FEBRUARY 2026 VOLUME 55

Dinner Dialogue

ALLEN COUNTY DRUG AND ALCOHOL CONSORTIUM



In This Edition

THEME OF THE MONTH

DINNER DISCUSSION IDEAS

ATOD TOPIC

WHY DINNNER DIALOGUES

Self-Compassion

You may have heard of self-care (doing things that support your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing), but have you heard of self-compassion?



Self-compassion means being kind and understanding toward ourselves when we suffer, fail, or feel inadequate, rather than ignoring our pain or approaching ourselves with self-criticism. Being self-compassionate means being helpful and encouraging to ourselves, just like a good friend would be.

Self-Compassion Institute
WITH DR. KRISTIN NEFF

DINNER DISCUSSION TOPICS

Self-Compassion

- When a friend is having a hard time, what are some ways you may offer to support them? Which of these things could you do for yourself next time you struggle?
- When a friend is upset with themselves, what are some things you may say to them? Do you think it would help to say these things to yourself when you are frustrated or when you fail?
- How do you know when you are happy and comfortable?
- What are some things you do that make you feel better?
- When you fail at something, what are some things you think about yourself?
- When your friend fails at something, what are some things you think about them?
- How and why are these different? How can we change our inner voice to match the support we would show a friend?

Activities to Foster Self-Compassion

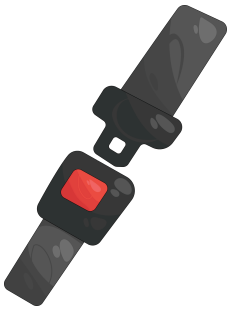
- **Journaling** about hard times has many benefits. Taking the time to write out how you feel and why you feel that way helps us clarify our emotions, identify causes and effects with our emotions, and even improves our physical and emotional well-being by lowering blood pressure and improving immune function.
- **Hug**! It's well established that hugging others has many benefits (both physically and emotionally), but you don't always have someone around to hug. Next time you need a hug and no one's around to give one, wrap your arms around yourself and squeeze tight. Hugging yourself may seem silly, but it can reduce stress after you make a mistake or have a hard day.
- **Gently notice your self-talk**; both internal and external. Sometimes, without even really noticing or meaning to, we can insult ourselves after making a mistake or when frustrated. Language matters! Next time you are struggling, pay a bit of attention to the thoughts you have about yourself and the things you say. The more often you intentionally remind yourself that you're doing your best and it's okay to have a hard time or a hard day, your self-talk will naturally become kinder and more understanding.
    - It's important to remember that self-compassion requires taking a *balanced, mindful approach* to our suffering so that we neither suppress or exaggerate it. No need to police your thoughts!

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Topic

Harm Reduction and the Never Use Alone Lifeline

Harm reduction is an approach to do exactly that: reduce risk of harm. There are many things each of us do that come with risk. An everyday example of this is drive, but sometimes we do things like sky dive or do Jiu Jitsu. All of these things come with risk, yet we choose to do them anyway.

This is where harm reduction comes into play.



A few examples of harm reduction in our everday lives include wearing sunscreen to reduce the risk of harm from sun exposure and wearing a seatbelt when we drive to reduce the risk of being seriously physically harmed in case of an accident.



When addressing substance use disorders, harm reduction is a practical and transformative approach that incorporates community-driven public health strategies — including prevention, risk reduction, and health promotion — to empower people who use drugs (and their families) with the choice to live healthy, self-directed, and purpose-filled lives.

Another example of harm reduction is ensuring that people who use drugs have access to life-saving resources such as Never Use Alone.

Never Use Alone provides toll-free national overdose prevention, detection, life-saving crisis response, and medical intervention services for people who use drugs while alone. Never Use Alone's peer operators are available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
"No stigma. No judgment. Just love!"

If you or a loved one plans to use drugs alone, please call Never Use Alone at **877-696-1996.**



February is American Heart Month

All About CPR

CPR stands for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation. When someone has a heart attack or nearly drowns, their breathing or heart may stop. If this happens, CPR can help save a life!

How do I do CPR?
There are many resources for getting trained in CPR. Parkview Health, Three Rivers Ambulance Authority, The American Red Cross, and more all offer certification courses locally, For a free, online resource to learn more about CPR, please see below.

Why should I learn CPR?
If someone is without a pulse and without breathing, doing CPR on them gets oxygen and blood where it needs to be manually. If performed immediately, CPR can double or triple a person's chance of survival after cardiac arrest.

What if I hurt someone?
Although we cannot and do not provide legal advice, Indiana has Good Samaritan laws that help protect bystanders when intervening. If acting reasonably and in good faith, you can usually rest assured that you will be immune from civil liabilty when acting in an emergency.

To access a free, online CPR course, visit the QR code above or Google "American Health Care Academy Free CPR Course."

Why Dinner Dialogues?

Consistent and open communication with your children will boost their self-esteem, improve their self-image, and empower them to make long term healthy decisions.

When they begin to feel heard and understood by the most important people in their life, they will be less likely adhere to the voice of other influences.

Youth who eat dinner with their family are less likely to:
Use tobacco/nicotine
Use alcohol
Use marijuana
Have friends that use tobacco/nicotine, alcohol, or marijuana
Plan to use drugs in the future
Feel depressed
Think about suicide
Have sex early
Engage in risky behaviors
Make poor decisions

Have an idea for a topic, issue, or something else you'd like to see in a future edition of Dinner Dialogue?

Please submit your anonymous feedback by scanning this QR code with your phone's camera!
Alternatively, visit www.dacac.org to find the survey.