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Time
10–15 minutes



For
Everyone



What You'll Do
Notice the difference between how you treat yourself and how you treat others.

How Would You Treat a Friend?

Date: ____ / ____ / ____



What Is Self-Compassion?

Self-compassion is simply compassion directed inwards. Researcher Kristin Neff describes it as having three main elements: kindness, a sense of common humanity, and mindfulness. Together, these help create a self-compassionate mindset.

Often, our inner voice is much harsher toward ourselves than it would ever be toward someone we care about. This exercise helps you notice that difference and practice speaking to yourself with the same kindness you would offer a friend.



Goal

The goal of this exercise is twofold.

First, it aims to highlight the discrepancy between how one treats oneself versus how one treats a friend when life is difficult. Second, it aims to help individuals practice cultivating self-compassion.



Advice

- This tool can be used to practice cultivating self-compassion by tapping into one's inner educator.
- Others may feel worse after reflecting at first. That's okay. Be gentle with yourself.
- You can use this exercise in therapy, in journaling, or as a daily practice.
- Over time, this can become a powerful way to build self-compassion.

Exercise

Think about a current difficulty or challenge in your life. It could be related to relationships, work, school, health, or anything that feels hard right now. Then, complete the table below. Write as much as you need.

How I Talk to Myself (Self)	How I Would Talk to a Friend (Friend)	What I Can Do Differently (Action)
What self-critical or harsh things am I saying to myself?	What kind, supportive, and compassionate things would I say to a friend in the same situation?	What is one small way I can treat myself with more kindness and understanding?



Tip: If it feels hard to be kind to yourself, try imagining how you would speak to someone you love very much. Then, practice speaking to yourself in that same way.



Be as kind to yourself as you would to someone you love.

