

Self-Compassion Break

Use this exercise when you are experiencing a situation in your life that is difficult and/or is causing you stress. You could also use this exercise to extend compassion to yourself for an event that has taken place in the past.

This could be something you feel guilt or shame about, or even just an event where you feel you could have been kinder to yourself.

STEP 1

Bring the situation to mind and allow yourself to feel the stress and emotional discomfort that is present in your body. If looking at a past event, see if you can re-feel these sensations.

STEP 2

Bring mindfulness to the situation. Explain to yourself that this is a moment where you are or were suffering. You could say to yourself "in this moment I feel hurt" or "ouch, this is painful" or "I am experiencing stress right now".

STEP 3

Bring understanding of suffering as a common humanity to the situation. Remind yourself that suffering is a part of life. You could say to yourself "right now, there are hundreds of thousands of people feeling this way too" or "I am not alone in feeling this way, even though sometimes it feels that I am" or "every human suffers, but this will pass, just as it does for everyone else".

STEP 4

Bring warmth and compassion to the situation. Remind yourself that you are entirely entitled to be compassionate and kind to yourself. You could ask yourself "what kind of words do I need to hear right now?". Some examples could be "I will give myself the compassion I need right now" or "I accept myself totally as I am" or "I forgive myself". If this feels like a stretch right now, you could tell yourself "I am open to learning to accept myself as I am".

