Kirsten  
I don't have a set of questions. It really is about you just talking about what you think about self empathy, whether you think it even is a thing. And in you know and and just you know your thoughts and feelings about that and whatever you say is is absolutely fine so.

Charley  
I've definitely got a few things in mind which I'm sort of happy to share, but did you have any sort of questions you wanted to ask first or?

Kirsten  
No, it really is just for you to start wherever you want to start. You know, with an experience or with a thought or a feeling, it's just over to you.

Charley  
OK, so the first thing that comes to mind that I thought this morning. Was the fact that I had my first client yesterday? So yeah, as exciting and as like sort of. Uplifting as and you know, as it would be, I sort of went into it thinking, OK, it's the perfect example of the need for self empathy. Because I went in and you could go in there thinking like, oh, this could happen, this could happen and oh, what if I don't say this or and you sort of worry over so many possibilities. And it's the first ever time and. I just took 10 minutes in my room in my therapy room, just to sort of ground myself and to put it all into perspective for me. Really help to sort of go. OK, well, you know, the important thing for me here is just to get a sense of my clients world, just their internal world, what's going on for them, keeping at their pace. I'm not there to perform any miracles to to say the right things. To sort of come up with something really clever that they want to hear, it's purely just staying at their level, understanding them, and then just reflecting and paraphrasing and just asking any questions. If there's like a need for me to get, get a bit of clarity. And so I just sort of said those words to myself while I sat there and I just breathed and I just got used to the room because it's I've only been in that room for my induction. I was only in there for like, an hour, so I hadn't really properly sat in there and knowing that, it's just going to be me and the clients, so. I think that was really important to have that self. Sort of discussion and like I suppose it is a form of self empathy, because you sort of having that talk to yourself and you sort of reassuring yourself. And then even afterwards. I felt it went as well as it possibly could go and I was sort of happy with the way it went and I felt like there is a possibility to build a sort of therapeutic relationship with my client and afterwards, you know, you can't help but overthink it and analyse it and partly thought, yeah, I could pick it apart and I could say like, oh, maybe I didn't quite do this well enough and I didn't do that, but I just thought, what, what purpose does that solve and that in that moment now, now that I've already done that. So by having that frame of mind and way of thinking. Really helped me realise that what I needed, and then afterwards I was like, you know what, I'm going to go for a really nice walk. And so I did and the sun came out and that was lovely. And I came home. I just put on like a good a good TV show. Had a nice lunch and I knew I needed to do something for myself. Rather than like over thinking about it and and sort of stressing. So that's a prime example of, but I've only learnt to do that I think. From what I've learned from the course. And moments where we have had points of self empathy, where we've sort of. Done a bit of mindfulness or meditation, or we've sort of flown about some scarves and done some dancing and all that sort of stuff. And as sort of silly as that sounds in perspective at points, thinking back is actually like, Oh well, letting loose and being silly and doing those things actually. Has served as a good reminder for me to sort of do that, or at least be kind to myself and not have to think. Oh, I'm in uni, I should be doing really academic things all the time, but. But I'm stuck here with like a glittery scarf and I'm dancing around and it made me think, OK, maybe maybe this is just as important. So yeah, because when I think back prior to this course when I was doing my, when I'm XXXX and when I was sort of stuck in a rut with with work. My former self empathy was just it was never really there. I always wanted to to do more for myself. But. And ever have so much on and I make up excuses being like, Oh yeah, I'd love to sit and, you know, sit down and relax and do that. But I've got this to XXXX, I've got. I've got this to sort out and I've got this to think about next and there will always be like an excuse that would stop me from having that form of empathy for myself. But now, despite the fact that I'm still working and still doing that for two days and doing this course I've got so much on but somehow I'm not giving myself those. Excuses and saying, oh, I've got so much on. I can't just sit down and relax and I'm finding whenever there's a tiny moment or something to do to say, Oh no, you know what? Screw it. I'm going to go for a walk. I'm going to sit for 10 minutes and just listen to some nice music or maybe no. I'm just more in tune to my own needs and feelings, which this course has given me, which is good. I know some people might have the opposite feelings from the course and thinking that maybe like you know, it's. Endured more stress and hasn't given them the chance to be empathic, but I feel like I'm a positive case in the sense of what it's given me. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean, I just thought 'cause, that was the prime example 'cause. That's just the sort of fresh in my mind with the with my client being sort of only yesterday. And yeah, but yeah, previously trying to, I'm trying to think back to a really specific scenario.

Kirsten  
It's OK. I mean that that was a really interesting scenario, but you. I mean, you're talking about it in terms of self-care. But you're also what I heard was you're also. Relating it to being more in tune with how you feel, and there's a recognition that you need it and almost an understanding that you need it in a way you didn't understand it before. That's what I'm hearing.

CHarley  
Yeah, yeah. Yeah, exactly. It's sort of. Through this course, because we've had to sort of almost lay everything bare is what I found. Like you have to have your heart literally like out in the open like, beating, going here you go is this is what it looks like and then you and then what your brain's out there. You just feel like especially for the first couple of months just felt naked all the time and like every with everyone's get out with torchlights on me and I'm like OK Yep. This is me. Yep. Nice to hello. Yes I got a. For a towel I could use OK never mind. Literally it was. You know, you feel so sort of almost vulnerable and everyone's sort of going. OK, this is what's going on in my life. And there's no layers to it. Everyone just let everything out. And it was it was, it was not what I was used to at all. So that like, that was a lot to to witness and and to absorb. But initially. And then why don't you sort of get used to it and you realise that? Everyone else is the same. And that you're all just sort of like Adam and Eve just walking around the forest together and you realise, like, it's OK because they're the same, you know? And so it made it sort of made it OK in the end. But you know before then, especially in other forms of work, So many people are so tough on themselves or there's no time for to, for even compassion or empathy or empathy for yourself or. For others, the members of staff you can get so consumed and so like absorbed by it, whereas doing a course like this, you're sort of encouraged to look after yourself to, to look after others like our personal development group, you're just listening to others share their stories. And for me or actually, this is a good. I just remembered a few other things. From last year's personal development. A great a great form of self empathy for me was when. Someone in our group just disclosed the fact that I'd had such an impression on them and made such an impact on them that it changed their views on on how they see other people and how they and how they sort of. They've gone into the the world in a whole different light and all this sort of stuff. And I was just like, well, I haven't done anything special. I've just been myself and just just sort of showing them that. And clearly that was enough and for me to get that sort of confirmation that I'm enough. But I'm more than enough to the point where I've had an impact on someone so greatly by just being me is like the most powerful form of sort of empathy that I felt. Towards me, but then that added on to my own self empathy, because then I'm like, wow, they they think that that must mean I I I do good and I I do make a really good impression and that I I do care and and people really value and respect me and Oh well and it just feeds my my like need to be kind to myself. Which is, which is lovely. I guess.

Kirsten  
So I'm kind of hearing then the because I remember that that was incredibly powerful. I remember that happening. So am I right in thinking then that you think that the two are linked, that sort of given empathy to others is linked to giving empathy to yourself, and it's almost like a feeding of both if you're kind to yourself, it helps you to be kind to others. Do do you think it is like that or?

Chris  
I in my case I'd say so. Yeah, because knowing that I've had that sort of impact and someone's sharing all of all of those lovely sort of compliments and feelings of of empathy and and sort of love towards me only allows me to take from that a positive thing that I can give back to myself as well, I think. I mean. In a way, I can imagine some people wouldn't know what to do with that and they would make him feel uncomfortable, or maybe make them question it, but I'm sort of quite gullible. I'm like, oh, that's great. Thanks. And I just sort of take it. And I'm like, thank you. Thank you. That's. So I just, I just let that I just, yeah, I just I'm at that point where I don't really sort of overthink things as much now even sort of dangerously to the point where I used to live inside my head. Thank you so much that I go, oh, I could say this, but no one really needs to know or no one really cares. So maybe it's probably better that you just, you know, don't say it at all. And I'll go. Oh, OK. And I had these little internal voices, whereas now I'm like, oh, I'm going to say this, I'm going to say this, and it will just come out and then my brain will go wait, did you have a chance to think about how that could come out to others too late and it? And so I'm, like, trying to catch up with my words rather than. Overthink it and not say it, so I don't know whether that is positive or negative. I suppose that's a bit of both, but I think it's because I'm in quite a congruentt place within what I say. What I feel and think. There all seem to be quite clear and coherent at the moment, especially after I guess personal therapy definitely helps. So that's definitely a key thing to to link to empathy as well. And self, self love, self empathy. There's personal therapy because. Having that as well as everything else on the course, having someone I know you have to pay them everything else, but you still have you still having someone that is sitting and listening to you unconditionally and just, you know, sometimes I wouldn't even bring in anything serious. It could just be complaining about the course or a really tough assignment, but they were just there. They just absorbed everything and just gave nothing but empathy back to me. And so that can only. So it was like holding a sort of a mirror up. So I'm only looking back at my reflection in a way. And it only gave me. What I needed and to help me get through the whole year really. Because without that, I'd say myself empathy would have been a lot more of a struggle. Because assignments in the academic side of things, I'm naturally quite tough on myself when it comes to academia and everything else, because obviously going to lead into my upbringing and everything else only because I've sort of been. Up to. You know to do things right, to not make mistakes, to work really hard to the point where, like, you know, you should never give up or never quit or or never complain XXXXXXXXXXX sort of give myself credit when it was due. When I did work hard and think I know I need to work harder than others to pick up on the same information. Drawn back to this course I know compared to 'cause, there's so many capable and so many smart and creative and intelligent. And you know so many people from amazing backgrounds. And I've never done any form of psychology or counselling or anything at ucse at a level. At degree level and then, so here's me the crazy one going. Oh yeah, it'd be a great idea. Let's do a master's level version of it when I've never even done psychology at GCSE. So I basically knew who Freud was, and that was it. And I was like, OK. And everyone's like, oh, yeah, so, you know, psychoanalysis, it's it's this. And the theory, oh, it's maybe it could work on this. I'm literally like haha, literally going home, Googling what everyone says in the first couple of months just to get an idea. And then just almost felt like a like. Like sort of like I was committed identity fraud or something like I was being this like. There was, like, deceiving everyone. It just didn't seem right at the beginning, and that was hard because there was a lot of self doubt there and there was a lot of points when I was sort of thinking, OK, I've got this assignment to do and I'd be overthinking it and I'd be like, oh, you're not smart enough to do this. Why do you think, you know, why are you doing this to yourself? And it's really hard. Or maybe maybe you should, you know. By this, instead or is this really what you want to do and so many internal voices in my head were going off? The great thing is there's never, ever been a voice that said you should quit. I anything that I've applied myself to I've always finished. I don't quit. It's not in my nature to to quit. I don't where that must be. Something I've picked up from my father, which I guess I'm grateful for. But in terms of the other elements like that, that's that's still there. But now they're sort of whispers. Whereas before they were, like very obvious. Shouts almost every now and then, so I've managed to silence them to a whisper, but that's just that's just something to sort of say from the beginning. In terms of my journey. Yeah, definitely sort of self empathy and that sort of love for myself when it came to academia and and to what I could offer at the beginning of the course was right. It was like bottom level. I didn't have any of those positive.

Charley  
Feelings or thoughts at all? So that's something. To think over. Hmm.  
KIRSTEN   
Is that the prominent aspect? Is it a self love you've you've also mentioned self-care.

Charley  
Hmm.

Kirsten  
And sort of a reduction in self doubt. But if I had to sort of pin you down a bit more, what what would you say is sort of your defining feature of this self empathy thing?

Charley  
Oh. Yeah, I guess I've never really thought or used the term myself, so trying to sort of Pin it down or or sum it up XXXXXXXX

Kirsten  
It you might not, you might not think it's helpful, to do that and that's fine. You might see it as too slippery to do that and that's OK.

Charley  
Well, 'cause, when I think of empathy. I think of it's it's, it's warmth, it's, it's sort of providing a sense of like compassion. And awareness and. Like. It's like a felt sense with that other person. So I'm trying to see it for myself. I guess. How I see it for myself would be. The awareness of what's going on within me and being kind to. To that. So a voice, if it's good or bad and sort of understanding why it's there and. Sort of respecting it and allowing it to sort of be there or if it needs to fester. If it's negative, then that's fine. But it's just sort of being with that for yourself, I suppose. So being sort of empathic to yourself would just be like saying, you know, you don't have to be really happy right now or it's OK to be sad or it's sort of making peace with whatever that feeling is within you, I suppose. Yeah, that's.

Kirsten  
So it sounds like you describe almost describing. Two voices almost or there's you, and then there's a voice. It's almost like there's two cells, almost and. Maybe acknowledging that voice or your, I don't know, telling that voice to go away, maybe, or, but I'm hearing, like, two different aspects that enables the self empathy, maybe.

CHarley  
Yeah. Yeah. Because I feel like there is that internal voice that. So if everyone has but I sort of see as a as a as like an aeration for me. It's just like a narration of what's going on. So I think that's important to to listen to. But then there's also like a gut feeling and like a felt sense within you. And so those two seem to be either working on the same team or sometimes completely against each other. So I guess having that self empathy would be sort of going OK, you know, Red team and blue team, you know, let's work together here. You know, we're on the same side. And you know, it's sort of getting them to to sort of see each other's pros and cons and to to work with each other rather than it being. You know a separate, separate thing. And then I think for me that's where congruence happens. And then that's when you can be at your true self empathic sense when you're completely clear with what you think, or so correlates with how you feel and the actions you do. And it's all like smooth blowing. If any one of them is interrupted, then you then that's when the negative thoughts come in, and that's one prevents. That's what prevents self empathy, I think. So it's when, you know, not all the characters are playing ball 11 character's gone off when he's ripped off the gripped and he's he's just gone home and the others are like well we, you know we've got a show to put on. So that's what it's like for me when all the characters know their lines they're all on stage and they're all doing their best. Then it'll make sense when one is out of alignment. Then that's when things get a bit blurry for me anyway.

Kirsten  
That's that's really, really interesting. OK. Thank you for that. I've only really got one more thing to ask and again, you might not be able to answer it. It might not be relevant, but you mentioned I think you said you know there's you've got. So I see your gut as being maybe one of these characters. There are others, and I wondered whether one of them is the gut. I wondered whether one of the others was like the cognitive, like maybe the thinking side. I've got like the thinking bit and but then you've got your gut bit and this may be the emotional character I just wondered, were they the sort of different characters that you meant or was it not really like that?

Charley  
Yeah, yeah, I know that's a probably a more sort of. Practical way to see it definitely would be the the gut feeling I think is separate. So then my cognitive thoughts and then my emotions. So they all would be separate characters that have their say within that whole performance, if that makes sense. So yeah, they'd all be separate just for me 'cause. You know, you get people that say, oh, I'm. I'm like, I'm, you know, I think with my head, I think with my heart or my gut I'm a gut person for some reason I just sort of have that gut feeling and that's always usually been right for me to have a sort of to sort of go oh, this doesn't seem right or this this definitely feels right. I'm just going to go with that over my own sort of thought I'll get like a feeling in my gut and that sort of what I'll use. To go with first, but if my head doesn't agree with that gut feeling or my emotions don't, then that's when it's best up when when all three of them, especially the. Epic Tripod or agree with each other then that's a good sign for me and that lets me or it or it opens the door for more self empathy. I think if the three agree with each other.

Kirsten  
Yeah. Yeah, that that doors. And it's really interesting. Thank you so much. It's given me a lot to think about. I've just found it fascinating to listen to what you've had to say. Have you got anything else you want to add, or are you?

Charley  
Yeah. And I think I mainly just wanted to, yeah, share share what, what was sort of at the forefront of my mind from this morning, which I think I did, which is good because I think that was important to share that. And then I have gone into negative thinking patterns and other things that I know I have done in the past and still do, but not as much just because I wanted to sort of not just be an advocate of everything that I do is, is positive and self self empathy. I wanted to share that. The other side of it as well and try to balance it out so you get. A sort of a more all rounded perspective rather than me just being like yeah, everything's great for me because obviously that's not always true. But yeah.

Kirsten  
Thanks.

CHarley  
Yeah, yeah, no problem. I think, yeah. As long as that's hopefully enough. Unless you had anything else you wanted to.

Kirsten  
I I don't have any expectations. It really is about listening to you and you know there's no right or wrong with this. It's it's I'm interested in your story and what you think. So that's fine. I'll turn the recording off now.