Mindful Self-Care for Embodied Self-Regulation
Novel Insights for Enhancing Positive Body Image and Embodiment

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The ARMS Model

- The ARMS concept is innovative in the de-nesting of the self and the external system.
- The self is embodied between the internal aspects of self and external aspects of self.
- Cook-Cottone, 2006, 2015a, 2015b, 2017
Attunement and Integration

• As women and men manage *internal* and *external* aspects of self, the quality of attunement can be changed by any one aspect of experience.

• Cook-Cottone, 2006, 2015a, 2015b
Disordered Self

• Conflict, struggle, and disorder can manifest in the absence and the consequent seeking of attunement in other ways (Cook-Cottone, 2006, 2015a, 2015b, 2017).
Mindful Self-Care

- Mindful self-care is a methodology for cultivating **attunement** and **positive embodiment** among the internal aspects of self, within the context of external challenges.

- The mindful self-care process involves four steps
  - (a) mindful awareness of self-care as essential to well-being,
  - (b) assessment of self-care domains,
  - (c) assessment-driven self-care goal setting, and
  - (d) engagement in self-care behaviors.

  - Cook-Cottone, 2006, 2015a, 2015b, 2017
Embodiment of Self-Care

Cook-Cottone, 2015a
Mindful Self-Care Scale

• Mindful Self-Care Scale is a tool for the assessment of the aspects of self-care addressing each area of the ARMS through actionable practices.

• Cook-Cottone, 2015a, 2015b
Mind, Full, and Short Versions in Books
Item Construction

• Over 100 items were created in thematic clusters based on the research:
  – Nutrition/Hydration
  – Exercise
  – Self-Soothing
  – Self-Awareness
  – Mindfulness
  – Rest
  – Relationships
  – Physical and Medical Care
  – Environmental Factors
  – Self-compassion
  – Spiritual Practice
  – General Items
Item Construction

- Items were designed to be actionable and prescriptive
- For example:
  - “I used deep breathing to relax”
  - “I planned my self-care”
Student and Expert Review

• Across three graduate classes in the CSEP department the items were tested and reviewed.
  – Awkwardly worded items were rewritten
  – Students also added items
• Experts reviewed the items and items were again revised.
  – John Norcross
  – Tracy Tylka
  – Evelyn Tribole
  – Scott Meier
The MSCS was administered to:

- Sample 1, $N = 448$ (EFA)
  - Age, $m = 33.5$, $sd = 11.7$
  - Ethnicity/race equivalent to US pop.
  - Males 20.3%, Females 79.7%

- Sample 2, $N = 452$ (CFA)
  - Age, $m = 34.0$, $sd = 11.7$
  - Ethnicity/race equivalent to US pop.
  - Males 30.1%, Females 69.7%, .2% transgender
Body Esteem Scale (BES)

- The BES is a 35 item questionnaire which asks participants to rate how they feel about various areas of their body on a 5 point scale.
- Possible responses include
  - “strongly dislike,”
  - “slightly dislike,”
  - “neutral,”
  - “slightly like,” or
  - “strongly like,” which each response have numerical values 1-5, respectively.
- Participants are asked about various body areas such as their nose, lips, waist, muscular strength, and weight.
Eating Attitudes Test (EAT-26)

- The Eating Attitudes Test (EAT-26) is a 26 item self-report questionnaire which used as a measure of eating pathology.
- The EAT-26 is a 6 point scale which asks questions such as “I vomit after I have eaten”, “I feel extremely guilty after eating”, “others would prefer it if I ate more”, and “I avoid foods with sugar in them”.
- Participants are asked to indicate whether they engage in these behaviors
  - “always”, “usually”, “often”, “sometimes”, “rarely”, or “never”.
  - Responses can then be coded into one of four categories, namely, “binge”, “vomit”, “laxative use”, and “exercise”.

EFA Six Factors Emerged (CFA Confirmed)
Supportive Relationships

• I spent time with people who are good to me (e.g., support, encourage, and believe in me).
• I felt supported by people in my life.
• I felt that I had someone who would listen to me if I became upset.
• I felt confident that people in my life would respect my choice if I said “no.”
• I scheduled/planned time to be with people who are special to me.
Supportive Structure

- I kept my work/schoolwork area organized to support my work/school tasks.
- I maintained a manageable schedule.
- I maintained balance between the demands of others and what is important to me.
- I maintained a comforting and pleasing living environment.
Physical Care

- I drank at least 6-8 cups of water.
- I ate a variety of nutritious foods.
- I planned my meals and snacks.
- I exercised at least 30-60 minutes.
- I took part in sports, dance or other scheduled physical activities.
- I did sedentary activities instead of exercising.
- I planned/scheduled my exercise for the day.
- I practiced yoga or another mind/body practice.
Self-Compassion and Purpose

• I kindly acknowledged my own challenges and difficulties.
• I engaged in supportive and comforting self-talk.
• I reminded my self that failure and challenge are part of the human experience.
• I gave myself permission to feel my feelings.
• I experienced meaning and/or a larger purpose in my work/school life.
• I experience meaning and/or a larger purpose in my personal Private life
Mindful Awareness

• I had a calm awareness of my thoughts.
• I had a calm awareness of my feelings.
• I had a calm awareness of my body.
• I carefully selected which of my thoughts and feelings I used to guide my actions.
Mindful Relaxation

• I did something intellectual (using my mind) to help me relax (e.g., read a book, wrote).
• I did something interpersonal to relax (e.g., connected with friends).
• I did something creative to relax (e.g., drew, played instrument, wrote creatively, sang, organized).
• I listened to relax (e.g., to music, a podcast, radio show, rainforest sounds).
• I sought out images to relax (e.g., art, film, window shopping, nature).
• I sought out smells to relax (lotions, nature, candles/incense, smells of baking).
## Body Esteem

Table 4. 
Correlations between MSCS Scales and Body Esteem in Sample 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>MSCS Factor 1</th>
<th>MSCS Factor 2</th>
<th>MSCS Factor 3</th>
<th>MSCS Factor 4</th>
<th>MSCS Factor 5</th>
<th>MSCS Factor 6</th>
<th>MSCS Total Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males (N=91)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Body Esteem Physical Attractiveness</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>.30*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Body Esteem Upper Body Strength</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>.25*</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Body Esteem Physical Condition</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>.48**</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Females (N=357)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Body Esteem Sexual Attractiveness</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>.34**</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Body Esteem Weight Concern</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Body Esteem Physical Condition</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>.40**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: MSCS = Mindful Self Care Scale, Body Esteem = Body-Esteem Scale, *p<.05, **p<.01
Table 3.
Correlations between MSCS Scales and EAT-26 Scales in Sample 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>PC</th>
<th>SR</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>MR</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAT-26 Dieting Subscale</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.91</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAT-26 Bulimia Subscale</td>
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<td>-.18**</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.28**</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>.86</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAT-26 Oral Control Subscale</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>-.18**</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.72</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAT-26 Total Score</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>-.23**</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-.28**</td>
<td>-.1</td>
<td>.92</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes: N=448. MSCS=Mindful Self Care Scale; PC = Physical Care; SR = Supportive Relationships, MA = Mindful Awareness; SC = Self-compassion, MR = Mindful Relaxation; SS = Supportive Structure; EAT-26=Eating Attitudes Test-26, * p <.05, ** p <.01
Mindful Self-Care Process

Cook-Cottone, 2015
MSCS with...

- Hospice Workers
- [https://www.betterselfcare.com/assessment](https://www.betterselfcare.com/assessment)
- Medical Residents at Mayo clinic.
  - Accounted for 16% of wellness indicators
The Self-Care Imperative

“Because no matter the challenges we confront...
There is no escaping this reality, no matter what others, or we, try to say about it.
If we don’t care for ourselves, we’ll be limited in how we can care for others.
It is that simple. And it is that important—for you, for others, and for our planet.”

Daniel Siegel,
The Mindful Therapist (2010, p. 3)
References