

Title: COMPASSION-FOCUSED THERAPIES FOR SELF-ESTEEM: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND META-ANALYSIS

Short title: *COMPASSION THERAPY AND SELF-ESTEEM*

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Abstract:

Purpose: To identify whether compassion-focused therapy (CFT) or compassion-based interventions are effective in improving self-esteem. **Methods:** Databases (CINAHL, MEDLINE and PsycINFO) were searched, along with OpenGrey literature. Experts were also contacted and handsearching of reference lists and citing articles undertaken. To be eligible, papers had to include an intervention identified as being compassion-based and mention “self-esteem” as a variable or outcome. Papers were quality appraised using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT). Data were analysed using a random-effects meta-analysis model, with sensitivity analysis conducted in relation to the quality of studies. **Results:** Ten eligible papers were identified. Within-group analysis of data from eight studies demonstrated a medium, significant overall effect size ($g = 0.56$, 95% CI [0.19-0.93], $z = 3.54$, $p < .001$), which increased slightly and remained significant ($g = 0.61$, 95% CI [0.05-1.17], $z = 2.82$, $p = .005$) when the lowest quality studies were removed. **Conclusions:** CFT or compassion-based interventions may be effective in improving self-esteem. However, there is large clinical and methodological heterogeneity amongst studies making further conclusions difficult.

Keywords:

COMPASSION-FOCUSED; CFT; THERAPY; SELF-ESTEEM; REVIEW; META-ANALYSIS

Data availability statement:

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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