

SELF-COMPASSION LETTER

Part One: Which imperfections make you feel inadequate?

1. Chose an aspect of yourself that you dislike or often criticize; something that causes you to feel ashamed, inadequate, insecure, or not “good enough” (e.g., one related to your abilities, relationships, work/school performance, appearance, or personality).
2. Describe how this perceived inadequacy makes you feel. What thoughts, images, emotions, or stories come up when you think about it?

Part Two: Write a letter to yourself from the perspective of an unconditionally loving friend

3. Next, imagine someone who is unconditionally loving, accepting, and supportive. This friend sees your strengths and opportunities for growth, including the aspect of yourself you have just been writing about.
 - *Reflect upon what this friend feels towards you, and how you are loved and accepted exactly as you are, with all your very human imperfections.*
4. Now write a letter to yourself from the perspective of this kind friend – focusing on the perceived inadequacy you tend to judge yourself for.
 - *What would this friend say to you about your “flaw” from the perspective of unlimited compassion?*
 - *How would this friend convey the deep compassion he/she feels for you, especially for the pain you feel when you judge yourself so harshly?*
 - *What would this friend write in order to remind you that you are only human, that all people have both strengths and weaknesses?*
 - *And if you think this friend would suggest possible changes you could make, how would these suggestions embody feelings of unconditional understanding and compassion?*

Part Three: Feel the compassion as it soothes and comforts you

5. After fully drafting the letter, put it aside for fifteen minutes. Then return to the letter and reread it. Let the words sink in. Feel the encouragement, support, compassion, and acceptance.
6. Review the letter whenever you are feeling down about this aspect and remember that accepting yourself as you are right now is a necessary step for change. Do you think you could make a habit of treating yourself like your best friend?

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EULOGY EXERCISE

Step 1: Reflect on Your Life

Begin by finding a quiet and comfortable space where you can focus on introspection. Take a few deep breaths to center yourself. Think back on your life so far and consider the various stages, experiences, and achievements that have defined it. Reflect on your roles, relationships, and personal growth.

Step 2: Imagine Your Ideal Eulogy

Close your eyes and imagine your own memorial service or funeral. Picture your loved ones, friends, and colleagues gathered to remember you. Visualize someone you deeply respect and trust, such as a close friend or mentor, delivering your eulogy. In this eulogy, imagine them highlighting your life's accomplishments, values, and the impact you've had on others. What positive qualities, achievements, and contributions do you hope they would emphasize? What kind of legacy would you like to leave behind?

Step 3: Write Your Eulogy

Open a notebook or a document on your computer, and start writing your eulogy as if you were that trusted person delivering it. Be honest and heartfelt in your words. Describe your life's achievements, the positive traits you possess, the values you've upheld, and the impact you've had on others. This should be an uplifting and inspiring reflection of your life.

Step 4: Reflect on Your Eulogy

After completing your eulogy, take a moment to read it aloud or to yourself. Allow the words to sink in. Reflect on how it makes you feel and whether it aligns with your current priorities, values, and sense of purpose. Does it capture the essence of the life you want to lead? Are there areas where you'd like to make changes or improvements?

Step 5: Identify Your Values and Priorities

Consider the values and priorities that stand out in your eulogy. Are there certain themes or qualities that appear repeatedly? These may provide clues to your core values and aspirations. Make a list of these values and priorities.

EULOGY EXERCISE

Step 6: Set Meaningful Goals

Now that you have a clearer understanding of your values and priorities, set specific, meaningful goals that align with them. These goals should help you live a more purposeful life. They can encompass various aspects of your life, such as personal development, relationships, career, health, and contributions to your community or society.

Step 7: Develop an Action Plan

Break down each goal into smaller, actionable steps. Create a timeline for when you'd like to achieve these steps and identify the resources and support you'll need along the way. Make your action plan realistic and achievable.

Step 8: Take the First Step

Start working on the first step of your action plan immediately. Taking action is crucial in turning your reflections and aspirations into reality. Remember that progress may be gradual, and setbacks are part of the journey.

Step 9: Regularly Review and Adjust

Periodically revisit your eulogy and your goals. Reflect on your progress, celebrate your achievements, and adjust your goals as needed. Life is dynamic, and your sense of purpose may evolve over time.

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY TOOLS

EULOGY EXERCISE

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POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY TOOLS

WWW JOURNAL

The WWW (= *what went well*) journal exercise is one of my all-time favorite Positive Psychology tools because it is SO quick and easy, can be completed in any context (at work, at school, at home, ...) and has numerous proven benefits for our wellbeing.

Here's how it works:

Carve out at least 1 minute every day (e.g. before going to bed) to reflect on your day. Think about the things that went well, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant. These can be tiny successes, moments of joy, or anything that made you smile.

Aim to write down at least 3 things that went well during your day, and why they went well.

This practice helps shift your focus toward the positive aspects of your life, cultivate gratitude, and improve your overall outlook. Plus, research suggests that it can even enhance the quality of your sleep if done at night.

If you'd like to use this exercise at work, you could consider incorporating it at the beginning of meetings. I also love to use it at the beginning of my lessons at school as it not only starts the lesson on a positive note but also gives me some time to set everything up while my students are talking.

How about you start by creating a WWW list for this week or month:

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