We all have an inner critic that says negative things. Some think it pushes us, but it can harm us. Being kind to ourselves is important for our well-being, especially during times of stress and suffering. Self-compassion, which is relating to ourselves with kindness, care, and understanding instead of self-judgment, can help.

Researcher, Dr. Kristin Neff, talks about self-compassion having three parts:

**Self-kindness**
We are gentle and understanding with ourselves rather than harsh and critical.

**Recognition of our common humanity**
Our shared imperfections and experiences of suffering are what unite us as humans, preventing feelings of isolation.

**Mindfulness**
We hold our experience in balanced awareness, rather than ignoring our pain or exaggerating it.

The Great Good Science Center shares the benefits of practicing self-compassion:
- It enhances well-being and motivation
- It helps us to relate to and be present for others
- When practiced, we become more empathetic and forgiving and can resolve conflict in healthier ways
- When people are more self-compassionate, they are better able to cope with difficult life experiences.
- Self-compassion is associated with higher self-efficacy, or confidence in one’s ability to succeed, and lower fear of failure
- When self-compassionate people do fail, they use healthier coping strategies and are better able to bounce back.

For more information, contact Tara Solomon-Smith, tsolomon@ksu.edu, or call 620-244-3826.