

three elements of
Self-Compassion
this season

The holiday season can be demanding, especially for USPS employees working hard to serve their communities. Self-compassion can help you stay grounded, reduce stress, and respond to challenges with more ease. Dr. Kristin Neff—a psychologist and pioneer in the field of self-compassion—identifies three core elements of self-compassion to help us care for ourselves—especially during busy times.

The Three Elements of Self-Compassion

1. Self-Kindness vs. Self-Judgment

- Be gentle with yourself when things don't go as planned.
- Replace critical thoughts with kind, encouraging words.
- Speak to yourself like you would to a friend.

2. Common Humanity vs. Isolation

- Remember that stress and struggles are part of being human.
- You're not alone in feeling overwhelmed.
- **Holiday Tip:** Remind yourself: "Others are going through this too."

3. Mindfulness vs. Over-Identification

- Notice your thoughts and emotions without getting caught in them.
- Create space to respond calmly instead of reacting automatically.
- **Holiday Tip:** Pause and take a few deep breaths before responding to stress.

Putting It Into Practice

- Use kind, patient words with yourself
- Acknowledge that others share similar pressures
- Take short breaks to breathe and reset
- Treat yourself with the care you'd offer someone else

Your EAP is here to support you through the season. If you're feeling overwhelmed, don't hesitate to reach out. Help is free, private, and available 24/7.