

Developing Your Own Self-Compassion Mantra

A self-compassion mantra is a set of memorized phrases that are repeated silently whenever you want to give yourself compassion. They are most useful in the heat of the moment, whenever strong feelings of distress arise. The phrases I typically use are:

*This is a moment of suffering.
Suffering is part of life.
May I be kind to myself in this moment.*

You might find these phrases work for you, but it's worth playing with them to see if you can find wording that fits you better. What's important is that all three aspects of self-compassion are evoked, not the particular words used.

The first phrase, "This is a moment of suffering" is designed to bring mindfulness to the fact that you're in pain. Other possible wordings for this phrase are "I'm having a really hard time right now," "This is really difficult," "It's painful for me to feel this now," etc.

The second phrase, "Suffering is part of life" is designed to remind you that imperfection is part of the shared human experience. Other possible wordings are "Everyone feels this way sometimes," "A lot of other people probably feel the same way," etc.

The third phrase "May I be kind to myself in this moment" is designed to help bring a sense of caring concern to your present moment experience. Other possible wordings are "I'm sorry you're having such a hard time darling," "Poor thing, it will be alright," "Know that I'm here for you and care about you," etc.

The final phrase, "May I give myself the compassion I need," firmly sets your intention to be self-compassionate. Other possible wordings are "I am worthy of receiving self-compassion," "I need to give myself compassionate care," etc.

Find the four phrases that seem most comfortable for you, and repeat them over and over again until they're memorized. Then, the next time you judge yourself or have a difficult experience, silently repeat your self-compassion mantra. It's a handy tool to help soothe and calm troubled states of mind.