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Offering Yourself Self-Compassion

Self-compassion is a concept that is increasingly being studied. People who practice it tend to have better physical and mental health and to be happier.

Self-compassion consists of three elements

1 Self-kindness:
Treating yourself the same way you would treat a loved one going through a difficult time, such as a failure or a life challenge.

2 Common humanity:
Recognizing that humans are imperfect, that everyone makes mistakes, faces challenges, and experiences difficulties.

3 Mindfulness:
Being able to pause and observe difficult moments. Acknowledging suffering without exaggerating or minimizing it.



Reflective questions on self-compassion

Think of a time when a friend was going through a difficult situation, a failure, or a moment when they felt inadequate.

How do you react in those moments, and what do you say to that friend?

Now, think of a difficult situation where you personally felt inadequate. How do you react? What do you say to yourself?

Do you notice a difference in the way you respond to your friend versus yourself? If so, what is it?

Most people tend to be much more self-critical than they are toward others! We can work on softening our inner dialogue to offer ourselves more kindness in daily life, especially during difficult times.

An exercise to offer yourself self-compassion:

Take a pause and notice any self-critical thoughts. Offer yourself the same kind and supportive words you would say to a friend, reminding yourself that all humans suffer and make mistakes.

