifts crops CBD products directly from their farm outside of Burlington, Vermont to your door. Sunset lake CBD has something for everyone.

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[00:34:21] **Laura Reagan:** And for more information and resources on trauma and healing from trauma, go to [www dot trauma therapists, network.com](http://www.traumatherapistsnetwork.com). Trauma therapists network is a community for therapists and a place for anyone to go to learn more about trauma and find resources and connect. [Www dot trauma therapist, network.com](http://www.traumatherapistnetwork.com).

[00:34:44] **Laura Reagan:** Thank you for listening to therapy. Chat

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