



CMTAI 2019, PUNE

Embracing Our Undeserving Selves

Presented by Niharica Shah

Founder, Interior Gardening Psychological Services

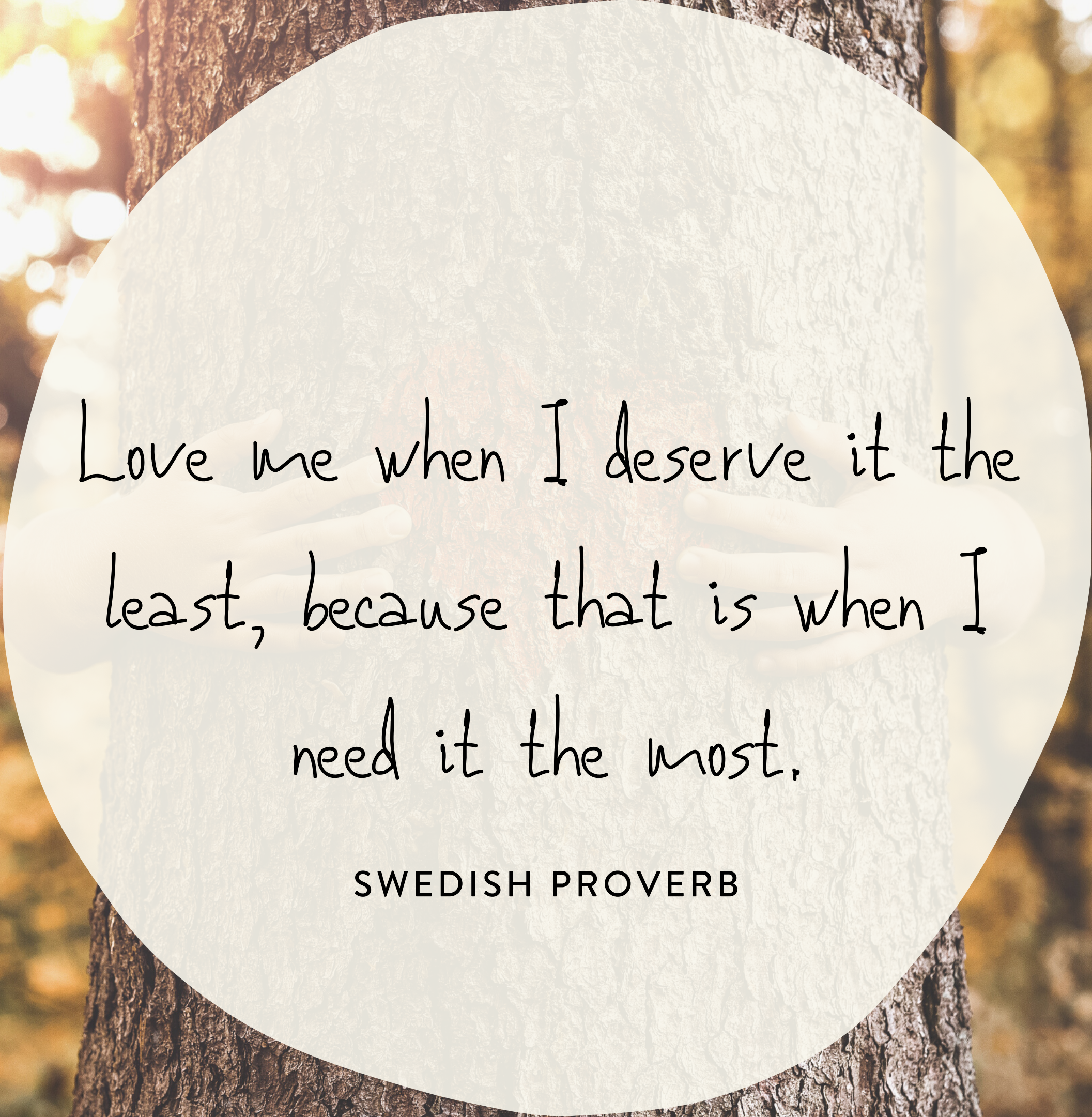
M.Sc. Clinical Psychology (U.K.)

**Expressive Arts Therapy Facilitator (Artsphere,
CMTAI, CID)**

Topics for Today

- The Underserving Self
- Shame
- Self-Compassion
- Unconditional Positive Regard





Love me when I deserve it the
least, because that is when I
need it the most.

SWEDISH PROVERB

'Underserving' Self



THE CONCEPT

The 'Underserving' Self is the aspect of our Self that we deem unworthy of love and acceptance from others and/or ourselves.

The 'underserving' self usually is deemed as falling short or displaying too much of something that we don't want to be perceived as, or identify with - that disturbs our idea of our ideal self.

SELF-SABOTAGE

Feeling that we are underserving of something can often lead us to sabotage situations or relationships where the need for love, affection, acceptance, acknowledgement, etc. is actually being fulfilled. This constantly drives us to stay small.

Shame - Dr. Brené Brown



DEFINITION

Dr. Brené Brown defines shame as "an intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging". Shame is a focus on self, not on action.

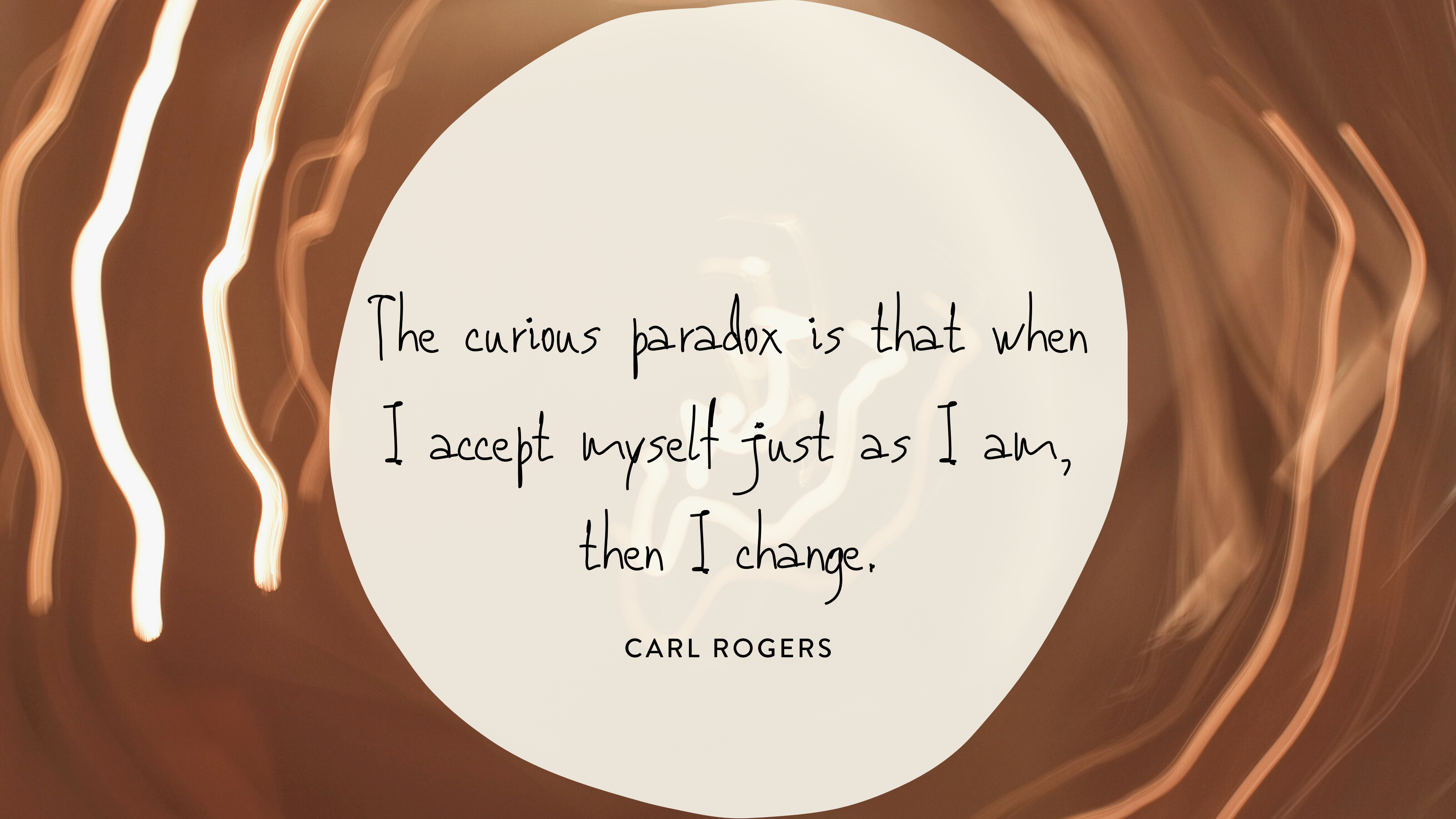
THE SHAME GREMLIN

Shame is highly co-related with Depression, Anxiety, Suicide, Bullying, Addiction, Aggression, Eating Disorders, Violence.

Shame = blame + disconnection + fear.

THE VOICES OF SHAME

- Never _____ enough.
- Who do you think you are?



The curious paradox is that when
I accept myself just as I am,
then I change.

CARL ROGERS

Self Compassion - Dr. Kristin Neff



SELF-KINDNESS VS SELF-JUDGEMENT

Being warm and understanding toward ourselves when we suffer, fail, or feel inadequate, rather than ignoring our pain or flagellating ourselves with self-criticism.



COMMON HUMANITY VS ISOLATION

Recognising that suffering and personal inadequacy is part of the shared human experience – rather than being something that happens to 'me' alone.



MINDFULNESS VS OVER-IDENTIFICATION

Taking a balanced approach to our difficult emotions so that feelings are neither suppressed nor exaggerated. We cannot ignore our pain and feel compassion for it at the same time.

Rogers' Unconditional Positive Regard



DEFINITION

"It means caring for the client as a separate person, with permission to have his own feelings, his own experiences." Not simply about liking someone. Also means respecting their agency, and valuing them as individuals doing their best to move forward in ways they deem most constructive.

MEETING OUR SHAME WITH UPR

- Being able to regard ourselves positively without any T&C's.
- Providing a nurturing and accepting internal environment during period of struggle.

AS PROFESSIONALS

Knowing and working on our own shame makes it much less likely that we will become uncomfortable or engage in countertransference if a client brings up similar experiences.

References & Additional Reading

- Brown, B. (2006). Shame resilience theory: A grounded theory of women and shame. *Families in Society*, 87 (01).
- Brown, B. (2010). *The Gifts of Imperfection: Letting Go of Who We Think We Should Be and Embracing Who We Are*. Center City: Hazelden.
- Neff, K. D. & Tóth-Király (in press). The Self-Compassion Scale. In O. N. Medvedev, C. U. Krägeloh, R. J. Siegert and N. N. Singh (Eds.) *Handbook of assessment in mindfulness*. New York: Springer.
- Neff, K. D., Long, P. Knox, M., Davidson, O., Kuchar, A., Costigan, A., Williamson, Z., Rohleder, N., Tóth-Király, I., & Breines, J. (2018). The forest and the trees: Examining the association of self-compassion and its positive and negative components with psychological functioning. *Self and Identity*. 17 (6), 627-645.
- Neff, K. D. & Davidson, O. (2016). Self-compassion: Embracing suffering with kindness. In I. Ivtzan & T. Lomas (Eds.), *Mindfulness in Positive Psychology* (pp. 37-50). Routledge.

Interior Gardening

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES



CONNECT WITH ME

- Email - niharica@interiorgardening.co.in
- Website - www.interiorgardening.co.in
- Social Media - [@interiorgardeningindia](https://www.instagram.com/interiorgardeningindia)

ABOUT

Interior Gardening Psychological Services was founded in 2018 with the intention of creating safe spaces for individuals and groups to explore, express and transform themselves. Niharica has a Person-Centred and Psychodynamic approach in her work. She aims to help individuals become more compassionate towards themselves, and thereby, with the community at large.

SERVICES OFFERED

- Individual Psychotherapy (Verbal and Expressive Arts)
- Group Therapy and Facilitation
- Corporate Mental Wellbeing Initiatives
- Youth Wellbeing Programs
- Personal Development Workshops
- Learning and Development for Mental Health Professionals
- NEW! Mental Health Products