
Self-Compassion Break

When you notice that you're feeling stressed, frustrated, upset or any other type of emotional discomfort, or you become aware of your inner critic, bring that situation to mind and take a 5 minute self-compassion break by following the instructions below.

Start by noticing where you feel the emotion or discomfort in your body. Where are the sensations the strongest? Make contact with the sensations as they arise in your body.

Now, say to yourself, slowly:

1. "This is a moment of suffering"

That's mindfulness. Other options include:

- *This hurts*
- *This is tough*
- *Ouch!*

2. "Suffering is part of life"

That's common humanity. Other options include:

- *Other people feel this way*
- *I'm not alone*
- *We all struggle in our lives*

3. "May I be kind to myself"

See if you can find words for what you need in times like this. Other options may be:

- *May I accept myself as I am*
- *May I give myself the compassion I need*
- *May I learn to accept myself as I am*
- *May I forgive myself*
- *May I be strong*
- *May I be safe*
- *May I be patient*

If you're having trouble finding the right words, imagine that a dear friend or loved one had a similar difficulty as you. What would you say to that person?

Now see if you can offer the same words, the same message, to yourself.

Self-Compassion Letter

1. Think of something you are currently struggling with in your life
2. Get out a pen and paper or your computer
3. Imagine the letter is coming from your future self, five years in the future. Your future self is looking back with wisdom and love and offering your present self compassion and guidance. (i.e. I'm so grateful that you are having this challenging experience because you've learned so much from it about self-compassion, perseverance and taking risks)
4. Talk in the second person (i.e. Dear Vanessa,...)
5. Describe to yourself the feelings you're experiencing (i.e. I can tell you are being hard on yourself, I can see that you're frustrated about feeling stuck)
6. Insert a message of common humanity which helps connect you to all others. (i.e. Vanessa, you are only human and it's completely normal to feel this way and to have these experiences)
7. Offer yourself guidance and self-kindness, the same way you would give encouragement to a friend in need. (i.e. I'm so proud of you for your commitment and bravery in the face of uncertainty)
8. Sign the letter with love, decorate it with stickers or drawings if you feel inspired to do so. Keep the letter somewhere you will see it and read it often, particularly during challenging times

