**Background**

Self-compassionate individuals treat themselves with the compassion and care shown to others, namely to treat themselves with kindness, recognising their shared humanity and being mindful when considering their negative qualities.

A greater capacity for self-compassion is associated with psychological wellbeing and the intention to engage in health promoting activities but what about motives to exercise?

**Study Purpose:**

Explore, the influence of self-compassion for regular exercisers on activity.

Does self-determined motivation mediate the influence of self-compassion on physical activity involvement?

**Participants**

Recruited via running clubs, **Parkrun** and social media groups

- 351 Participants completed the online survey

**Measures & Analysis**

- **Self-Compassion Scale** (Neff, 2003)
  - 26 items
  - 6 sub-scales + Total Self-Compassion

- **International Physical Activity Questionnaire LF** (Craig et al, 2003)
  - 27 items
  - 4 activity domains inc. Leisure

- **Demographics**
  - Age, Gender
  - Body Mass (height and Weight)
  - General health status
  - Disability

Analysis:

- Bivariate Correlations of SCS and BREQ-2 sub-scales
- Independent t-tests of gender differences
- One-way ANOVA of age group differences
- Mediation Analyses of Total METs and Leisure METs (SPSS Process)

**Findings**

**Table 1: Bivariate correlations between Total METs and Leisure METs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Total METs</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Leisure METs</td>
<td>- .03</td>
<td>- .05</td>
<td>- .02</td>
<td>- .03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>- .07</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Self-Compassion</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Self-Kindness vs Self-Judgement</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Common Humanity vs Isolation</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Mindfulness vs Over-Identification</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusions**

- Older adults and men involved in regular exercise display greater self-compassion than women and younger exercisers. In particular taking a balanced view of negative emotions (feelings are neither suppressed nor exaggerated).
- Older adults and men are less likely to exercise to maintain self-esteem or to avoid guilt
- Older adults are also less likely to exercise due to pressure exerted by others or external reinforcers.
- Self-determined motivation mediates the influence of self-compassion on physical activity, more so for total activity than planned leisure activity.

**References**

