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Effects of a Brief Online Self-Compassion Training on Non-Suicidal Self-Injury Correlates– a randomized waitlist-controlled study

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Self-compassion has been highlighted as a key tool to counteract self-critical thinking in clinical samples, thus making it a potential means to target the self-punishment motive endorsed by non-suicidal self-injurious (NSSI) ideators. **AIM**: This study examined the efficacy of a brief online self-compassion training in reducing (a) explicit self-criticism, (b) implicit self-criticism, (c) pain endurance and (d) the inclination to engage in NSSI in a sample of past year NSSI ideators. **Method**: Sixty-three Singaporean adults reporting presence of self-injurious thoughts in the past year were randomly assigned to either a 1-week self-compassion training group or a waitlisted control group. **Results**: The repeated measures MANOVA analysis revealed that as compared to the control group (n = 33), the training group (n = 30) yielded significantly greater reduction in explicit self-criticism after a single session (p = .013, partial η^2 = .101) and significantly greater reduction in self-criticism (p = .001, partial η^2 = .170), pain endurance (p = .004, partial η^2 = .130), as well as the explicit inclination to self-injure (p = .051, partial η^2 = .063) after the one-week training. The reduction in explicit self-criticism and inclination to self-injure was maintained at the 2-week follow-up. **Conclusions**: The findings provide novel evidence supporting the use of online self-compassion training in reducing self-criticism and pain endurance in NSSI ideators. This study strongly supports the potential use of digital health platforms incorporating brief online trainings in order to improve accessibility and adherence of treatment.

Keywords: non-suicidal self-injury, self-criticism, self-compassion, pain endurance, online intervention, digital health