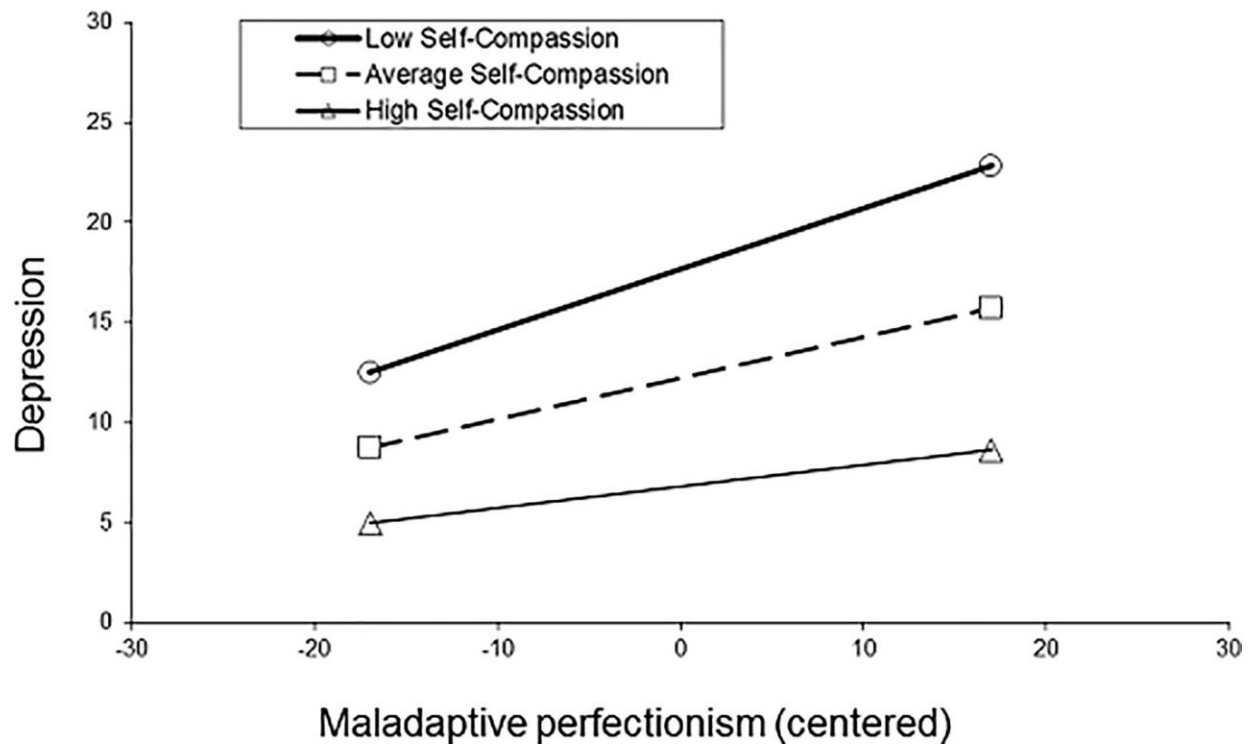


Self-compassion may protect people from the harmful effects of perfectionism

February 21 2018



The moderating effect of self-compassion on perfectionism and depression, in an adult sample. Credit: Ferrari et al (2018)

Relating to oneself in a healthy way can help weaken the association between perfectionism and depression, according to a study published February 21, 2018 in the open-access journal *PLOS ONE* by Madeleine Ferrari from Australian Catholic University, and colleagues.

Perfectionistic people often push themselves harder than others to succeed, but can also fall into the trap of being self-critical and overly concerned about making mistakes. When the perfectionist fails, they often experience depression and burnout. In this study, Ferrari and colleagues considered whether [self-compassion](#), a kind way of relating to oneself, might help temper the link between perfectionist tendencies and depression.

The researchers administered anonymous questionnaires to assess [perfectionism](#), depression, and self-compassion across 541 adolescents and 515 adults. Their analyses of these self-assessments revealed that self-compassion may help uncouple perfectionism and depression.

The replication of this finding in two groups of differently-aged people suggests that self-compassion may help moderate the link between perfectionism and depression across the lifespan. The authors suggest that self-compassion interventions could be a useful way to undermine the effects of perfectionism, but future experimental or intervention research is needed to fully assess this possibility.

"Self-compassion, the practice of self-kindness, consistently reduces the strength of the relationship between maladaptive perfectionism and [depression](#) for both adolescents and adults," says lead author Madeleine Ferrari.

More information: Ferrari M, Yap K, Scott N, Einstein DA, Ciarrochi J (2018) Self-compassion moderates the perfectionism and depression link in both adolescence and adulthood. *PLoS ONE* 13(2): e0192022. doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0192022

Provided by Public Library of Science

Citation: Self-compassion may protect people from the harmful effects of perfectionism (2018, February 21) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-02-self-compassion-people-effects-perfectionism.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.