**Online Resource 1**

**Measures**

**Trait self-compassion and self-esteem.** The Self-Compassion Scale (Neff, 2003; 26 items) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965; 10 items) were administered to participants as a set of online trait questionnaires prior to the current in-lab study. This allowed us to verify that trait levels of self-compassion and self-esteem were equivalent across our three experimental conditions. Items on the Self-Compassion Scale were rated on a Likert-type scale from 1 to 5, whereas items on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were rated from 0 to 4. Both measures demonstrated excellent internal reliability (Self-Compassion Scale: *α* = .94, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale: *α* = .92).

**Negative affect.** To verify that participants experienced an increase in distress when recalling their self-esteem threatening event, state negative affect (NA) was measured before and after event recall. Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they felt (a) upset and (b) distressed in the present moment on two separate visual analogue scale items ranging from 0 (very slightly or not at all) to 100 (extremely). Responses to both items were averaged to create a composite measure of NA. Spearman-Brown coefficients for the NA items in the present study were .77 pre-recall and .76 post-recall.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Previous disclosure regarding the negative experience.** Participants responded to the item, “How much have you shared about your thoughts and feelings regarding this negative experience with others?” on a 5-point Likert-type scale directly after bringing their negative experience to mind.

**Expected helpfulness.** To verify that each writing exercise was perceived as being equally credible, participants were presented with a short description of the exercise to which they had been randomly assigned and asked to respond to a single item “How helpful do you think this written exercise would be if you really pushed yourself to get into it?” on a 5-point Likert-type scale directly before completing the writing exercise.

**Effort.** To determine whether participants were engaged in the experimental manipulation, participants were asked to respond to a single item, “How much effort did you honestly apply to the written exercise?” on a 5-point Likert-type scale directly after completing the writing exercise.

**Results**

**Equivalence of groups.** See Table 1 (main text) and Supplementary Table 1 for descriptive statistics of all variables by condition. No significant differences emerged between conditions in trait self-compassion (*F*(2, 82) = 0.19*, p* = .83), trait self-esteem (*F*(2, 82) = 0.03*, p* = .97), credibility of the writing exercise (*F*(2, 82) = 0.13, *p* = .88), the degree to which participants had previously disclosed their negative experience to others (*F*(2, 82) = 0.62, *p* = .54), or self-reported effort applied to the assigned writing exercise (*F*(1, 82) = 0.82, *p* = .44). The overall mean for the amount participants had previously disclosed their negative experience was 2.20 (*SD* = 1.08) out of 5, and the overall mean rating of effort applied during the writing exercise was 3.65 out of 5 (*SD* = 0.84). Therefore, participants across conditions both selected experiences they had not fully shared with others previously and applied themselves reasonably well to their assigned writing exercise.

**Emotional impact of recalling self-esteem threatening experience.** A repeated measures ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of time (*F*(1, 82) = 103.82, *p* < .001) with no time by condition interaction (*F*(2, 82) = 0.48, *p* = .62), suggesting that across conditions participants experienced an increase in negative affect after recalling their self-esteem threatening experience.

**Simple slope analyses.** Simple slope analyses revealed that in the self-compassion condition, there was a significant positive relationship between SE threat and both disclosure depth (*B* = 0.02, *SE* = 0.01, 95% CI [0.006, 0.03], *sr2* = .09) and length (*B* = 1.56, *SE* = 0.61, 95% CI [0.36, 2.77], *sr2* = .07). In the self-esteem condition, there was a non-significant positive relationship between SE threat and disclosure depth (*B* = 0.01, *SE* = 0.01, 95% CI [-0.008, 0.03], *sr2* = .01) and length(*B* = 0.68, *SE* = 0.80, 95% CI [-0.92, 2.27], *sr2* = .01). In the free writing condition, SE threat negatively predicted disclosure depth (*B* = -0.02, *SE* = 0.01, 95% CI [-0.03, -0.003], *sr2* = .06) and length(*B* = -1.49, *SE* = 0.70, 95% CI [-2.88, -0.10], *sr2* = .05).

**Supplementary References**

Neff, K. D. (2003). The development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity, 2,* 223-250. doi: 10.1080/15298860309032

Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

**Supplementary Tables and Figures**

Supplementary Table 1

*Means and standard deviations of all study variables*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Self-compassion  (*n* = 29) | | Self-esteem  (*n* = 30) | | Free writing  (*n* =26) | |
|  | *Mean* | *SD* | *Mean* | *SD* | *Mean* | *SD* |
| Self-Compassion Scale | 2.55 | 0.76 | 2.65 | 0.52 | 1.83 | 0.58 |
| Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale | 1.87 | 0.76 | 1.83 | 0.44 | 2.59 | 0.51 |
| NA before event recall | 18.88 | 22.61 | 11.67 | 15.26 | 16.00 | 18.64 |
| NA after event recall | 45.79 | 25.89 | 38.58 | 21.00 | 37.65 | 19.20 |
| Previous disclosure | 2.38 | 1.12 | 2.13 | 1.14 | 2.08 | 0.98 |
| Expected helpfulness | 3.07 | 1.10 | 3.17 | 0.95 | 3.19 | 0.80 |
| Writing exercise effort | 3.52 | 0.95 | 3.63 | 0.76 | 3.81 | 0.80 |

*Note*. Previous disclosure was assessed prior to engaging in the writing exercise. Writing exercise effort was measured after completing the exercise.

SE Threat

D1 x SE Threat

D3

D3 x SE Threat

D1

Residual Changes in Shame

Disclosure Depth Ratings

-0.31 (0.16)

-0.43 (0.16)

0.04 (0.01)

-0.02 (0.01)

0.03 (0.01)

*Supplementary Figure 1.* Mediated moderation model for disclosure depth as rated by trained research assistants. Significant unstandardized regression weights are depicted with standard errors, and non-significant regression paths are represented by dashed lines Correlations between independent variables and error terms for endogenous variables were included but are not depicted here for simplicity. Model fit statistics: *χ2*(5) = 2.27, *p* = .81 CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00

Dummy code scheme D1: self-compassion = 0, self-esteem = 1, free writing = 0; D3: self-compassion = 1, self-esteem = 0, free writing = 0

SE Threat

D1 x SE Threat

D3

D3 x SE Threat

D1

Residual Changes in Shame

Disclosure Word Count

-0.31 (0.16)

-0.43 (0.16)

-2.87 (0.90)

-1.45 (0.67)

*Supplementary Figure 2.* Mediated moderation model for disclosure word count. Significant unstandardized regression weights are depicted with standard errors, and non-significant regression paths are represented by dashed lines. Correlations between independent variables and error terms for endogenous variables were included but are not depicted here for simplicity. Model fit statistics: *χ2*(5) = 2.27, *p* = .81 CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00

Dummy code scheme D1: self-compassion = 0, self-esteem = 1, free writing = 0; D3: self-compassion = 1, self-esteem = 0, free writing = 0

1. Although NA alone was used to examine the effect of recalling the self-esteem threatening event, we acknowledge that examining changes in shame might have been a preferable induction check due to our interests in this construct specifically. A measure of state shame was not administered pre-recall to reduce participant burden. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)