



Mindful Self- Compassion (MSC) Program Evaluation

*MSC Fundamental Concepts & Skills (MSC1D)
Course Assessment*

Prepared by: Margaret Davies, B.S., MPH
GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

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Introduction to Mindful Self-Compassion

Mindful Self Compassion (MSC) is an empirically supported program designed to cultivate the skill of mindfulness and self-compassion. Based on the groundbreaking research of Dr. Kristin Neff and the clinical expertise of Dr. Christopher Germer, MSC teaches core principles and practices that enable participants to respond to difficult moments in their lives with kindness and care.

Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council (CCSNPC) implements the MSC program using a public health approach for the primary prevention of suicide and for promoting and building resilience at a population-level. The program aims to serve the entire community including educators, students, health and behavioral health providers, youth-service providers, government and non-profit workers, parents, and community members. Unlike many highly-priced MSC classes offered in other parts of the U.S. and around the world, CCSNPC's workshops and materials are free to all Georgia participants wishing to learn and benefit from this program.

To ensure equity and access to the MSC resources for a wide range of professionals and community members, CCSNPC have developed a menu of diverse MSC training options (online and in-person), to include: 90-minute session (MSC90), 1-day workshop (MSC1D), 5-day intensive (MSC5D), 8-week course (MSC8W), Self-Compassion Training for Healthcare Communities (SCHC), Self-Compassion for First Responders (SCFR), and Self-Compassion-Focused Yoga (SCFY). The program also offers 60-minute Trauma-Sensitive Interactions (TSI) Training, Safety & Resilience School Training (combination of MSC and suicide prevention), and 15-minute Mindfulness Meditation sessions. Each of these training options helps participants acquire different levels of knowledge and skills for coping with immediate emotional needs as well as building longer-term behaviors.

CCSNPC's team of MSC teachers includes:

- Vira Salzburn, MSM, Program Director, Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council, MSC Trained Teacher.
- Amanda Meyer, Independent Program Consultant, MSC Teacher-in-Training, Trauma-Sensitive Yoga Instructor.
- Hannah Neal, MSW, Independent Program Consultant, MSC Teacher-in-Training.
- Fausta Luchini, Independent Program Consultant, MSC Teacher-in-Training, Trauma-Sensitive Consultant and Coach
- Jessica Matthewson, MSCJ, CPRP, Youth to Adult Program Manager (YTA) Gateway Community Service Board, MSC Teacher-in-Training

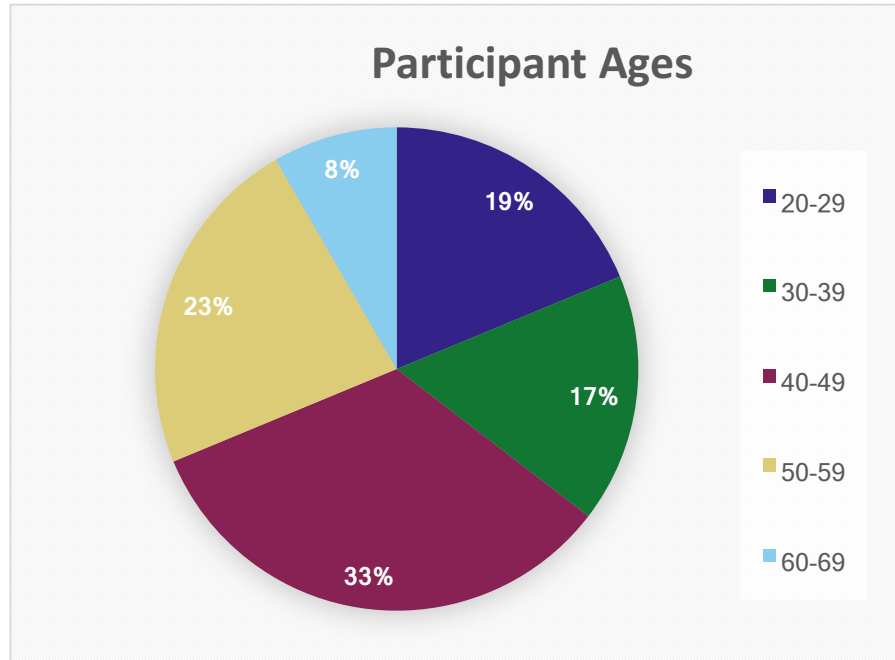
CCSNPC's MSC program tracks participant registration, and through pre-/post-workshop evaluation collects both quantitative and qualitative data to ensure continuous improvement of the MSC program and illustrate the impact (individuals' change in knowledge and skills).

This evaluation is specifically focused on the 1-day workshop (MSC1D) using pre-/post-workshop responses collected from 104 participants in 11 different workshops facilitated from December, 2019 to February, 2021.

Survey Results: Demographics

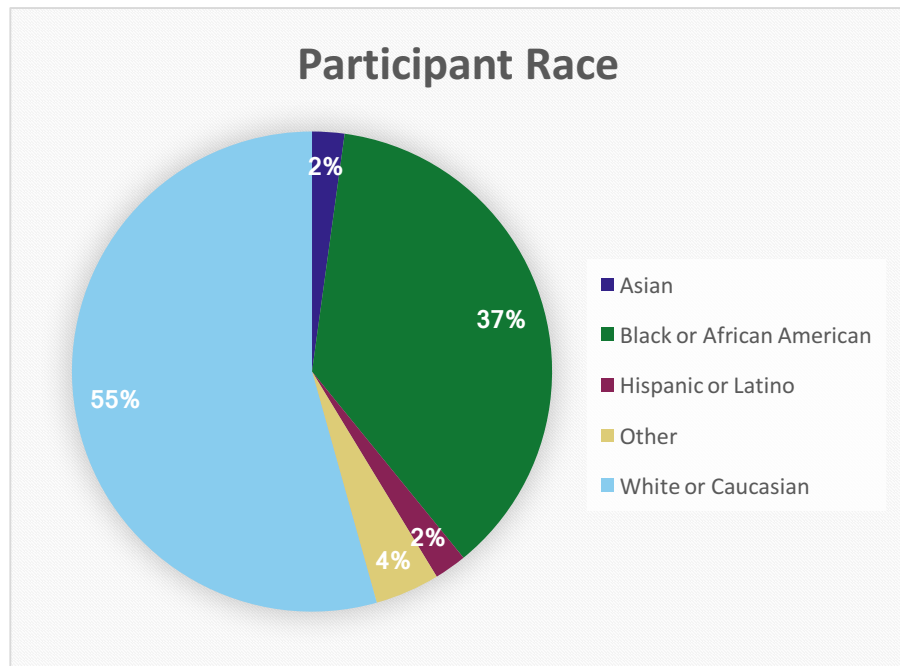
Age

Most participants were between the ages of 40 – 59 years old. 19% of participants were between 20 and 29 years of age, 17% between 30 – 39 years of age, 33% between 40 and 49, 23% between 50 and 59. 8% were between 60 – 69 years old. The program could likely benefit from involving more participants from younger age ranges, although the availability of younger people to participate in a full day of training should be considered.



Race

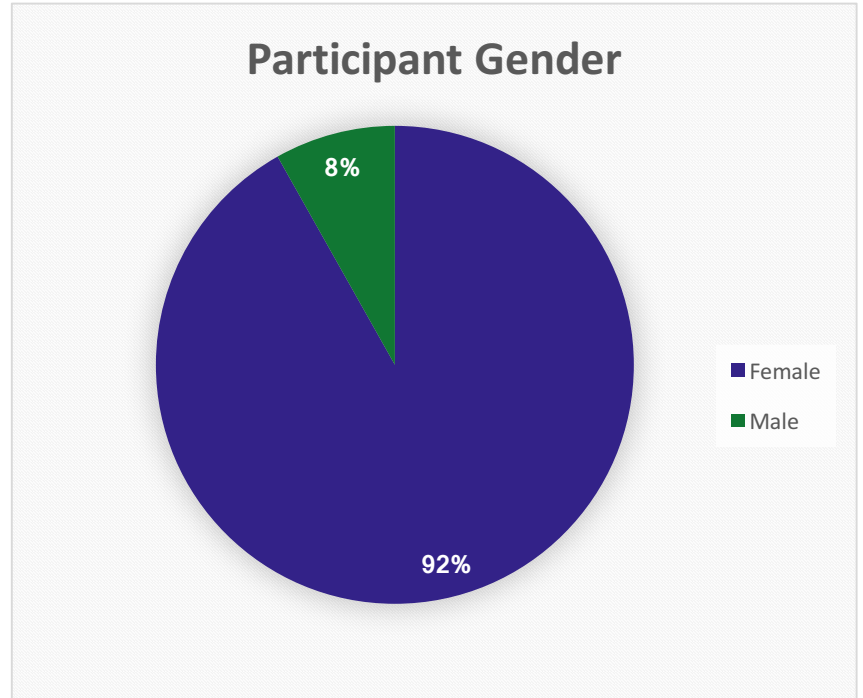
Most participants identified as white (55%). 37% identified as black or African American. The other 8% identified as Asian (2%), Hispanic or Latino (2%), or other (4%).



MINDFUL SELF COMPASSION 1-DAY COURSE PROGRAM EVALUATION

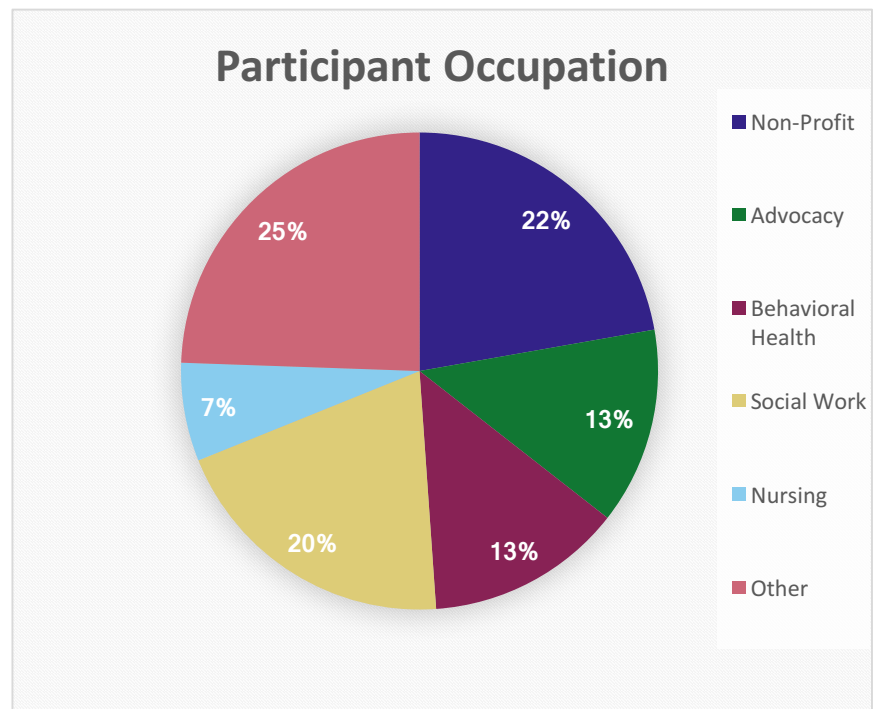
Gender

The overwhelming majority of participants identified as female, at 92%. 8% identified as male. An option was provided for 'other.'



Occupation

Occupations were mixed. 22% of participants stated they worked for a nonprofit organization. 13% were involved in advocacy work, and 13% worked in behavioral health. Social workers made up 20% of the participants. 7% said they were nurses or in a nursing profession, and 25% identified another field of work, including yoga teachers, students, and artists. This area is limited by a large number of missing responses and the free response aspect of the question.



MINDFUL SELF COMPASSION 1-DAY COURSE PROGRAM EVALUATION

Pre-workshop evaluation

Using the Likert scale, participants were asked to rate if they agreed or disagreed with the statements provided to assess attitudes towards MSC skills. Additionally, participants were asked about experience with meditation and previous MSC courses.

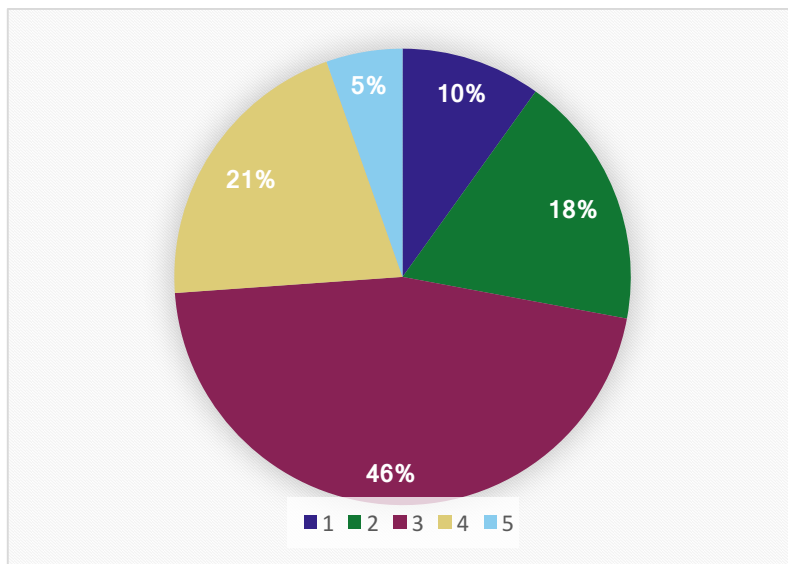
Text

Please rate the extent to which you AGREE / DISAGREE with the following:

- *I have a good level of knowledge about the science-based benefits of mindful self-compassion.*
- *I have a good understanding of how to respond to feelings of failure or inadequacy with self-kindness rather than self-criticism.*
- *I have a good level of knowledge about the practice of Loving-Kindness (Metta).*
- *I feel confident in my current skills to relate to difficult emotions with greater moment -to -moment acceptance.*
- *I have a good understanding of how to use self-compassion to live in accord with my values.*
- *I feel confident in my current skills to integrate mindfulness and self--compassion practices into daily life.*
- *Please choose the answer that best describes your meditation experience prior to taking this course.*
- *Have you ever taken a mindfulness or compassion-based program before?*

The results to these questions are provided below, Questions 1-8.

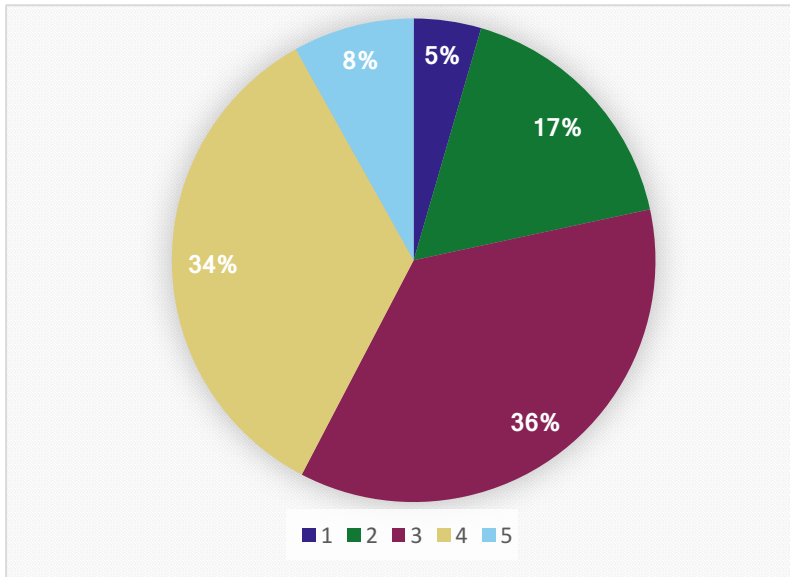
Question 1: I have a good level of knowledge about the science-based benefits of mindful self-compassion. (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “Not at All” and 5 is “Completely”).



74% of the participants rated themselves a 1 (10%), 2 (18%), or 3 (46%) indicating a lower level of knowledge about the science-based benefits of MSC. 26% of the participants said they had a higher level of knowledge, rating themselves a 4 (21%) or 5 (5%).

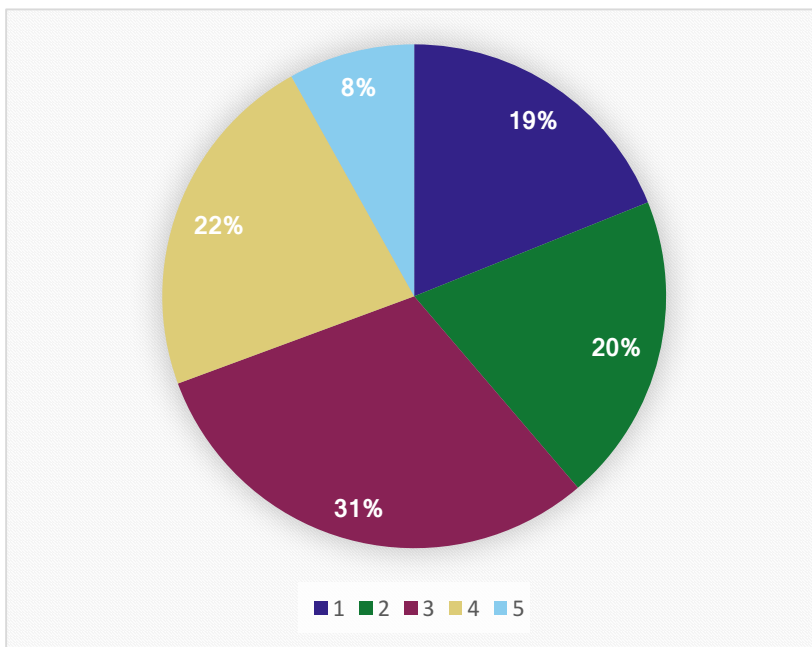
MINDFUL SELF COMPASSION 1-DAY COURSE PROGRAM EVALUATION

Question 2: I have a good understanding of how to respond to feelings of failure or inadequacy with self-kindness rather than self-criticism. (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “Not at All” and 5 is “Completely”).



58% of participants indicated they felt they had a lower level of understanding how to respond to negative feeling with self-compassion instead of self-criticism. 5% rated themselves a 1 out of 5 on the scale, 17% rated themselves a 2, and 36% rated themselves a 3. 34% of participants said their understand was a 4 out of 5, and 8% rated themselves a 5 out of 5 for responding to negative feelings with self-compassion.

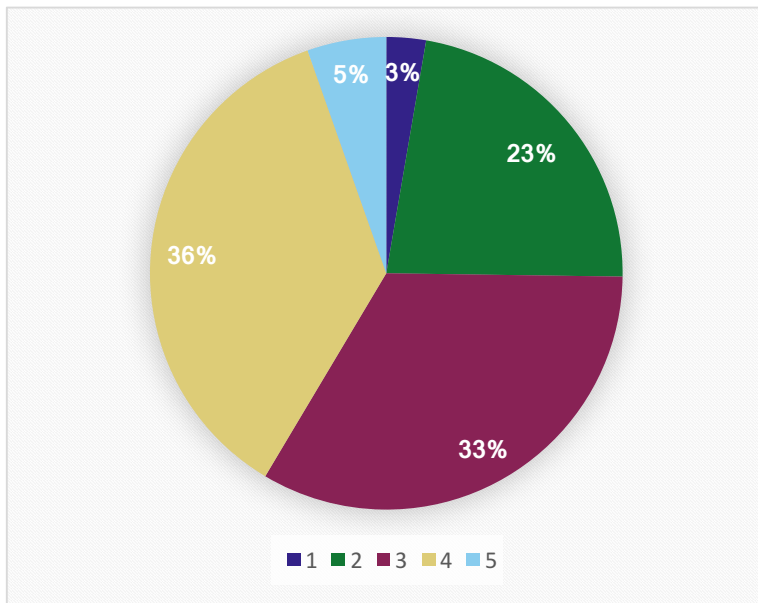
Question 3: I have a good level of knowledge about the practice of Loving-Kindness (Metta). (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “Not at All” and 5 is “Completely”).



Responses to having a good level of knowledge about the practice of loving-kindness were pretty evenly split. 19% said they had no knowledge, 20% said they had a little knowledge, 31% chose a rating of 3 out of 5, and 22% rated their level of knowledge a 4 out of 5. 8% said they have a “completely” good level of knowledge about the practice.

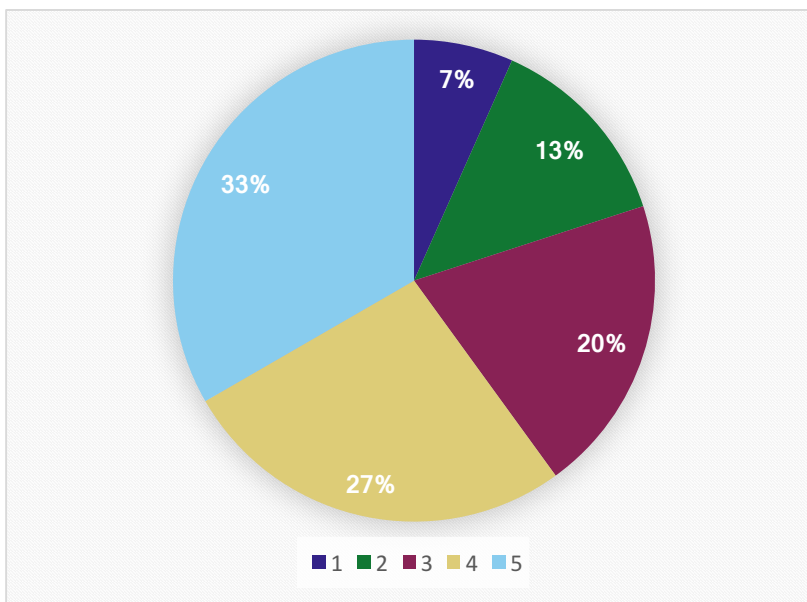
MINDFUL SELF COMPASSION 1-DAY COURSE PROGRAM EVALUATION

Question 4: I feel confident in my current skills to relate to difficult emotions with greater moment-to-moment acceptance. (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "Not at All" and 5 is "Completely").



59% of the respondents said they were not confident with their current skills to relate to difficult emotions with moment-to-moment acceptance. 3% rated themselves with a 1, 23% gave themselves a 2, and 33% gave themselves a 3. 41% rated their current skills either a 4 (36%) or 5 (5%).

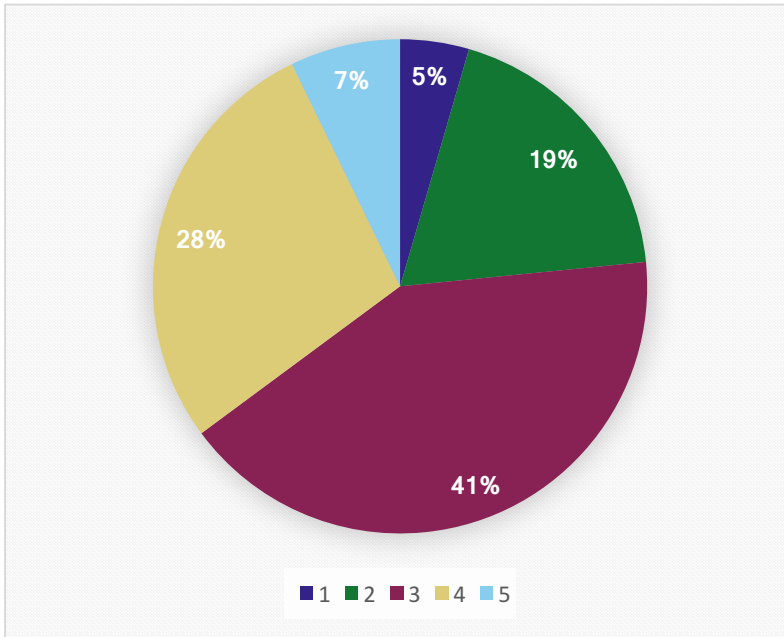
Question 5: I have a good understanding of how to use self-compassion to live in accord with my values. (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "Not at All" and 5 is "Completely").



60% of respondents felt they had a good understanding of how to use self-compassion to live in accord with their values, with 27% rating themselves a 4 and 33% rating themselves a 5. 20% rated themselves a 3, 13% a 2, and 7% said they had no understanding of using self-compassion to live in accord with their values.

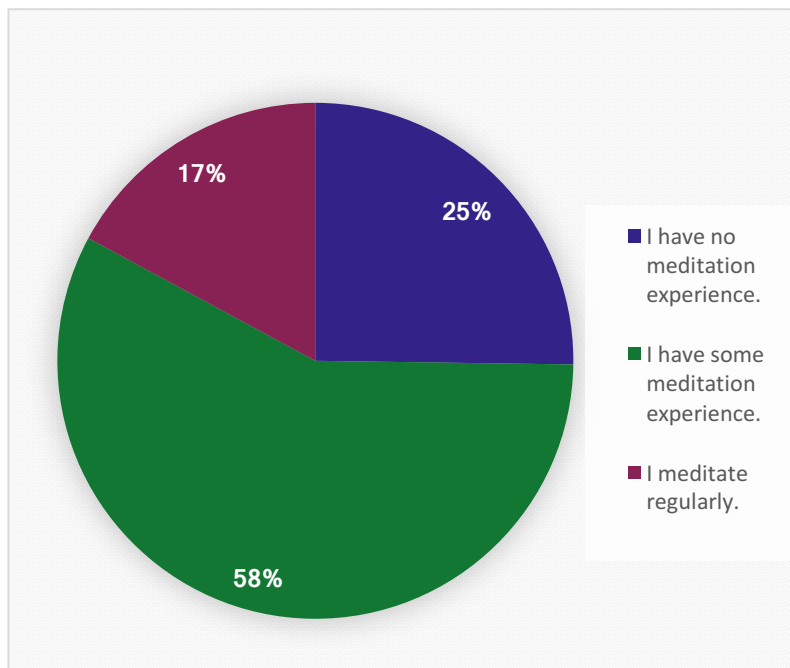
MINDFUL SELF COMPASSION 1-DAY COURSE PROGRAM EVALUATION

Question 6: I feel confident in my current skills to integrate mindfulness and self-compassion practices into daily life. (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “Not at All” and 5 is “Completely”).



65% of respondents indicated that they were not confident in their current skills to integrate mindfulness and self-compassion practices into their daily life, with 41% rating this ability a 3 of 5, 19% a 2, and 5% a 1. 28% said they were pretty confident in their abilities, rating themselves a 4 of 5, and 7% stated they were “completely” confident in their abilities to integrate mindfulness and self-compassion into their daily life.

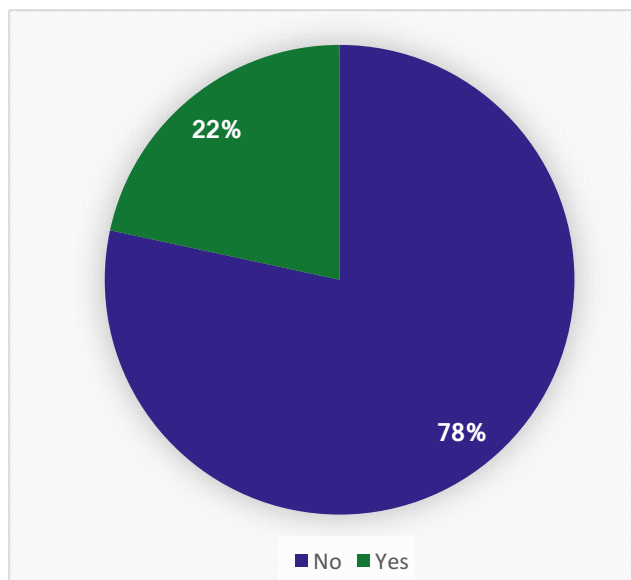
Question 7: Please choose the answer that best describes your meditation experience prior to taking this course. (Options: no meditation experience, some meditation experience, or meditates regularly).



25% of respondents stated they had no meditation experience prior to taking the class. 58% said they had some meditation experience, and 17% said they meditate regularly.

MINDFUL SELF COMPASSION 1-DAY COURSE PROGRAM EVALUATION

Question 8: Have you ever taken a mindfulness or compassion-based program before?
(Yes/No)



78% of respondents had never taken a mindfulness or self-compassion based program before. 22% said yes, they had taken a class before. Specifications included working somewhere where mindfulness and self-compassions were taught, taking a shorter version of the MSC courses offered by CCSNPC, using the mindfulness component of DBT (dialectical behavior therapy), using mindfulness phone apps, and practicing mindful yoga.

Post-workshop Evaluation

Following the MSC1D workshop, using a Likert scale, participants were asked to rate the learning objectives and given a chance to provide comments about aspects of the course they felt were helpful and areas for improvement. They were also invited to leave any additional comments.

Text

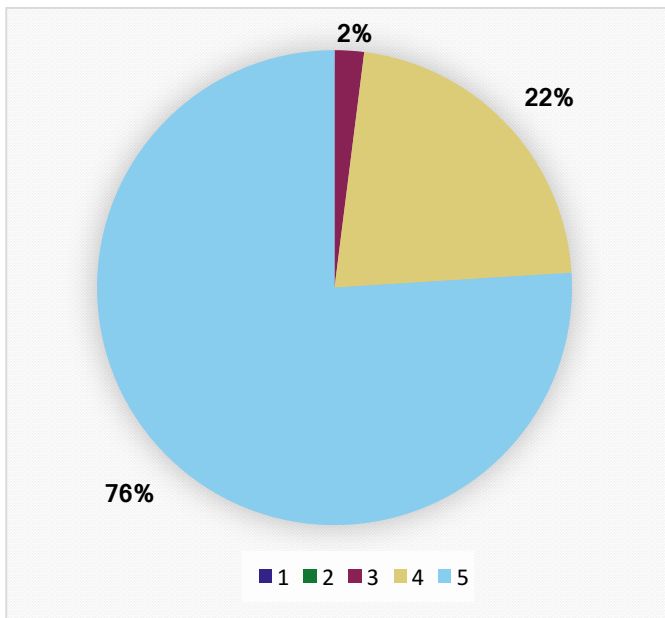
Please rate the extent to which you think each of the course learning objectives (listed below) was achieved by the MSC1D workshop.

- *Build an understanding of mindful self-compassion and its benefits.*
- *Respond to feelings of failure or inadequacy with self-kindness rather than self-criticism.*
- *Practice developing feelings of goodwill, kindness and warmth towards yourself and others using Loving-Kindness (Metta).*
- *Relate to difficult emotions with greater moment -to -moment acceptance.*
- *Use self-compassion to live in accord with your values.*
- *Integrate core mindfulness and self-compassion practices into daily life.*

The results to these questions are provided below, Questions 1-6.

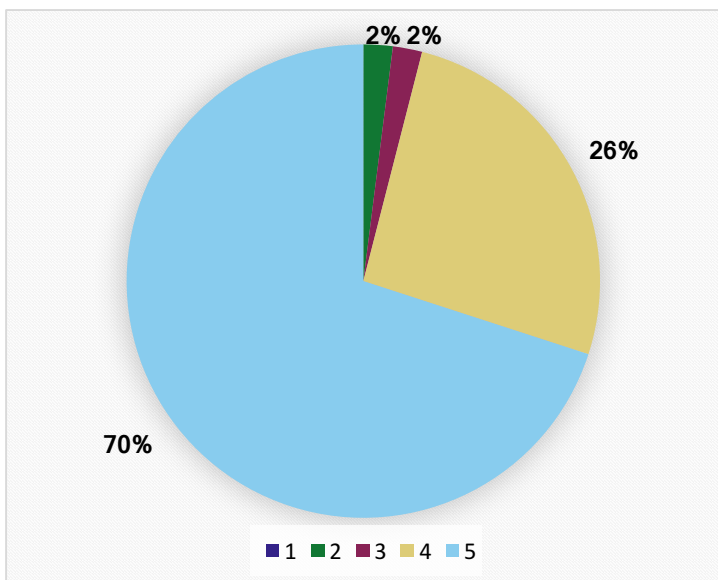
MINDFUL SELF COMPASSION 1-DAY COURSE PROGRAM EVALUATION

Question 1: Build an understanding of mindful self-compassion and its benefits. (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = "Not at all" and 5 = "Completely")



The vast majority of participants (98%) rated the MSC1D course highly in building an understanding of mindful self-compassion and benefits (4 = 22%, 5 = 76%). 2% rated a 3 of 5. There were no 1 or 2 ratings given.

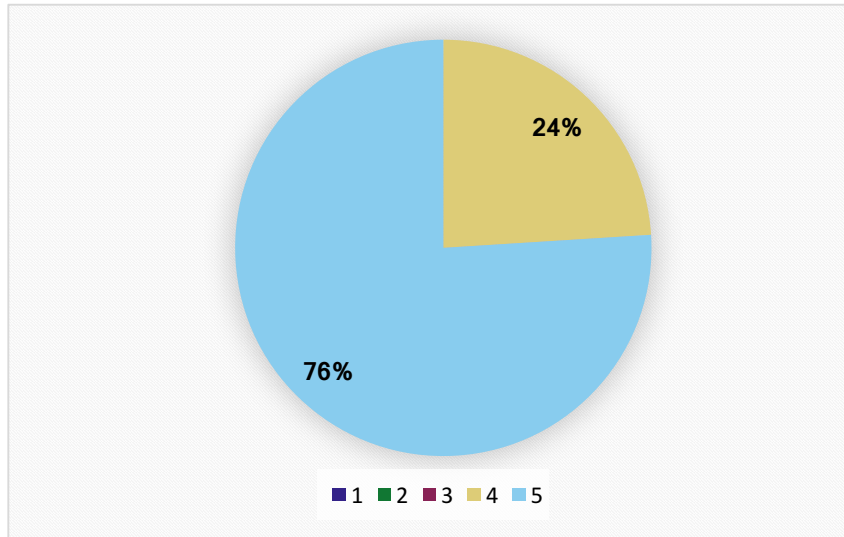
Question 2: Respond to feelings of failure or inadequacy with self-kindness rather than self-criticism. (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = "Not at all" and 5 = "Completely")



96% of participants said that following the training, they would respond to feelings or failure or inadequacy with self-kindness rather than self-criticism (26% rated this a 4 of 5, 70% rated a 5 of 5). 4% of participants gave this item a 3 or 2 (2% each), and there were no rating of 1 given.

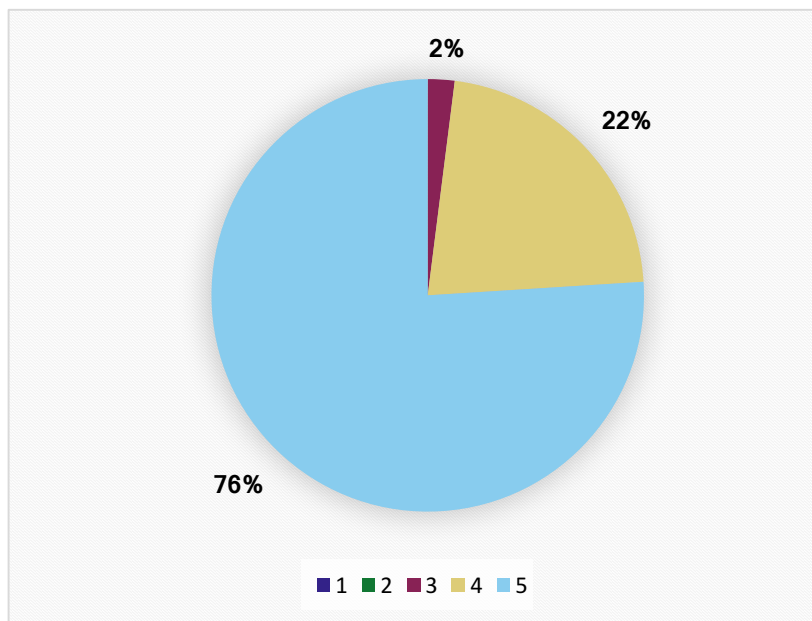
MINDFUL SELF COMPASSION 1-DAY COURSE PROGRAM EVALUATION

Question 3: Practice developing feelings of goodwill, kindness and warmth towards yourself and others using Loving-Kindness (Metta). (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = "Not at all" and 5 = "Completely").



24% of participants said they felt strongly about their ability to practice developing feelings of goodwill towards themselves and others using loving-kindness. 76% said they felt completely able to do so. There were no responses of 1, 2, or 3 on this question.

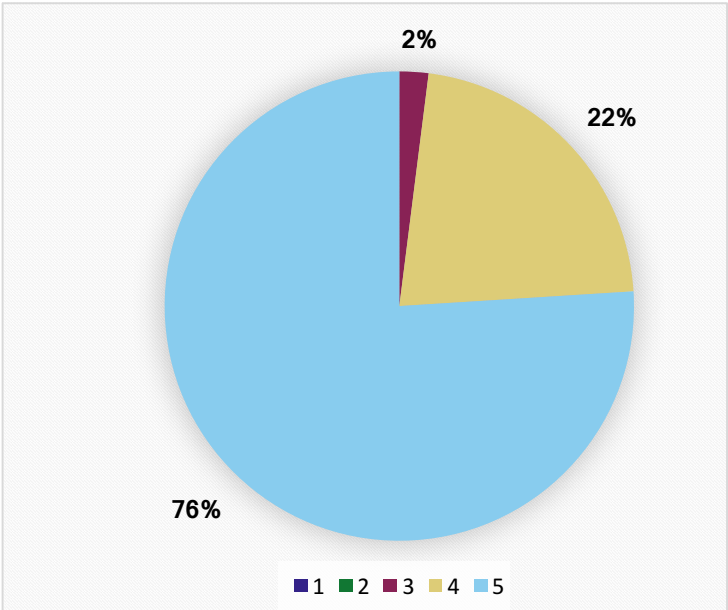
Question 4: Relate to difficult emotions with greater moment-to-moment acceptance. (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = "Not at all" and 5 = "Completely").



98% of participants rated the course a 4 (22%) or 5 (76%) for teaching how to relate to difficult emotions with greater moment-to-moment acceptance. 2% rated this a 3, and there were no 1 or 2 ratings.

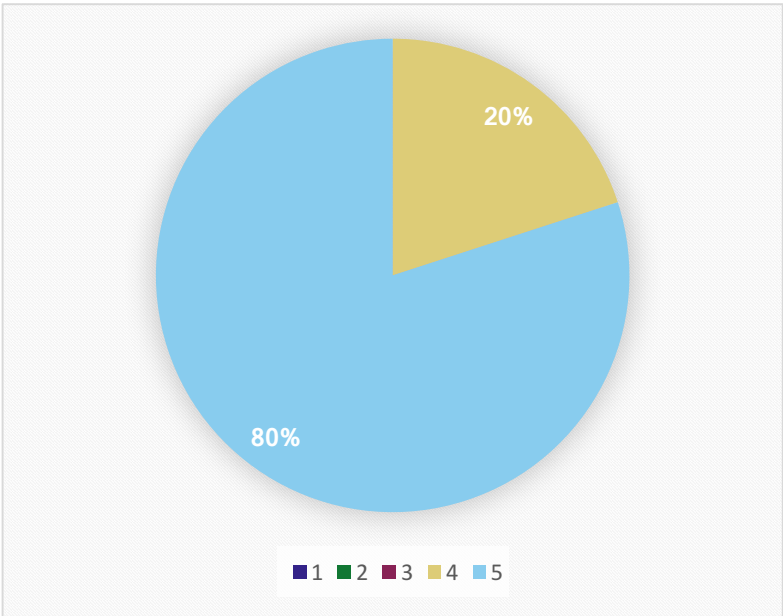
MINDFUL SELF COMPASSION 1-DAY COURSE PROGRAM EVALUATION

Question 5: Use self-compassion to live in accord with your values. (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = “Not at all” and 5 = “Completely”).



Following the course, 76% of respondents were “completely” confident of being able to use self-compassion to live in accord with their values. 22% were very confident (rating of 4), and 2% rated themselves a 3. There were no ratings of 1 or 2 reported.

Question 6: Integrate core mindfulness and self-compassion practices into daily life. (Scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = “Not at all” and 5 = “Completely”).



80% of participants said they felt “completely” able to integrate core mindfulness and self-compassion practices into their daily lives following the MSC1D course. 20% said they were very confident in their ability to do so (rating of 4). There were no ratings of 1, 2, or 3.

Further Comments

Participants were asked a number of open-ended response questions relating to the MSC1D course and suggestions for its improvement. Each question and a representative selection of responses are listed below.

Question 1: What 1-3 aspects of this workshop did you find least useful?

The most common response was that it could be hard to focus:

- *“Difficult to get back attention and focus after several meditations.”*
- *“Too many meditation sessions (loss of focus)”*

Another participant expressed a desire to have more time to talk to other people in the class:

- *“I wish there was more sharing and time with other students. I know it takes a lot of time but going into break outs sharing in small group and then coming back to share with larger group might help with more dynamic exchange and feeling of unity in space and practice. It was a really good class just a quiet bunch who liked to use chat...which is totally ok at this time because we are all so overstressed but could be therapeutic in nature with more sharing and connections.”*

A majority of respondents stated that “it was all helpful” or simply put “n/a” in the response box.

Question 2: What 1-3 aspects of this workshop were most helpful to you?

The responses to this question varied widely. Several responses mentioned “mindfulness” and “meditation” as the top aspects. Other responses included:

- *“Soles of the Feet exercise”*
- *“Learning methods of how to have self-compassion”*
- *“Listening to the stories and hearing the meditations”*
- *“The science behind it, the practices in the workshop”*
- *“Asking ‘What Do I Need Right Now?’; The emotions wheel; Goals vs. Core Values”*

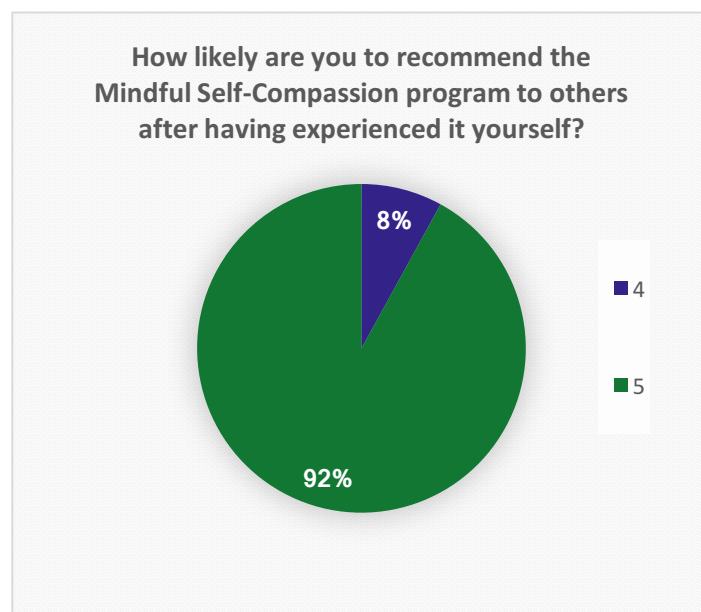
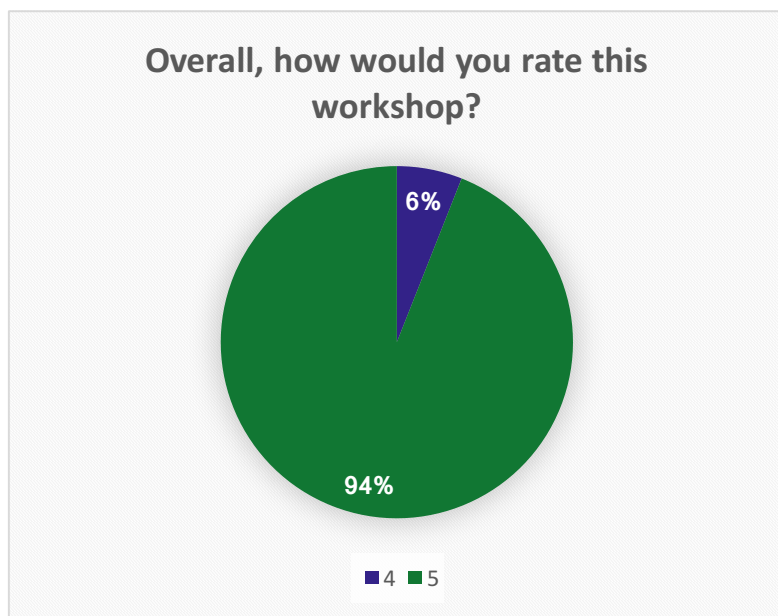
Question 3: Please list 1-3 ways you will change your personal mindfulness and self-compassion practice as a result of participating in this workshop.

The majority of the responses revolved around being more aware of feelings and working towards incorporating self-compassion into everyday life. In addition, several respondents note that they will work on meditating more often.

- *“I can be less hard on myself and know that I am not perfect and it is ok to not be perfect.”*
- *“I will make sure I take time out of each day for meditation.”*
- *“Slow down and connect what I am actually feeling. Acknowledge the feeling no matter what it is and accept it.”*
- *“I won’t be so hard on myself, be more compassionate to others, it’s ok to make mistakes”*
- *“See experience as part of a larger human experience.”*

MINDFUL SELF COMPASSION 1-DAY COURSE PROGRAM EVALUATION

The overall ratings for the workshop were very positive, with 94% of participants giving a rating of 5 out of 5, and 6% giving a 4 out of 5. In addition, all participants said they would be “highly likely” or pretty likely to recommend the MSC program to others.



Suggestions and Conclusions

In general, the MSC1D course indicates that it is a strong course that teaches the skills people are hoping to learn from taking the course. In particular, in the pre-course assessment, 65% of participants were unsure of their abilities to incorporate the concepts of mindfulness and self-compassion into their everyday life. In the post-course assessment, 100% of participants rated their abilities to do so either a 4 or 5.

Additionally, 100% of participants in the post-course assessment said they had a good level knowledge of the practice of loving-kindness (Metta), compared to the 30% that said they had a good level of knowledge about the practice of Loving-Kindness (Metta) in the pre-course assessment. This indicates that the MSC class does successfully introduce these concepts to the people taking it.

Areas for improvement may be to work on outreach in the community. A majority of the people taking the course are female. There may be cause to try to enroll more male participants, especially as MSC works towards being an upstream approach to suicide prevention. However, this may be addressed by one of the other MSC classes as this evaluation only focuses on the 1-day course.

Additionally, expanding the age range for MSC participants would be another area to investigate, although given the timeframe of the course it may be difficult for those under 20 to find the time for a full day of instruction.

Overall, people who take the MSC1D course feel that it is a strong course and they have learned more about the concepts of mindfulness and self-compassion. Additionally, most people (78%) had never taken a self-compassion course, suggesting that the class does reach new audiences. The suggestions for improvement are minimal. Bringing more people into the course may show more areas opportunities, however it appears to be a well-received class.