

SELF-CRITICISM VS SELF-COMPASSION A Closer Look

Self-Criticism



activates the



This is the part of the brain - the amygdala - that rings the alarm bells and tells us there's a threat



Body releases cortisol (the "stress hormone") + adrenaline



The sympathetic nervous system (fight or flight) is activated



When we are self-critical, our body receives the message "get ready, there's danger"



Self-Compassion



activates the

MAMMALIAN CARE SYSTEM

This is the physiological programming received from infancy that allows us to be soothed and comforted



Body releases oxytocin (the "love hormone") + other opiates



The parasympathetic nervous system (rest and digest) is activated



When we are self-compassionate, our body receives the message "you are safe and secure"



PROMOTES
EMOTIONAL BALANCE
ACCEPTANCE + LOVE + CALM

The two primary ways we relate to ourselves – self-criticism and self-compassion – are connected to two different circuits in the brain that directly impact our physiology. When we're self-critical, we activate the threat defense mechanism and experience stress and fear in the body. When we are self-compassionate, we activate the mammalian care system which soothes us and provides a sense of calm and balance.