



Self Compassion

Mindfulness

Mindfulness Moment: Self-Compassion

Instructions: Read the following script below at a slow, deliberate pace. You can read the purpose prior to the exercise if you'd like. Brackets [] contain instructional notes that are not read aloud.

Purpose: This is an exercise in feeling compassion towards yourself. Self-compassion often does not come naturally – it is a skill you need to learn, practice, and consciously engage in.

Self-Compassion Exercise:

Sit quietly with both feet on the ground and your hands in your lap. Allow yourself to feel centered in the chair. You may close your eyes if you'd like or you may keep your eyes open and focus your attention on something in the room. Bring your attention to your breath. [Pause briefly.]

Now bring your awareness and attention to a person who you care about that is experiencing something stressful. Think about the feelings of compassion and love you have for that person. Imagine yourself enfolding this person in that feeling. [Pause briefly.]

Extend your thoughts to include the desire that this person receives or experiences a decrease in distress and an increase in joy and happiness. Notice the thoughts, physical sensations, and emotions that come to you when you focus on compassion. [Pause briefly.]

Now, bring your awareness to something that is causing you stress. Acknowledge that this is stress, and notice how it makes you feel without judging if those feelings are good or bad. Say to yourself “Stress is a part of life.”

Return your attention to the feelings of compassion that you extended to the person you care about, and now extend those feelings to yourself. Imagine enfolding yourself in feelings of self-compassion. Think about your own desire to experience a decrease in distress and an increase in joy and happiness. Notice how you feel when you direct compassion towards yourself. [Pause briefly.]

Now bring your attention, mindfulness, and awareness back to your breath. With one last breath, bring your attention and awareness back to the present, ready to continue your day with awareness, relaxation, and focus.

Source: Adapted from Livingwell.org