



Beyond Self-Judgment: Discover the Power of Self-Kindness

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outline

Introduction
1

Grounding Activity
3

Session Goals
5

Final tips and takeaways
12

Resources 13

Mindfulness Grounding Activity





Inspirational quote

“TALK TO YOURSELF LIKE YOU WOULD
TO SOMEONE YOU LOVE.”

— **BRENÉ BROWN**

<https://brenebrown.com/about/>

Goals of the session:

- Understanding self-judgment
- Reframing self-judgment
- Cultivating self-kindness (Kristen Neff)
- Self-kindness and personal growth
- Closing reflection/integration
- Resources



Understanding Self-judgment

1. What is self-judgment?
 - A harshly critical response to our mistakes, failures and inadequacies, which involves a rejection of our emotions, and leaves us feeling isolated in our suffering (Neff)
2. Impact of self-judgment
 - Increases stress and anxiety, sense of shame, indecisiveness
 - Reduces self worth and resilience
 - Keeps us 'stuck' and unable to make positive changes
3. How does it show up? (e.g. perfectionism, inner critic)
 - **Reflective question:** What does your inner critic sound like?



Reframing Self-Judgment

Cognitive reframing approach:

- Identify – Pause -- Reframe
- **Identify:** Mindful awareness of thoughts
- **Pause** to examine – are they rational? Is there sufficient evidence? Would a friend agree?
- **Reframe:** Replace with a kinder softer message/tone
 - Reflective moment: Recall a recent self-judgment moment and explore compassionate options using this approach

Cultivating Self-kindness

Definition of self compassion:

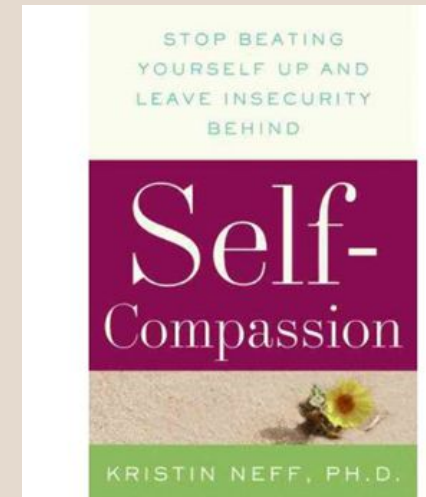
- “The desire to alleviate our own suffering; taking care of ourselves just as we’d treat someone we love dearly ...” - Christopher Germer, 2009
- Like putting a band-aid on your finger when you cut it in order to help it heal



Cultivating Self-kindness

Kristen Neff's 3 pillars of self compassion:

- Self-kindness - being kind and understanding toward ourselves when we suffer, fail, or feel inadequate
- Common humanity – Recognition that all human beings suffer; connects vs separating us from others
- Mindfulness – Skill that helps us to turn *toward* our pain with acceptance of the present moment reality



Cultivating Self-kindness

Practical techniques:

- Compassionate self talk – talking to yourself as you would a good friend
 - E.g. Imagine a friend in a similar situation, what would you say to them? Say this to yourself in a difficult moment
- Compassionate self visualization exercise:
 - imagine your most compassionate self; picture this version of yourself comforting you



Cultivating Self-kindness

Guided practice – self compassion Break
OR Loving Kindness exercise (8 min)



Cultivating Self-kindness

1. **Physically:** In what ways do you care for yourself physically? Can you think of new ways to release tension/stress?
2. **Mentally:** How do you care for your mind, especially when you're under stress? Try supportive phrases, such as "this too will pass"
3. **Emotionally:** Befriending painful emotions; forgiveness of self are examples. How do you care for yourself emotionally? i.e. engaging in activities that are intrinsically enjoyable? Is there something new you'd like to try?



Cultivating Self-kindness

4. **Relationally:** In what ways do you care for yourself in your relationships? Are you isolating?

5. **Spiritually:** How do you for yourself spiritually? This refers to intangible aspects of ourselves, i.e. God, soul, values such as love, peace, truth, or sacred connections; contact with the miracle of daily life



Self Kindness and Personal Growth

Self kindness supports:

- Better decision-making, trusting one's judgment
- Increased confidence – increases felt sense of safety and security
- Emotional resilience – reduces depression and anxiety; improves mood and life satisfaction
- Reflective activity: Write a short letter to yourself from a compassionate friend



Closing reflection/integration

- Key takeaways
 - Self-Kindness/Self-compassion is a journey, not a destination!
 - Be kind to yourself as you are learning to be more compassionate!
 - Choose one practice to try this week; identify which one in the chat

“The core of mental toughness is actually self-compassion, people who are mentally tough stay mentally tough because they don’t slip easily into shame or self-criticism or self loathing.” - Brené Brown

Resources

- Brené Brown website: <https://brenebrown.com/>
 - <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/11/10/bren-brown-this-is-the-core-of-mental-toughness.html>
- Germer, C.K. (2009). *The mindful path to self-compassion*. New York: Guilford Press.
 - Christopher Germer website: <https://chrisgermer.com/meditations/>
 - Christopher Germer YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTFN8t9SXiQ>
- Harvard Health:
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mental-health/4-ways-to-boost-your-self-compassion>
- Neff, K. (2011). *Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself*. New York: Harper Collins.
 - Kristen Neff website: <https://self-compassion.org/>



thank you

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