

Podcast 3

Hello and welcome to this week's Pockets of Pleasure.

Last week I spoke about why pockets of pleasure isn't an invitation to unrestrained hedonism and we also delved into the 8 senses. If you missed that episode you can find it by going to thesensorycoach.com/shownotes

This week's episode is dedicated to self compassion and why I believe it's the foundation upon which we can build a kinder world. We'll uncover what self compassion is, what it isn't, and why it matters, then we'll finish up with a few ideas on how to start practicing it, and of course the weekly Pocket Challenge will focus on bringing some self compassion to your days.

There's lots to get through so let's crack on.

What IS Self Compassion?

Self compassion is, quite simply, the act of treating ourselves kindly, it's viewing ourselves through the lens of loving kindness, being gentle with our own psyche and soul, forgiving ourselves for being human, treating ourselves as we'd treat someone we care deeply for.

Why do we find treating ourselves with compassion so hard?

We can find compassion for almost everyone else in our lives, but when it comes to us, not so much. We beat ourselves up, we diminish our achievements, we talk to ourselves in ways we'd (hopefully) never dream of talking to others.

We can find being compassionate to ourselves difficult for many reasons. It's likely to have been a self protective mechanism from childhood, something the culture in which we grew up foisted on us from a young age.

Don't get too big for your boots.

Who do you think you are?

What makes you think you're so special?

Don't be so selfish.

I'm sure there are a 100 more little digs that taught us from a young age that we don't deserve to treat ourselves kindly, that other people's needs trump our own.

It's because of this widely shared childhood experience that, in recent decades, there's been a big drive to increase our self esteem, as it became common knowledge that so many of us were plagued by low self esteem.

But the psychologists realised that this drive to increase self esteem wasn't as helpful as it should've been, instead high levels of self esteem were creating more narcissism, prejudice, discrimination, self righteous anger, self absorbed individuals - in other words - a less compassionate world.

So if you're a kind hearted compassionate soul, the last thing you'll want to become is ,one of them' those people it's easy to perceive as bad.

You can see this playing out every day on every social media channel.

Virtue signalling seeps under our skin day after day, and can leave us feeling that we're not doing enough, that WE are not enough.

Are we eating the best diet for the planet? Are we buying the best products for the planet? Are we part of the solution or part of the problem? Do we believe the right things? It's a lot of big stuff to tease apart, and sometimes it's just easier to take the short cut of agreeing with, and joining in with, the loudest voices.

Every aspect of life, it seems, has become polarised. You're on the right side or the wrong side. You're either with us or you're against us.

Opinions are binary whilst we're encouraged to embrace the diverse and the non binary.

There's no room left to listen and take on board diverse perspectives. It seems that the default setting for 21st century human opinion is judgementalism whilst pretending to be anything but, and preaching a ,just be kind' message at the same time. The mental gymnastics involved are exhausting.

How many times have you heard 'I'm not being judgmental but...'? ?

We judge others before they can judge us. We deride them as bad and, by default, claim the

badge of righteous goodness for ourselves. But we don't truly believe in our own goodness, how can we when our harsh inner critic is constantly reminding us about what a crappy person we are? It's an internal tug of war.

Whilst the world is fighting this inner battle, truth becomes distorted through the lens of fanaticism. We HAVE to stand fully in our loudly proclaimed beliefs because otherwise... who are we?

Our sense of self is so tied to our zeal that to even consider looking at another view point overwhelms our capacity to function. We have to believe we are good, not like those 'OTHERS'.

To question our worldview is to push the self destruct button, or so it seems.

And so we cling to our beliefs as though they were a lifejacket.

But what if the lifejackets are filled with lead weights, not keeping us afloat but dragging us beneath the surface? What would it take to cut loose from the thing that just might be drowning you?

This polarised toxicity is the backdrop against which we measure our rightness as a human being. Compassion has been squeezed out and, in my opinion, this all stems from our lack of self compassion.

Why? Because self compassion allows for self acceptance. It allows us the grace to be wrong (or right!) without our fragile veneer of self esteem crumbling. It allows us room to listen to dissenting voices, safe in the knowledge that it won't tear the core of our being apart to hear something that challenges us, that makes us consider a different view point, that maybe could change our mind.

As Gina Senarighi says: (Sen A Ree Ghee)

,Using self compassion doesnt mean letting yourself off the hook for missteps, but owning them and still holding space to love yourself.'

So much is spoken about self love these days, but without a foundation of self compassion, it's disingenuous and can be a dangerous path because the crucial thing to remember is that, without compassion for ourselves, there can't be true compassion for others.

As Kristin Neff says in her book *Self Compassion*, the proven power of being kind to yourself:

,If you are continually judging and criticising yourself while trying to be kind to others, you are drawing artificial boundaries and distinctions that only lead to feelings of separation and isolation.'

Dealing with our trauma and shame is required work if we want our children to have a future. To do that we must first learn to look inwards with compassion before turning outwards.

Well, that was all a bit heavy wasn't it? But we have to look at the consequences of our ingrained behaviours if we're going to change them for ones that serve us all better. I don't think it's going too far to say that life on earth is depending on us finding our self compassion, stat.

Ok, let's lower the blood pressure with a short burst of sound healing.

When we come back we'll be exploring how we can increase our self compassion and begin treading the path that will lead to the creation of a better life, for all of us.

MUSIC

Welcome back. In the first segment we looked into what self compassion is, what it isn't and why it matters so much.

Before we look at how we can grow our self compassion, I'm going to explain a little bit about why it's a key aspect of my philosophy as The Sensory Coach.

Ever since I created the idea of The Sensory Coach, one of the driving principles for me has been to help other people realise and acknowledge others differences. As someone who was relentlessly bullied for large parts of both my childhood and adulthood, I have come to hope that, through an understanding of the senses and sensory types, people can develop more compassion for others but first for themselves.

And I know it works because I've seen it in action, first in my own life and then in the lives of many of the people I've worked with.

When I was doing my aromatherapist training we had to create a blend that would help with anxiety. Anxiety and I have a long relationship, so creating this blend was, in the first instance, an entirely selfish exercise! It had to work for me. It became a precious tool in my anxiety kit and I created a little ritual around using it. It was so good that I couldn't keep it to myself, but I couldn't very well call it The cPTSD blend could I? Considering what it gave me, along with the guiding

principles of The Sensory Coach, it had to be The Self Compassion blend, it's my signature blend now and I still use it regularly. Im using it now as I'm trying not to beat myself up about how long this episode is taking me to create!

I still have a long way to go on my own self compassion journey - it's not easy to undo decades of self abuse - but the thing I realised is that no one else is going to do it for me. All the external praise and kind words in the world couldnt break through the protective but suffocating shell I'd created, it had to be taken apart from the inside out. Only I could do that.

It's a life's work that involves daily practice, but don't let that put you off! It gets easier and the great thing is, once that harsh inner critic begins to know its place, you become stronger, you start doing the things you'd never believe you could - like making a podcast! And before you know it, you've got yourself a self compassion snowball! The more momentum it gathers, the more energy you have to give to others, willingly, without feeling put upon or resentful, because now you 're learning about your own real needs you'll make time to meet them, you'll explore boundaries and set them, you'll realise your own worth and you will NOT want to go back to how you felt before you opened your heart to yourself!

Other people may struggle with this new version of you, but you'll have the ability to show them compassion, you'll be able to encourage them on their own exploration of inner kindness, and if they continue to treat you disrespectfully, you'll have the inner strength to do whatever needs to be done to maintain your boundaries without crumbling under the worry of what they'll think.

THAT is how self compassion changes the world for the better and that's why I'm so passionate about it.

So... how do you begin to cultivate self compassion in your own life?

Shall I tell you a secret?

You've already started!

These pockets of pleasure you've been looking for and filling, they served a bigger purpose than just pleasure.

Cheeky huh?

By starting to look for the moments of joy, you've begun to understand yourself and discover what brings you pleasure.

By giving yourself those small moments of respite from the world you've begun to value your own time.

By tuning in to your inner senses you've begun to listen to the wisdom of your own body.

You're already so much further along this journey than you realised!

I called The Sensory Coach methodology The Tree of Self Transformation. It's got 5 branches but it's a circular, self-perpetuating system.

the first branch is self knowledge -

the second is self compassion

the third is self nurture

the fourth is self expression

and the fifth is self determination

If any of that is ringing bells, it's because all of those things are stealthily built in to these pockets of pleasure you've been exploring.

Now the cat's out of the bag, and you know you've already been practicing a form of self compassion, after the break I'll share a way to dig in a bit deeper in this week's pocket challenge.

music

Welcome back let's get straight into this week's

pocket challenge :

Last week you were looking for inner pockets of pleasure by noticing what your internal senses were telling you.

This week's challenge adds another element of The Noticing to your day, which, if you make it a regular practice, will help you to make your pockets of pleasure even more nurturing.

This week, as you continue to fill up your pockets of pleasure, take a moment to notice any moments where you criticise yourself for enjoying a moment, where you berate yourself for not having a perfect moment, or judge yourself for 'wasting' time.

When you catch yourself in a moment of self criticism, put your right hand on your upper left arm and rub or pat gently, take a deep breath and simply say 'I am enough'. No judgement, no questioning, no exploring where that self abuse stems from, just a gentle, soothing, loving touch and the reminder that you are enough.

You can do this anywhere - no one will notice, you can even say the words 'I am enough' in your head if you need to, but if you can say them out loud do, using your voice is a more powerful experience than saying the words in the confines of your head. Releasing the frequency of those words beyond the inner boundaries of your body is a special kind of empowering magic.

I'm excited to find out how you get on with this exercise, it's one of my absolute favourites.

With December almost upon us I thought I'd create a nice seasonal gift for you - it's my Self Compassion Advent Calendar!

It's a set of 24 printable cards with a different quote about Self Compassion on the back. You could hang them on garland, pop them in a little box or your bag, you might add string to them and hang them all on a hook, taking one off each day, it's entirely up to you.

They're absolutely free, you don't even need to give me your email address. Feel free to share them with friends, strangers, loved ones - the more self compassion the kinder the world.

Sharing is caring 🤗

You can find the pdf on the shownotes page for this episode - go to thesensorycoach.com/shownotes and click on the link to episode 3.

Ok my lovelies this has been a long one. I hope it's been helpful.

in next week's podcast we're going to be exploring the magic of sound.

Don't forget to check out the show notes which includes the download for the Self Compassion Advent Cards along with a free shipping discount for the Self Compassion blend, the transcript, a couple of musical treats and recommended reading.

As always, do let me know how you get on with the Pocket Challenge - instagram
@thesensorycoach and hashtag [#TSCPockets](#)

Thanks for spending this time with me, I wish you a week filled with not just pockets of pleasure
but an abundance of loving kindness towards your beautiful self.

Bye for now