



ICM Asia Pacific 2019

Auckland, New Zealand

Mauri Noho, Mauri Oho, Mauri Ora

ICM Asia Pacific 2019 Pre-Conference Workshop
Mindful Self-Compassion: The Antidote to Perfectionism and Conflict
Renske van den Brink and Fiona Moir

Much of our work demands that we exhibit a combination of high academic competence and an ability to strive for excellence amidst tough competition. Unfortunately, these qualities can predispose to perfectionism and self-criticism, which can result in an increase in both anxiety and depression. There is evidence that compassion-based strategies can mitigate these problems and significantly improve well-being in both individuals, and in the workplace as a whole.

Compassion flows naturally when people are confronted with a vulnerable child or a distressed friend. Such support and encouragement can generate a relaxation response, enabling the person to overcome personal difficulties and try again. In contrast, criticism can result in a reduction in personal courage and an increase in anxiety. The foundation of self-compassion practice is that rather than turning away, we learn to turn towards our own distress with an attitude of kindness, creating the possibility for a supportive response to distress. Neurobiological evidence supports the assertion that generation of self-compassion is a skill, which can be learned and strengthened with repeated practice.

This three-hour workshop will be an introduction to the principles of self-compassion, referring to the work of clinicians such as Gilbert and Neff. The workshop will include a brief overview of the evidence and context for compassion-based techniques, followed by a variety of practical exercises. In the second half of the workshop participants will learn how to use mindful self-compassion in difficult conversations when there is disagreement, anger or high levels of tension.

Drs Renske van den Brink and Dr Fiona Moir have been running groups teaching health professionals relationship skills and self-care for more than 17 years. They have recently completed a series of 25 nationwide well-being workshops for dentists in New Zealand during which the 'Self-Compassion' section was highly evaluated.





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Dr Renske van den Brink

MBChB DipObs FPC FRNZCGP DipCouns MNZAC PGDipMindBodyHealthcare Accredited Balint Group Leader (BSANZ)

Renske has worked as a GP for many years before adding additional training in Counselling (2002) and a Post-Graduate Diploma in MindBody Healthcare at AUT in 2009. She now works in private practice using the principles of mindful self-compassion as a foundation tool to complement her work in private practice. Renske also provides supervision to healthcare professionals and leads several Balint supervision groups. She is a part of the Auckland Insight Meditation Sangha in Westmere, Auckland.

Dr Fiona Moir

MBChB, MRCGP, PhD

Fiona trained in the UK at Sheffield University, and went on to work as a GP in the UK and New Zealand. She now works in a part-time role in the Medical Programme Directorate and in The Department of General Practice at The University of Auckland as a Senior Lecturer. Within this job, she has developed SAFE-DRS, a Health and Wellbeing curriculum for medical students, and has created comprehensive pastoral care policies and care pathways for the medical school. In 2016, she was appointed as a Director of Medical Student Affairs. Outside of the University, she is also a Director of two companies: Connect Communications, a medical education business which designs and facilitates self-care, supervision and communication skills sessions for health professionals, and First Response, a company specialising in peer-interventions for identifying and responding to distress in the workplace.

In 2008, she was one of the co-authors of the CALM website, a resource for stress management and happiness, which was originally made available to students and then later released to the public. Her interests are: early interventions for stress, anxiety and depression; self-care; the health of health professionals; healthy workplaces and communication. Her PhD is in the area of peer-led interventions to improve mental health. In 2018, she won the University of Auckland Vice-Chancellor's excellence award for Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

