

**Abstract of the thesis entitled**

**Self-Compassion, Stress Coping and Well-being among  
People Living with HIV in Hong Kong**

Kris King-Hong Choi

For the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology  
at the Chinese University of Hong Kong  
in June 2019

Living with a diagnosis of HIV is an extremely stressful and life-changing event. Prior literature states that the well-documented elevated rate of psychiatric comorbidity in people living with HIV (PLHIV) could be ascribed to a greater number, variety and impact of HIV-related negative life events being experienced, such as psychosocial stress from diagnosis, concerns of disclosure, medical, treatment-related and financial stress, and social stigma. Previous studies found the relationships of self-compassion with better adjustment and more adaptive responses to having HIV, but there is limited research to examine the specific cognitive mechanism by which self-compassion promotes well-being. The present study examines the mediating effect of coping (adaptive and maladaptive) on the association between self-compassion (self-warmth and self-coldness) and well-being among PLHIV. Structural equation modeling and mediation analyses were conducted based on 291 PLHIV in Hong Kong. The structural model of coping as mediator between self-compassion and well-being fit the data (comparative fit index = .95, Tucker–Lewis index = .93, root-mean-square error of approximation = .06). The indirect effect of self-coldness on well-being was significant through maladaptive coping. Clinical implications for the use of compassion-focused interventions differentially enhancing self-warmth and reducing self-coldness in well-being promotion among PLHIV are discussed.