

Self-Compassion in Daily Life Exercise

(Adapted from Germer, 2016)



Introduction

When we are developing our self-compassion it is helpful to recognise the behaviours we already practise to support ourselves in difficult moments and consider any new actions we can take going forward to help us when we are having a hard time. Practising both our developed and new behaviours forms the action element of compassion, which ensures we are taking a kinder approach to ourselves and mindfully meeting many of our own needs. This means knowing when you're under stress or suffering (mindfulness) and responding with care and kindness (self-compassion). The simplest approach is to discover how you already care for yourself, and then remind yourself to do those things when your life becomes difficult.

Instructions

Use the table below to consider the ways that you already or would like to offer yourself self-compassion when you are having a difficult moment. Next time you encounter a challenging moment in your day, try to practise the new ways you have identified to offer yourself self-compassion.

Level	Questions to ask yourself	Your responses
PHYSICALLY – soften the body	How do you care for yourself physically (e.g., exercise, take a walk, massage, warm bath)? Can you think of new ways to release the tension and stress that builds up in your body?	
MENTALLY – reduce agitation	How do you care for your mind, especially when you're under stress (e.g., meditation, watch a funny film, read an inspiring book)? Is there a new strategy you'd like to try to let your thoughts come and go more easily?	

Level	Questions to ask yourself	Your responses
EMOTIONALLY – soothe and comfort yourself	How do you care for yourself emotionally (stroke the dog, write in a journal, cook, have a cup of tea)? Is there something new you'd like to try?	
SOCIALLY – connect with others	How or when do you relate to others that brings you genuine happiness (e.g., meet with friends, send a birthday card, play a board game or team sport, chat to people in your community)? Is there any way that you'd like to enrich these connections?	
SPIRITUALLY – commit to your values	What do you do to care for yourself spiritually (walk in the woods, appreciate nature, help others)? If you've been neglecting your spiritual side, is there anything you'd like to remember to do?	

Conclusion

This exercise gives you the opportunity to consider how you bring self-compassion into your daily life when you experience a challenge or encounter a difficulty. The actions you have identified that work to support you can also be practised on a regular basis to support your self-compassion practice in your day-to-day life going forward.