

A Break for Self-Compassion

The following practice is called a break for self-compassion. It is something you can do whether it be during the day or at night, anytime you find that you need a little self-compassion.

To practice this exercise, we will first need to call up a little suffering. Try to think about a situation in your life right now that is difficult for you, something you would like to resolve. Maybe you're feeling stressed, having relationship problems or you're worried about something that has yet to be.

The key is while you want to think of something that is difficult make sure it is not overwhelmingly difficult as to derail you, especially when new to practicing this meditation. Now you will want to take that situation and really get in touch with it, experience it fully, see what's going on around you, what happened or what might happen, and who said what, really bring the situation to life in your mind's eye. Once you can really associate with the feelings and the situation you will repeat these series of phrases designed to help you remember the three components of self-compassion exactly when you need it most.

The first phrase to repeat is:

This is just a moment of suffering, right?

With this you are bringing mindful awareness to the fact that suffering is present but also does not last forever it is simply a moment. Try to really identify with it stating that you are struggling so you acknowledge your difficulties while turning attention towards them. Remember this is just a moment of suffering.

The second phrase is:

Suffering is a part of life.

With this we remind ourselves of our common humanity. Suffering is a part of life, so recognizing that others experience the same suffering you do helps it to not be so overwhelming. The degree of the suffering may differ at times but suffering still exists and is a part of being human

The third phrase is:

May I be kind to myself in this moment?

This helps support bringing kindness to yourself, put your hand over your heart and really feel that kindness and appreciation of all that you are. Feel the warmth generated by your hands and allow those feelings of love to envelope your entire being. Speak to yourself as if you were speaking with a loved one or friend who was going through a similar situation and really allow for the compassion to take over your thoughts

Now tell yourself that you deserve to be well, you deserve to be happy and free from suffering. Then let go and take a moment to feel exactly how your body feels, allow for any sensations to be just as they are, accepting the entirety of you. Settle into the feeling allowing it to take root, as you embody it you will notice that the feelings of fear, confusion, anger, depression are being replaced with strength, clarity, compassion and happiness. When practiced regularly this will help to replace negative reactions to stressful situations with positive and creative ways to find ways to appreciate every situation.