

Worksheet 1

The self-compassion break

A three-step practice for moments of suffering — Dr. Kristin Neff's foundational exercise.

Use this worksheet whenever you notice you are struggling — a difficult conversation, a wave of self-criticism, a setback at work, a hard day. The Self-Compassion Break takes only a few minutes. Each step activates one of the three components of self-compassion.

The situation that is causing me pain right now:

1

Mindfulness — "This is a moment of suffering."

Pause. Acknowledge what is happening, without minimising or dramatising. Try a phrase that fits: *"This hurts."* *"This is painful."* *"This is a moment of stress."* Place a hand on your heart or another comforting place.

My phrase for this moment:

2

Common humanity — "I am not alone."

Remember: suffering is part of every human life. Other people, right now, are hurting too. Try: *"Suffering is part of life."* *"Other people feel this way."* *"I am not alone in this."*

My phrase for this moment:

3

Self-kindness — "May I be kind to myself."

Ask: *"What do I need to hear right now?"* Then offer those words to yourself in the warm tone you would use with a friend. Try: *"May I give myself the compassion I need."* *"May I be gentle with myself."*

My phrase for this moment:

What I notice now, after the break:

References

Neff, K. D., & Germer, C. K. (2018). *The mindful self-compassion workbook*. Guilford Press. The Self-Compassion Break is described in Chapter 5.