

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences  
Faculty of Tourism Imatra  
Degree Programme in Tourism  
Tourism and Hospitality

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**Self-compassion and compassion at work**  
**Case: hotel manager**

Thesis 2016

## **Abstract**

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Self-compassion and compassion at work Case: hotel manager, 27 pages, 4 appendices

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The objective of the study was to study how the concept of self-compassion and compassion can be seen in the management style of a manager who works in the hospitality industry. A case of hotel manager was chosen and investigated.

Theoretical data for this study was collected mostly from the Internet and some common knowledge of the author. A manager working in hospitality industry was contacted by the author and psychological scales were used to measure how the manager is compassionate towards himself and others. After collecting the results of the scales an interview was done with the manager.

The results show that both self-compassion and compassion for others can be seen and are important in the work of hotel managers. As the author took qualitative approach to the question and investigated positive side of self-compassion and compassion, quantitative research of the topic or investigation of negative side of self-compassion and compassion could be done in the future.

Keywords: self-compassion, compassion for others, management, hotel

## Table of contents

1	Introduction .....	5
1.1	Research questions .....	5
1.2	Research method .....	5
2	Compassion, self-compassion and management work.....	5
2.1	Definition of the concept compassion and 'self-compassion' .....	6
2.1.1	Self kindness .....	7
2.1.2	Common Humanity.....	8
2.1.3	Mindfulness .....	8
2.2	Difference between self-compassion and some other psychological concepts.....	8
2.2.1	Self esteem .....	9
2.2.2	Difference between self-compassion and self esteem .....	9
2.2.3	Unconditional self acceptance.....	10
2.2.4	Difference and similarity between self-compassion and unconditional self acceptance.....	11
2.3	Definition of management work in hospitality industry .....	11
3	Research and results.....	13
3.1	Introduction of the case and the research.....	13
3.2	Introduction of the case hotel manager.....	13
3.2.1	Hotel Sunroute Tokuyama.....	13
3.2.2	The manager .....	14
3.3	Introduction to self-compassion scale developed by Neff .....	16
3.3.1	Self-compassion scale .....	16
3.3.2	Compassion for others scale .....	17
3.4	Results and analysis.....	18
3.4.1	Results of self-compassion scale .....	18
3.4.2	Results of compassion for others scale.....	19
3.5	Results of the interview.....	20
3.6	Analysis and findings from the interview with the case manager .....	21
3.7	Self-compassion .....	21
3.7.1	Self-kindness.....	21
3.7.2	Common humanity and isolation .....	22
3.7.3	Mindfulness and over-identification .....	22
3.8	Compassion for others.....	23
3.8.1	Kindness and indifference .....	23
3.8.2	Common humanity and separation.....	24
3.8.3	Mindfulness and disengagement.....	25
4	Conclusion and suggestion for further research .....	26
5	References .....	28

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Self-compassion scale

Appendix 2: Compassion towards others scale

Appendix 3: Self-compassion scale translated into Japanese

## Appendix 4: Compassion towards others scale translated into Japanese

## **1 Introduction**

This thesis will examine the influence of the concept of self-compassion by Neff (2003) and compassion over the work of hotel managers by using case study with a hotel manager. First, literature review is made and then the case study with the manager is examined. This research is useful not only for managers but also for normal workers who work in hospitality industry as the thesis examines usefulness of the concept of self-compassion and compassion for others for more peaceful mind set at work in hospitality industry.

### **1.1 Research questions**

The aim for this thesis is to research how the psychological concept of self-compassion and compassion for others are seen or used in the management style of a manager of the hospitality industry. There are many studies made about the relation between self-compassion and compassion and various fields by many researchers, however, there are no studies made for the topic hospitality manager and self-compassion, thus this field needs some development.

### **1.2 Research method**

The thesis uses qualitative method to examine the question, meaning two scales are used and an interview is done in addition to the literature review. The first part of the thesis introduces the readers into the theory of self-compassion and compassion. In this part, comparisons of the theory of self-compassion and other psychological theories are made as self-compassion can be a new idea for many of the readers. In the second part the definition of hospitality manager and their work descriptions are introduced. Finally, in the third part, results of the Self-Compassion Scale and Compassion for Others Scale done by the case manager and the interview with a case manager are analyzed.

## **2 Compassion, self-compassion and management work**

Kristin Neff (2015) is one of the pioneer researchers of the concept self-compassion. Neff did her undergraduate study of communication at the

University of California at Los Angeles and received her Bachelor's degree in 1988, and did her graduate study of moral development at University of California at Berkeley and received Doctoral degree in 1997. She published a scale to measure self-compassion in 2003 and has developed an 8-week program to teach self-compassion skill which is called Mindful Self-Compassion. Also, she wrote a book, *Self-Compassion* in 2011. Currently she is an associate professor in human development at the University of Texas at Austin since 2006. In this chapter the definition of self-compassion and compassion is explained. (Neff 2015.)

## **2.1 Definition of the concept compassion and 'self-compassion'**

According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary, the word compassion means "*a feeling of wanting to help someone who is sick, hungry, in trouble, etc*" (Merriam-Webster 2015). As Neff (2003) claims, feeling compassionate towards oneself is the same as feeling compassionate towards others. Self-compassion originally comes from Buddhist psychology. There are three components in compassion, which are mindfulness, kindness and common humanity. When being compassionate towards others, these three components can be seen when an individual first recognizes the pain of others, which is mindfulness, treat them with kindness, which is literally kindness, and realizes that suffering is something that every human being experiences, which is common humanity. Compassion is usually directed towards others, however, as Neff (2003) points out a concept of self-compassion literally means having compassion towards yourself. People can have compassion not only towards others but also towards themselves as well, because having compassion means to be understanding and caring not only to other people who are suffering but also to themselves when in difficult situation. (Neff 2003.)

Neff (2015) defined self-compassion as being '*kind and understanding when confronted with personal failings*' (Neff 2015). Like compassion, the three components of self-compassion are mindfulness, self-kindness and common humanity. The idea of self-compassion is that when one is suffering, having a difficult time or failed with something, instead of criticizing their shortcomings

and negative sides, one can recognize their suffering, be kind to themselves self and understand the difficulty as a shared human experience. Similar to the theory of compassion, the first step of self-compassion is mindfulness, which means to recognize the pain of oneself in hard situations. The next step is self-kindness, which is to feel the desire to help oneself in a problematic situation. The last is common humanity, which means to realize that failure and imperfection can occur to any person in this world and recognise that pain as a shared human experience. (Neff 2015.)

There are many studies made by Neff (2015) and fellow researchers researching topics ranging from how self-compassion and well-being and happiness is related to self-compassion and well-being in parents of children with autism to the role of self-compassion in romantic relationships. Research done by other researchers, partly including Neff (2015) as an author, come from variety of fields, for instance, self-compassion and age, gender, culture, body image, eating behaviour, care-giving and burn-out, self-compassion in clinical contexts, coping and resilience, health behaviours and athletics, interpersonal concerns, self-compassion interventions, general reviews of self-compassion, comparisons with mindfulness, self-compassion as an outcome of mindfulness and compassion interventions, motivation, psychological functioning, positive psychology, psychological well-being, self-esteem, and in work contexts. However, there are no studies made for the topic, tourism and hospitality manager and self-compassion. (Neff & Beretvas 2013; Neff & Costigan 2014; Neff & Faso 2014; Neff 2015.)

### **2.1.1 Self kindness**

In the theory of compassion, the concept is defined as simply kindness. Kindness towards others means showing the kindness to those who are suffering and usually it is much easier to do so towards others than themselves as people are very used to criticize themselves. They get ashamed and feel inadequate when they fail, suffer or make mistakes and rarely show kindness to themselves when faced with difficulties, as people often think being kind to oneself is being self-indulgent or feeling self-pity. (Neff 2015.)

However, Neff (2015) claims that being warm and understanding towards oneself when faced with difficult situations is important. By being self-compassionate, people can recognize that experiencing sufferings and being imperfect is unavoidable and can be kind to themselves when faced with difficulties. To accept the fact that one cannot always be a perfectly ideal self with sympathy and kindness can bring emotional equanimity. (Neff 2015.)

### **2.1.2 Common Humanity**

All human beings suffer, but people tend to forget that fact and isolate themselves thinking that all the bad things are happening to only them. Common humanity theory points out that suffering and feeling inadequate is a common experience for all humans and recognize the suffering as experience that happens not only to themselves alone. (Neff 2015.)

### **2.1.3 Mindfulness**

Mindfulness involves two meanings, which are “*maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thought, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment*” and “*acceptance, meaning that we pay attention to our thoughts and feelings without judging them*” (Weiss & Hickman 2015). Additionally, Neff (2015) describes mindfulness as seeing a suffering situation from a larger perspective by relating one’s situation to that of other people’s. Hence, mindfulness is a non-judgemental mind that one is not over-identifying any thoughts and not suppressing nor deny any feelings. (Neff 2015.)

## **2.2 Difference between self-compassion and some other psychological concepts**

There are many psychological concepts which are both different and similar to the concept of self-compassion. As there are so many of them, the main few concepts were chosen and discussed below.



### **2.2.1 Self esteem**

The concept of self esteem is defined as a personal value or the sense of self-worth of a person. The concept of self esteem is defined as how valuable one thinks they are to others and to the world. Self esteem can include many aspects of the person, for example appearance, beliefs, emotions, behaviours or influence from other people. There is global self esteem which is normally constant, and situational self esteem which can fluctuate depending on the situation such as work, home, school, etc. Too little self esteem can make people feel depressed but too high self esteem can lead to narcissism. Synonyms of self esteem are self-worth, self-respect, self value, etc. (Amplified life network 2015; Cherry 2015.)

### **2.2.2 Difference between self-compassion and self esteem**

Nowadays in our society to be 'average' is not preferred. It is taught that everyone should feel themselves superior to others. This desire to feel superior to others can result in putting others down in order to secure their own self esteem. Especially when something wrong happens and one's self esteem drops, people tend to self-criticize and be harsh to themselves which can make them feel anxious, insecure and depressed. (Neff 2015.)

Neff (2003) claims that when their self-worth is threatened, self esteem can bring anger, aggression, prejudice and narcissism to people. For that reason, alternative psychological concepts were investigated, such as personal character by Damon (1995), true self-esteem by Deci & Ryan (1995), self-respect by Seligman (1995), or self-efficacy by Bandura (1990). Self-compassion is one of them and the word sounds similar to self esteem, however, Neff (2003) points out that they differ in various ways. (Neff 2003; Neff 2011.)

Self-compassion involves kindness to oneself which makes people be more kind to themselves in hard times or when they have difficulty facing the negative

side of themselves. Self-compassion also involves common humanity, which makes people to think that those difficult situations are experienced by many others which make them feel they are not isolated in the problem but oppositely feel connected to others. Lastly, self-compassion brings mindfulness which enable people to capture the situation in broader and more objective vision. (Neff 2015.)

All in all, self esteem require a person to be superior than the others to feel high self esteem, whereas by using self-compassion a person does not need to be better than the others, but oppositely can gain feeling of connectedness to others while feeling higher self worth. Neff (2015) says that, when compared to self esteem, self-compassion can give better emotional resilience, clearer self-concept, make a person to be more caring in relationships, reduces narcissism and reactive anger. High self-esteem is associated with less depression and anxiety, more positive emotions and optimism, which are the same things that self-compassion offers, however, self-compassion is more effective than self-esteem on negative situations like when their egos are threatened or when things go wrong for them. (Neff 2011; Neff 2015.)

### **2.2.3 Unconditional self acceptance**

Unconditional self acceptance is a psychological concept which allow one to accept themselves no matter what failures they make. According to Ellis (n.d.), accepting oneself unconditionally means one accepts themselves no matter what failure they make or what disapproval they receive, contrary, as a consequence of not accepting themselves one can feel embarrassed, inadequate, anxious, depressed, and shamed. Also, self-acceptance is about accepting the frustrations that are unavoidable in this world. (Ellis n.d.)

Unconditional self acceptance also includes not to think that one's failure, bad habits and negative features constitute as one's whole self and by using unconditional self acceptance one does not need any love, respect or approval given by others. Therefore, the idea of unconditional self acceptance is that the person is 'alright' as they are, they do not need to constantly improve or be

better self to accept themselves because what matters is now and here but not the future. This does not mean that accepting oneself means ignoring the faults and failures but those faults and failures are not relevant to one's basic acceptability. It is when they stop evaluating and grading themselves that they can accept themselves unconditionally. (Seltzer 2008; Grieger 2013.)

#### **2.2.4 Difference and similarity between self-compassion and unconditional self acceptance**

There are some similarities between unconditional self acceptance and self-compassion. When faced with personal shortcomings, by taking self-accepting stance one will naturally want to decrease suffering by being kind to them, hence self-compassion can be a strong motivation for personal growth and change. Similar to self-compassion, by using unconditional self acceptance one can be freed from self-disturbance, can make less focused on the shortcomings of oneself, and make the person think about how the situation can be changed. (Bernard 2013.)

All in all, both methods make the person to try to decrease the suffering and make any changes needed. As Seltzer (2008) points out, unconditional self acceptance may require developing self-compassion. Hence developing more unconditional self-acceptance requires more self-compassion. Neff (2003) also claims that self-compassion includes unconditional self-acceptance in itself as both provide acceptance of self-existence intrinsically. However, unconditional self-acceptance can sometimes be overly emphasizing self-fulfilment without paying enough attention to relationship or communities with others, and that is the difference between self-compassion and unconditional self-acceptance. Self-compassion includes sense of common humanity, which prevents to separate self from others, provide social connectedness, and helps to grow feelings of responsibility to others. (Neff 2003; Seltzer 2008; Bernard 2013.)

### **2.3 Definition of management work in hospitality industry**

According to BusinessDictionary a manager is "*an individual who is in charge of a certain group of tasks, or a certain subset of a company*"

(BusinessDictionary.com 2015). A manager is someone to whom staff report to. For example a front-of-house manager at a restaurant helps the patrons and take care of the hosts, or a project manager can be set for any kind of office project that can have a manager. Depending on what kind of work tasks they have at that department in a company, a manager can be called in different names such as line manager or staff manager. (BusinessDictionary.com 2015.)

Skillwise, according to Priolo (2011), top essential managerial skills are the following; leadership skill, adaptability, good communication skill, skill to develop good relationships, skill of constant personal development and skill to support development of others. According to Oxford Dictionaries the word hospitality means “*the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers*” (Oxford University Press 2015). The work of hospitality managers may include day-to-day operations of a hotel or restaurant, supervising personnel, overseeing facility maintenance, ensuring customer satisfaction and management of administrative and financial records. There are various types of managers in hospitality industry, for example, lodging manager, food service manager, or managers work for travel agencies. Specific duties for each manager also differ based on the job title type. (Priolo 2011; LearningPath.org 2015; Study.com 2015.)

Managers who work in travel agencies help in planning trips for individuals and group of travellers. Food service managers hire, train and schedule employees and take care of the quality of the food the establishment offers, they also handle complaints from customers as well as legal and financial aspects of the business. Lodging managers take care of hotel, motel and inn operation, the work tasks include coordination of front-office activities, setting of room price, keeping track of budgets and interviewing, hiring, and firing staff. Also they have responsibility to make sure customers have good experience in room, dining place, recreation facilities, and that they have a safe stay. (LearningPath.org 2015; Study.com 2015; Study.com n.d.)

### **3 Research and results**

In this chapter first the case of Sunroute Tokuyama hotel is introduced. Secondly, the career background of the hotel manager which the author did an interview with is introduced and lastly, the research method which the author took for the research question and its results are explained.

#### **3.1 Introduction of the case and the research**

A qualitative research was conducted to find how the psychological concept of self-compassion and compassion is seen or used in the management style of a manager of the hospitality industry. The research consisted of two parts. In the first part the manager filled in two scales which were self-compassion scale and compassion for others scale. They were then collected and analyzed.

In the second part an interview was done with the manager. The interview was then recorded, transcribed and analyzed.

#### **3.2 Introduction of the case hotel manager**

A hotel in Yamaguchi prefecture, Japan was contacted and their manager was interviewed. In this chapter the hotel, its basic information, services and facilities and the manager, his career background, his current position and work are introduced.

##### **3.2.1 Hotel Sunroute Tokuyama**

The interview with Mr. Nakanishi, the head of the sub general managers at Hotel Sunroute Tokuyama, was conducted on August 11th 2015 via Skype. Hotel Sunroute Tokuyama is located at the centre of Tokuyama city, the capital of Yamaguchi prefecture, which is located at the southern end of the main island of Japan. Sunroute chain hotel company has 74 hotels all over Japan and 1 in Taiwan. (Sunroute Tokuyama 2015.)

Sunroute Tokuyama was opened in 1982. It is a 9 story building with 66 single rooms, 2 double rooms, 30 twin rooms, 1 suite, 1 Japanese cuisine restaurant, 1 western cuisine restaurant, 3 large, 1 medium and 3 small event halls, a chapel and a shrine for weddings and a car parking lot. They offer various plans for parties, anniversaries, reunions and meetings at their event halls and plans for weddings at their chapel for western style weddings or at shrine for Japanese style weddings. (Sunroute Tokuyama 2015.)

The hotel accepts reservations both online and offline, and they not only offer a normal hotel stay but also have various packages. For example a stay at their suite room with a night view of the famous Yamaguchi oil factories from the window, with instruction sheet on how to enjoy the night view and a late check-out service, or a package for sport teams with special meals carefully cooked to satisfy the athletes both quantity and quality wise including free event hall usage for strategy meetings. Also, wedding service is a big part of the business of Sunroute Tokuyama and they are now planning to launch an entirely new restaurant menu for weddings. (Sunroute Tokuyama 2015.)

### **3.2.2 The manager**

The case manager is the head of the sub general managers at Hotel Sunroute Tokuyama. He was born in 1973 and started his career at Sunroute Tokuyama 13 years ago as a service worker for wedding ceremonies. Soon he was assigned to the captain of the service team, which according to him he was the fastest to get assigned to the captain. After working as a service staff for 5 years he was moved to a new post which was a night receptionist. He was not happy that he had to change the position, and wanted to quit the job, however, as he was not married yet then, he thought of giving it a try. At the end he found out that the receptionist job was time shift wise more stable than his previous position as a service staff, in which very often he had to work after the date changed. (Nakanishi 2015.)

He started to work as a night receptionist and, as a result of steady work shifts, he was able to reconnect with friends, which he did not have time for when he

was working as a service staff. As a result, almost all the friends did their wedding at the hotel, which convinced his boss that he is that kind of person who can create a good company around himself. (Nakanishi 2015.)

After 7 years he was told to move to the marketing department, which he was not very happy about but tried to recover the turnover by visiting various companies and promoting the hotel to gain new customers and keep old connections. In the beginning, the turnover recovered rapidly, however, as online booking became more popular, the turnover started to decline. According to the case manager, *“I was tired”, “I suffered and struggled for a month and had to go to psychiatric hospital”, “I was mentally sick and I took time off from the work for a month”* (Nakanishi 2015).

After some years, he was assigned to work as the manager of the reception department. Although all the workers were senior than him they told Nakanishi that they could work as his subordinates. After working as a manager of the reception department, he was promoted to the head of the section chiefs. It was not something he especially wished to be and the work got harder as the position required him to deal with essential part of the hotel’s work, such as finance or insurance. However, he worked hard and as a result gained trust of other workers. The subordinates supported him as, according to the case manager, they knew that he could make the hotel achieve good results. (Nakanishi 2015.)

After working as the head of the section chiefs, he was promoted to the assistant manager. Some years after the manager of the hotel suddenly resigned, and the case manager was then told to become the manager, which he declined as he was not feeling confident enough. However, as an alternative promotion, he was assigned to become the head of the assistant managers, which is technically on the same level of authority as the manager. Now the case manager oversees finance, human resource and many other departments of the hotel. (Nakanishi 2015.)

### **3.3 Introduction to self-compassion scale developed by Neff**

On the homepage of self compassion by Kristin Neff (2003), there is the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS), the Self-Compassion Scale-Short Form (SCS-SF) and the Compassion for Others Scale, which were designed by Neff (2015) to measure the individual levels of self-compassion and compassion for others. The questions in the scales are consisted with items to measure individual levels of self-kindness, self-judgement, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and over-identification for self-compassion scale, and kindness, indifference, common humanity, separation, mindfulness and disengagement for compassion for others scale. (Neff 2015.)

In this thesis, the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) and Compassion for Others Scale are used to measure the level of self-compassion and others-compassion of Mr. Nakanishi. Neff (2015) mentioned on her website of self-compassion organization that *“to all interested, please feel free to use the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) for research or any other use”, “dissertation students also have my permission to use and publish the Self Compassion Scale in their theses”, and “please feel free to use the Compassion for Others scale in your research”* (Neff 2015).

Both scales were translated into Japanese and sent by fax to Mr. Nakanishi’s office on July 4<sup>th</sup>. After answering the questions Mr. Nakanishi sent back the papers to the author on July 10<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Nakanishi was not explained the concept of self-compassion nor compassion for others and did not know about the concept as he told the author in the interview conducted after answering the questions. Samples of the scales are in appendices 1 and 2 and samples of translated version of the scales are in appendices 3 and 4.

#### **3.3.1 Self-compassion scale**

The Self-Compassion Scale is consisted of 26 questions to measure self-kindness, self-judgement, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and over-



identification. In addition to the positively worded questions, self kindness, common humanity and mindfulness, negatively worded questions about self-judgement, isolation, and over-identification, are asked to control agreement response tendency. Self-judgement is explained as when an individual is not kind to oneself, isolation as not having a feeling of common humanity and over-identification as over-identification and exaggeration of pain. (Pommier 2010; Neff 2015.)

Questions are answered from 1 to 5 where 1 is “almost never” and 5 is “almost always.” For items of self-judgement, isolation, and over-identification reverse-score are used when calculating the total score for self-compassion so that the values are reversed as following: 1→5, 2→4, 3→3, 4→2, 5→1. However, when examining each subscales separately, the scores are not reverse-coded. (Neff 2015.)

### **3.3.2 Compassion for others scale**

The Compassion for Others Scale is consisted of 24 questions to measure kindness, indifference, common humanity, separation, mindfulness and disengagement. In addition to the positively worded questions, kindness, common humanity and mindfulness, negatively worded questions about indifference, separation, and disengagement, are asked to control agreement response tendency. Indifference is a state of mind for a person to be dismissive, cold and uncaring, separation is not having a feeling of common humanity and disengagement is explained that an individual tries not to listen to others' sufferings. (Pommier 2010; Neff 2015.)

Questions are answered from 1 to 5 where 1 is “almost never” and 5 is “almost always.” For items of indifference, separation, and disengagement reverse-score are used when calculating the total score for compassion for others so that the values are reversed as following: 1→5, 2→4, 3→3, 4→2, 5→1. However, when examining each subscales separately the scores are not reverse-coded. (Neff 2015.)

### 3.4 Results and analysis

The results of the Self-Compassion Scale and Compassion for Others Scale done by the case manager are shown in this chapter. The results are put into tables and results of each subscales are analyzed comparing the average points and the points case manager got.

#### 3.4.1 Results of self-compassion scale

The results of the Self-Compassion Scale and Compassion for Others Scale are shown below with the permission of the case manager. Results are shown in the tables and each subscales are analyzed by comparing the average points and the points of the case manager.

Subscales	The case manager	Max	Min	Mid
Self kindness	15	25	5	10
Self judgement (Not reverse coded)	10	25	5	10
Common humanity	15	20	5	10
Isolation (Not reverse coded)	7	20	5	10
Mindfulness	19	20	5	10
Over-identification (Not reverse coded)	10	20	5	10
Total (Self judgement, Isolation and Over-identified added after reverse-coded)	100	130	26	104

Max = Maximum score

Min = Minimum score

Mid = Midpoint of the difference between maximum and minimum points

Table 1: Results for self-compassion scale

Table 1 shows that the total score of the case manager was 4 points below the midpoint of the difference of the maximum and the minimum points. The highest point the case manager scored out of the subscales self kindness, common humanity and mindfulness was 19 for mindfulness. For the other

subscales, self kindness and common humanity, he scored 15 for each, which is 5 points more than the midpoint. Among the subscales self judgement, isolation and over-identification, the case manager scored least for isolation, which was 7, 3 points lower than the midpoint and 10 for both self judgement and over-identification, which is the exact midpoint of the difference between maximum and minimum points.

The scores show that the case manager has a high level of mindfulness as the result was only 1 point away from the maximum point. Common humanity and self kindness are also on a high level as both were 5 points above the midpoint.

Low isolation score shows that he does not overly isolate himself in a negative situation. Self judgement and over-identification seemed to be depending on the situation he faces as he scored exact midpoint. Overall, the case manager scored around the midpoint for the whole Self-Compassion Scale, which shows he has average skill of self-compassion but high level of mindfulness.

### 3.4.2 Results of compassion for others scale

Subscales	The case manager	Max	Min	Mid
Kindness	17	20	5	10
Indifference (Not reverse coded)	5	20	5	10
Common humanity	17	20	5	10
Separation (Not reverse coded)	7	20	5	10
Mindfulness	17	20	5	10
Disengagement (Not reverse coded)	6	20	5	10
Total (Indifference, separation, and disengagement added after reverse-coded)	105	120	24	48

Max = Maximum score

Min = Minimum score

Mid = Midpoint of the difference between maximum and minimum points

Table 2: Results for compassion for others scale

Table 2 shows that the total score for Compassion for Others Scale of the manager was 105, which is 57 points higher than the midpoint and 15 points lower than the maximum point. For the subscales kindness, common humanity and mindfulness, he got 17, which is 2 points above the midpoint and 3 points lower than the maximum. For indifference he got the minimum score which is 5. Disengagement is 6, which is 1 point higher than the minimum and 7 for separation which is 2 points higher than minimum score.

The results show that the case manager has very low indifference, in which he scored minimum points. This shows that he is not cold or dismissive towards others. Disengagement and separation are also very low. For positively worded subscales he scored high points, which were all 17. This shows that the case manager has kindness, common humanity and mindfulness towards others with very low sense of indifference.

By comparing results of the case manager's self-compassion and compassion for others scale, there are some differences and similarities. Both for Self-Compassion Scale and Compassion for Others Scale he scored 19 for mindfulness subscale, which is only one point below the maximum point. Hence, it could be said that the case manager has a mindful way of regarding his own situation and also the situation of others.

For the subscales self kindness and common humanity from Self-Compassion Scale, the case manager scored 15 for each, whereas in Compassion for Others Scale, under the subscales for kindness (to others) and common humanity, he scored 17 for both. They were 2 points higher than the same categories from self-compassion scale. It can be analyzed that he holds kindness more towards the others if compared with kindness towards himself, and has more sense of common humanity towards the others than himself.

### **3.5 Results of the interview**

The interview was held on August 11th 2015 via Skype. At this point the case manager had done the Self-Compassion Scale test and Compassion for Others

Scale test, however the results were not revealed to him. In the beginning, he was explained shortly about the concept of compassion and self-compassion, and then the interview was conducted. The interview was semi-structured interview. Mainly 14 questions were asked, however, there were some small questions asked, for example, to make sure what the interviewee had said. The interview was recorded under the agreement of the author and the case manager.

### **3.6 Analysis and findings from the interview with the case manager**

In this chapter, the interview of the case manager is analysed. His statements are categorised under each subscales of the Self-Compassion Scale and the Compassion for Others Scale. The statements are then analyzed on how they contain elements of each subscales.

### **3.7 Self-compassion**

From the analysis of the interview there were some statements made by the case study manager, which include elements of the theory of self-compassion. Almost all the subscale elements excluding self-judgement were seen in the case study manager's statements. Those statements are translated and analyzed under each subscale category below.

#### **3.7.1 Self-kindness**

For the subscale of self-kindness, the case study manager got 15 which is 5 points higher than the midpoint. In the interview when the author asked him how to cope with angry customers, he explained his way of dealing with those customers who demand the hotel to give some kind of compensation for something the hotel cannot be blamed about: *"I fight with those people who are trying to get something out of us for no proper reason, that means I won't be a pushover"* (Nakanishi 2015), also when he faces those situations he keeps in mind that *"when it's necessary, I can decline their demand"* (Nakanishi 2015). These statements show the way he uses self-kindness and protects himself from the worst situations. (Nakanishi 2015.)

As a result of being kind himself, the case study manager is defending the right of not to always respond obediently to the difficult customers. This is important way to behave towards difficult customers, especially in Japan, as customer service there can be quite obedient, which can cause stress on the workers.

### **3.7.2 Common humanity and isolation**

The case study manager got 7 for the subscale isolation, which is 3 points lower than the midpoint, which was 10. According to the case study manager, as he has become mentally stronger with dealing with difficult customers, he does not feel overly stressed by having those customers. However, for many years, he suffered from stress from those situations. He told that *“I didn’t know what to do, of course I trust my colleagues but, you know, I can’t show my weaknesses, right?”* (Nakanishi 2015.)

Also, when the hotel is on a bad situation he *“sometimes explain why it is happening but mostly I keep it in myself”* (Nakanishi 2015). Those statements show that he used to and still does isolate himself from others in some situations. However, he claims that *“now I have some colleagues who I can talk about everything”* (Nakanishi 2015), which shows that he has developed stronger sense of common humanity over the years of working. (Nakanishi 2015.)

### **3.7.3 Mindfulness and over-identification**

For the subscale mindfulness, the case study manager scored 19, which was one point less than the maximum point. In the interview he told the author that he often checks the customer comments on such websites as TripAdvisor or Jaran, Jaran is a Japanese version of TripAdvisor. He says *“I often see comments that say our building is old, like SWOT analysis we have to know our strengths and weaknesses, our hotel is 30 years old and there is nothing we can do for comments like that, we can’t help having an old building, but we are promoting our strong sides, without doing that I’m sure we can’t have occupancy rate of 78%”* (Nakanishi 2015.) This shows how he is taking a step back to see the situation in a wider perspective and trying to push positive

aspects of the hotel to front rather than to deal with weaknesses that cannot be helped.

The case study manager had 10 for over-identification. He said that many years back when he was not working as a manager yet, he took negative situations such as angry or difficult customers, too negatively to the extent that he could not sleep at night thinking about those, he said "*I was thinking about it so much*", "*I couldn't sleep*" (Nakanishi 2015), and as a result of suffering from it every night, he had to visit psychiatrist and had to take a mental sick leave of one month from work. This shows that he had the tendency of over-identification, that he identifies and think excessively about the situation and had a weaker sense of mindfulness. (Nakanishi 2015.)

However, he says that '*I think I became stronger after I nearly got promoted to a general manager, I don't care about those (customers) as much as I did before*', '*before I was very angry that I thought of keeping a memo of that customer's name and phone number but now, I don't get angry as much, I try to not meet with them and just try not to repeat the situation again*' (Nakanishi 2015). This shows how he developed ability to not over-identify negative emotions and see them through mindful perspective. (Nakanishi 2015.)

### **3.8 Compassion for others**

By analysing the interview there were some statements made by the case study manager which include elements of the theory of compassion to others. Those statements are translated and analyzed under each subscale categories below.

#### **3.8.1 Kindness and indifference**

The case study manager got 17 for the subscale kindness towards others and 5 for indifference, which is an opposite subscale of kindness. As indifference means cold and uncaring, the opposite is management with warmth and care towards others. The case study manager shows kindness by listening to subordinates and colleagues. He says "*now I have some colleagues who I can talk about everything, its rather me listening than talking though*", "*they can*

*have many concerns, like family problems for example, I ask them to come and I listen to them, as soon as I noticed, very quickly, on that moment I noticed, so, well, those times if there weren't enough people to deal with customers then I do it later but usually on that moment I noticed, I call them and talk"*(Nakanishi 2015).

Also, as he is quite busy, he sometimes does not have time to answer everyone who needs some kind of approval from him about their work, however, he says *"I put sticky notes with people's names who seemed to want to ask me something", "I try to ask them what they had to ask before I go home"* (Nakanishi 2015). Once he had a worker who looked depressed. He talked with the worker and found out that the father of the worker had a serious disease and was about to die, so the worker wanted to quit the job and be with his father. He convinced the worker to not quit, he says *"I told him that I will make his day offs double the amount but told him to stay at the work, he was 50 and it's difficult to find a new job again if he quits here"* (Nakanishi 2015).

As can be seen, he has kindness towards his subordinates, however, he claims that kindness towards his subordinates was something he did not really care about but developed as he got higher in his position. He says, *"I didn't really think about it, I was careful about it but after I started having many subordinates I started to think about it more, I can feel when someone is having problem from, like, their face or like expression or attitude, I have to be careful of those small things because that can affect how they do their customer service"* (Nakanishi 2015).

### **3.8.2 Common humanity and separation**

The case study manager got 17 for his common humanity and 7 for separation. When he was asked about what makes him happy when doing his job, he answered, *"after all, we say we don't do it (the work) just to make them happy but seeing customers happy is the best reward, and that evaluation, receiving compliments or getting remembered by them, that is connected to what I have been keep doing, like trying to get remembered by customers"* (Nakanishi 2015).



This shows his sense of common humanity, because without sense of common humanity he could not relate his feelings to customers' happiness.

All service industry workers face difficult customers who are angry and complain. The case study manager explained how he deals with those customers: "*even if they are angry about something very small, it might have been very important thing for them*" (Nakanishi 2015). This shows how he is mindfully capturing the situation and his sense of common humanity and that he is thinking the situation from the customer's point of view. Additionally, he claimed that they have not had any seriously difficult customers for half a year at the point when the interview was conducted. (Nakanishi 2015.)

### **3.8.3 Mindfulness and disengagement**

For mindfulness, the case study manager got 17 and for the opposite subscale, disengagement, he had 6. When he has to deal with difficult customers who are angry and complain to him, he says "*the main thing is to listen to the customer, more than anything, listen to what they are angry about and what they want to say, take some time and listen to them*" (Nakanishi 2015). Instead of taking a negative approach to complaints, he tries to understand the situations customers are in carefully.

As he is mindfully dealing with the customer, he does not shut down or block customers opinions, he is being open to the customers sufferings which makes him good at dealing with difficult customers. He says, "*everyone in the hotel calls me to help (when they have difficult customers), I feel I can deal with most of the difficult customers successfully*" (Nakanishi 2015).

There are sometimes those customers who are trying to get some compensation for nothing. About them, he said that "*I don't obey them easily, like I feel bad for everyone (the subordinates) who are doing the best they can, they won't be convinced with that, I shouldn't apologize (to the customers) without making my workers convinced, making them convinced is important too*" (Nakanishi 2015). This shows that as a leader, one has to think not only about

customers but the workers below oneself which require mindful perception of the situation. (Nakanishi 2015.)

#### **4 Conclusion and suggestion for further research**

The aim of this thesis was to find out how the psychological concept of self-compassion and compassion is seen or used in the management style of a manager of hospitality industry. As there are many studies made related to compassion and self-compassion but none concerning management style of hospitality industry, the topic needed some investigation.

Theoretical research was made mostly online. In the theoretical part, the concepts of compassion and self-compassion were explained and how the concepts have been studied were introduced. As the concept of self-compassion could be new for the readers, comparisons were made between self-compassion and other psychological concepts. Also, the definition of manager and the definition of managers in hospitality industry were researched.

After the theoretical part, two inquiries and an interview were done with the case study manager. Results of the scales showed that the case study manager is average on self-compassion skill and relatively high on compassion for others skill. In the beginning, it was assumed that it could be possible that any connections between the concepts and the hospitality management work could not be found. Contrary, despite the initial estimation, there were many connections found from the interview.

By analyzing the interview with the case study manager, even though he did not know about the concept before, we could see many statements which show how self-compassion and compassion for others are integrated into management style of the case study manager. After the analysis, statements were found that show almost all the subscales of self-compassion scale and compassion towards others scale except for self-judgement. We could see that he is using the concept for example when dealing with difficult customers or how he treats his subordinates. Also, by analysing his statements we can see

that as the position at his work gets higher, his compassion towards others, which mainly means his subordinates, increased and that can be seen from the high points of compassion for others result.

As mentioned in the theory part, according to Priolo (2011), top essential managerial skills are the following; leadership skill, adaptability, good communication skill, skill to develop good relationships, skill of constant personal development and skill to support development of others. From the result of the interview it can be seen that these management skills, for example adaptability or skill to support development of others are deeply connected to compassion for others and self-compassion skill. For instance, mindfulness towards oneself which is opposite to over identification, which can help develop the adaptability or mindfulness towards others, which in turn is opposite to disengagement, which then can help develop the skill to support development of others. (Priolo 2011.)

It can be seen that the skill to be compassionate towards oneself and towards others are both equally important in hospitality management and, although being compassionate towards self is generally more difficult than being compassionate towards others, both skills are highly recommended to be developed by managers in hospitality industry. This research is important for both who are currently managers or who will be ones in the future.

Further research could be done in this field in for example quantitative research for the rate of how often managers in hospitality industry are using this concept. In addition, as this study focused on how the manager is compassionate towards others and the self, research on how managers can be uncompassionate towards others and the self could be investigated. Also comparing the importance of compassion towards others and compassion towards self in hospitality work could be examined.

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## Appendix 1: Self-compassion scale

To Whom it May Concern:

Please feel free to use the Self-Compassion Scale in your research. Masters and dissertation students also have my permission to use and publish the Self-Compassion Scale in their theses. The appropriate reference is listed below.

Best,

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### Reference:

Neff, K. D. (2003). Development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity*, 2, 223-250.

### Coding Key:

Self-Kindness Items: 5, 12, 19, 23, 26

Self-Judgment Items: 1, 8, 11, 16, 21

Common Humanity Items: 3, 7, 10, 15

Isolation Items: 4, 13, 18, 25

Mindfulness Items: 9, 14, 17, 22

Over-identified Items: 2, 6, 20, 24

Subscale scores are computed by calculating the mean of subscale item responses. To compute a total self-compassion score, reverse score the negative subscale items before calculating subscale means - self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification (i.e., 1 = 5, 2 = 4, 3 = 3, 4 = 2, 5 = 1) - then compute a grand mean of all six subscale means. Researchers can choose to analyze their data either by using individual sub-scale scores or by using a total score.

(This method of calculating the total score is slightly different than that used in the article referenced above, in which each subscale was added together. However, I find it is easier to interpret the total score if a mean is used.)

Appendix 1 (continued)

**HOW I TYPICALLY ACT TOWARDS MYSELF IN DIFFICULT TIMES**

Please read each statement carefully before answering. To the left of each item, indicate how often you behave in the stated manner, using the following scale:

<b>Almost never</b>					<b>Almost always</b>
1	2	3	4	5	

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone goes through.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. When I think about my inadequacies, it tends to make me feel more separate and cut off from the rest of the world.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. I try to be loving towards myself when I'm feeling emotional pain.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. When I'm down and out, I remind myself that there are lots of other people in the world feeling like I am.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. When times are really difficult, I tend to be tough on myself.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am.

\_\_\_\_\_ 14. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.



Appendix 1 (continued)

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.

\_\_\_\_\_ 16. When I see aspects of myself that I don't like, I get down on myself.

\_\_\_\_\_ 17. When I fail at something important to me I try to keep things in perspective.

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. When I'm really struggling, I tend to feel like other people must be having an easier time of it.

\_\_\_\_\_ 19. I'm kind to myself when I'm experiencing suffering.

\_\_\_\_\_ 20. When something upsets me I get carried away with my feelings.

\_\_\_\_\_ 21. I can be a bit cold-hearted towards myself when I'm experiencing suffering.

\_\_\_\_\_ 22. When I'm feeling down I try to approach my feelings with curiosity and openness.

\_\_\_\_\_ 23. I'm tolerant of my own flaws and inadequacies.

\_\_\_\_\_ 24. When something painful happens I tend to blow the incident out of proportion.

\_\_\_\_\_ 25. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure.

\_\_\_\_\_ 26. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.

## Appendix 2: Compassion towards others scale

### Compassion Scale

#### HOW I TYPICALLY ACT TOWARDS OTHERS

Please read each statement carefully before answering. To the left of each item, indicate how often you behave in the stated manner, using the following scale:

**Almost**

**Almost**

**Never**

**Always**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**5**

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. When people cry in front of me, I often don't feel anything at all.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Sometimes when people talk about their problems, I feel like I don't care.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. I don't feel emotionally connected to people in pain.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. I pay careful attention when other people talk to me.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. I feel detached from others when they tell me their tales of woe.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. If I see someone going through a difficult time, I try to be caring toward that person.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. I often tune out when people tell me about their troubles.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. I like to be there for others in times of difficulty.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. I notice when people are upset, even if they don't say anything.

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. When I see someone feeling down, I feel like I can't relate to them.

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. Everyone feels down sometimes, it is part of being human.

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. Sometimes I am cold to others when they are down and out.

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. I tend to listen patiently when people tell me their problems.

\_\_\_\_\_ 14. I don't concern myself with other people's problems.

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. It's important to recognize that all people have weaknesses and no one's perfect.

\_\_\_\_\_ 16. My heart goes out to people who are unhappy.

Appendix 2 (continued)

\_\_\_\_\_17. Despite my differences with others, I know that everyone feels pain just like me.

\_\_\_\_\_18. When others are feeling troubled, I usually let someone else attend to them.

\_\_\_\_\_19. I don't think much about the concerns of others.

\_\_\_\_\_20. Suffering is just a part of the common human experience.

\_\_\_\_\_21. When people tell me about their problems, I try to keep a balanced perspective on the situation.

\_\_\_\_\_22. I can't really connect with other people when they're suffering.

\_\_\_\_\_23. I try to avoid people who are experiencing a lot of pain.

\_\_\_\_\_24. When others feel sadness, I try to comfort them.

Coding Key:

Kindness Items: 6, 8, 16, & 24

Indifference Items: 2, 12, 14, & 18 (Reversed Scored)

Common Humanity: 11, 15, 17, & 20

Separation: 3, 5, 10, & 22 (Reversed Scored)

Mindfulness: 4, 9, 13, & 21

Disengagement: 1, 7, 19, & 23 (Reverse Scored)

To reverse-score, change the following values: 1 = 5, 2 = 4, 3 = 3, 4 = 2, 5 = 1

To compute a total Compassion Score, take the mean of each subscale (after reverse-scoring) and compute a total mean.

Please remember that if you plan to examine the subscales separately, you should not reverse-code. Before reverse-coding, for example, higher indifference scores represent more indifference, but after reverse-coding higher indifference scores represent less indifference. This is why the subscales of indifference, separation, and disengagement are reverse-coded before taking an overall compassion mean.

Pommier, E. A. (2011). The compassion scale. *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences*, 72, 1174.

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### Appendix 3: Self-compassion scale translated into Japanese

自分が苦しんでいるとき自分にどのように接するか

書かれている内容を読んで答えてください。質問文の左側にどのくらいの頻度でそのように行動するかを以下の尺度を使って答えてください。

ほとんどまったく				ほぼいつも
1	2	3	4	5

自分の欠点や足りないところに対して受け入れようとしないし批判的だ。

落ち込んでいるとき、そのときうまくいってないことで頭が一杯になりそのことに執着しがちだ。

物事が自分にとってうまくいってない時、困難は人生の一部で誰しものが経験することだと考える。

物事がうまくいっていないとき、自分が外界と切り離されているように感じがちだ。

精神的につらいときは自分に対して愛をもって接するようにしている。

自分にとって大切な何かで失敗したとき、無能感にさいなまれる。

ものすごく落ち込んでいるときはこの世の中には自分と同じように感じている人が大勢いるということを思い出すようにしている。

### Appendix 3 (continued)

状況が苦しいとき私は自分に厳しくなりがちだ。

何かで落ち込んだときは気持ちのバランスを保とうとする。

自分が無能だと思ってしまうことがあったときは、無能感は誰しも感じる感情だということを自分に思い出させる。

自分の性格の好きでないところに対しては我慢ならないシイラつくことがある。

とても困難な状況にあるときは、自分に思いやりとやさしさを与える。  
落ち込んでいるとき、ほかの人たちがみな自分よりも幸福なような気になる。

何かつらいことが起こったときは公平な目で状況を見ようとする。

失敗をすることは人間であることの一部だと思う。

自分自身に好きでないところがあると、自分に対して批判的になる。

何か自分にとって大事なことで失敗したときは、偏りのない目で状況を見ようとする。

自分がとても苦しんでいるとき、他の人が楽そうに見える。

困難な状況にあるとき私は自分に対して優しい。

何かショックを受けたとき、そのことで頭が一杯になる。

自分が何か困難な状況にあるとき私は自分に対して少し冷たくなる。

### Appendix 3 (continued)

落ち込んでいるとき、私は自分の気持ちを好奇心と開かれた心を持って見るようにしている。

私は自分の欠点や不十分さに対して寛容だ。

何か嫌なことが起こったときその物事をものすごく大げさに考えてしまう。

何か自分にとって大事なことで失敗したとき、孤独に失敗と向き合っている感じがする。

自分自身の人格で好きでない部分に対して、理解を示し忍耐強くいようとしている。

## Appendix 4: Compassion towards others scale translated into Japanese

### 他者コンパッション尺度

#### 普段私はどのように他者と接するか

書かれている内容を読んで答えてください。質問文の左側にどのくらいの頻度でそのように行動するかを以下の尺度を使って答えてください。

ほとんどまったく				ほぼいつも
1	2	3	4	5

誰かだ目の前で泣いているとき何も感じない。

人が悩み事を話しているときどうでもいいと感じる。

苦しんでいる人たちと気持ち的なつながりを感じない。

人が話しているとき注意深く話を聴く。

人が自分たちの苦悩を話しているとき感情移入の不足を感じる。

人が苦しんでいるときにできるだけやさしくしようとする。

人が自分たちの苦悩を話しているとき無関心になる。

人が苦しんでいるときにそばにいてあげるのが好きだ。

人が傷ついているとき、たとえその人が何もいわなくても気付く。

#### Appendix 4 (continued)

人が落ち込んでいるとき、全然気持ちがわからないと思う。

落ち込むという行為は誰にでもあることで人間であることの一部だと思う。

私は落ちぶれた人には冷たいことがある。

人が悩みを話しているときに辛抱強く聴く。

私は他人の問題には近づかないようにしている。

誰にでも弱さがあり誰しも完璧ではないということを認識することは大事だと思う。

不幸な人々を思いやることが多い。

他人と自分は違う人間だが他人も自分と同じように傷つくということを知っている。

他人が困っているとき私は自分ではなく誰かほかの人に任せる。

他人が苦しんでることに関して私はあまり気にしない。

苦悩というのは人類共通の経験だと思う。

人の悩みを聞いているとき、なるべく公平な目で状況を見ようとする。

人が苦悩しているときいまいち気持ちがわからない。

とても苦悩している人たちとはあまりかかわらないようにしようとする。



## Appendix 4 (continued)

人が悲しんでいるとき慰めようとする。