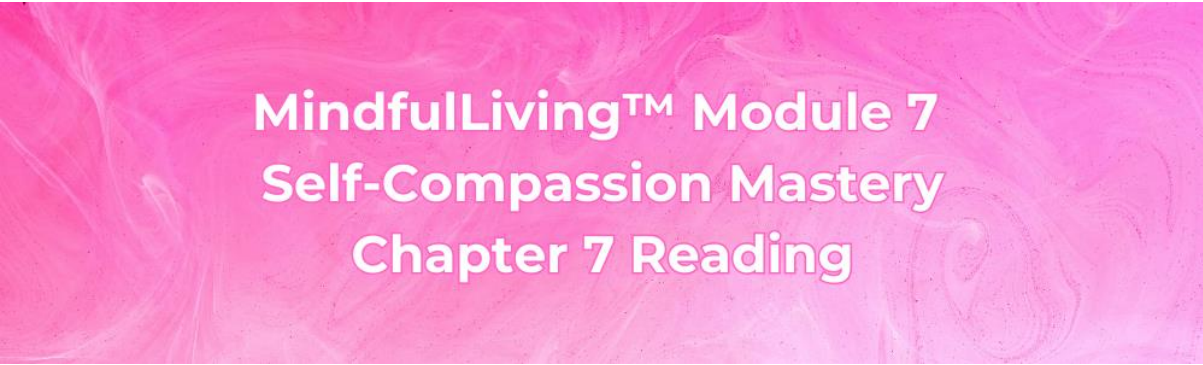




## MindfulLiving™ Module 7 Self-Compassion Mastery Chapter 7 Reading

### **Does Mindfulness Make You More Compassionate?**

*MindfulLiving™ is more than just moment-to-moment awareness; it embodies a kind, curious awareness that fosters compassion for ourselves and others.*

#### **Introduction**

As a MindfulLiving™ coach, I, Shery Clein, have thoughtfully curated the critical points of this article to enhance your understanding of mindfulness and its connection to compassion. I aim to provide an accessible overview, ensuring you can quickly grasp and apply these essential concepts in your mindfulness practice.





## My Journey into Mindfulness

- **Initial Experience:** I attended my first meditation retreat in Thailand 17 years ago with a limited understanding of mindfulness.
- **Realisation:** I quickly realised my mind wandered far more than I anticipated, leading to feelings of frustration and impatience.

## The Encounter with Compassion

- **Monk's Wisdom:**  
During my retreat, a monk explained that my struggles were due to impatience and judgment, not mindfulness. He emphasised, "What you practice becomes stronger," a concept supported by neuroplasticity research.
- **Transforming Attention:**  
Instead of feeling frustrated when my mind wandered, I learned to approach my thoughts with curiosity and kindness.

## The Connection Between Mindfulness and Compassion

Understanding this connection has transformed my life and work. Here are key insights:

- **Compassionate Attention:**  
Mindfulness involves compassionately paying attention, not just focusing on our thoughts.
- **Research Findings:**  
Studies have shown that mindfulness enhances empathy and self-compassion. For example:

- A 1998 study found that mindfulness training improved empathy in medical students.
- A 2005 study revealed increased self-compassion among healthcare professionals after mindfulness training.

## **Mechanisms of Mindfulness Cultivating Compassion**

While more research is needed, here are some ways mindfulness fosters compassion:

### **1. Self-Compassion:**

Mindfulness helps us treat ourselves with kindness, leading to greater compassion for others. For instance, therapists who practice self-compassion tend to be more compassionate with their clients.

### **2. Embracing Experience:**

Mindfulness allows us to accept all our feelings—positive and negative—with a compassionate awareness, which enhances our ability to empathise with others.

### **3. Interconnectedness:**

Practising mindfulness fosters an understanding of our interconnectedness, encouraging natural responses of compassion, just like how one hand instinctively helps the other.

### **4. Reducing Stress:**

Mindfulness helps combat stress and busyness, which can narrow our focus on ourselves. Research, like the Good Samaritan experiments, shows that being present increases our willingness to help others.

## **Conclusion**

Mindfulness is about remembering what matters most. My ongoing exploration of mindfulness aims to illuminate its benefits and deepen our understanding. As Rilke said, “Have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves.”

## **Questions for Reflection**

1. How can you incorporate mindfulness into your daily life to enhance compassion for yourself and others?
2. What experiences have you had that illustrate the connection between mindfulness and compassion?
3. In what ways can understanding interconnectedness influence your relationships and interactions with others?

## About the Author

**Shauna Shapiro, Ph.D.**, is a professor at Santa Clara University, a clinical psychologist, and a mindfulness expert. She has published over 100 articles and co-authored books, including *The Art and Science of Mindfulness*.

## Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to explore this critical topic. I hope this streamlined version enhances your understanding and practice of mindfulness, nurturing your awareness intelligence and making it easier to apply these valuable insights in your everyday life.

At Shery Clein MindfulLiving™, we support your journey toward greater well-being. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or need assistance. Remember, the most important thing is to enjoy the process, stay present, and have fun!

Blessings, stay healthy & safe ♡  
Love, Shery

