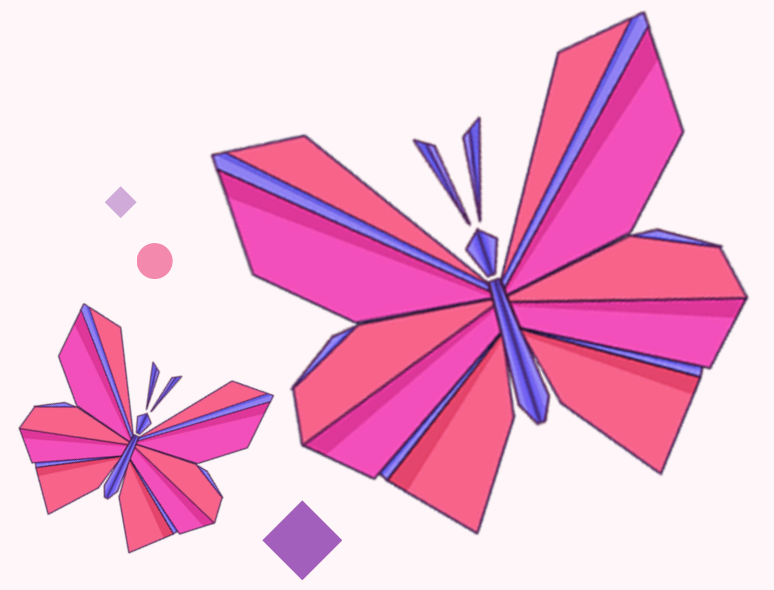




◆ What is Self-Compassion?

Self-compassion means treating yourself with the same care and kindness you'd offer a good friend. When things feel hard, instead of pushing through or pretending everything's fine, you give yourself permission to pause and ask, "What do I need right now?" This approach is about showing up for yourself with understanding instead of judgement.

Who might benefit? ◆◆

Self-compassion can support anyone – and you don't need to be in crisis to try it. It can be especially helpful if you notice a loud inner critic, feel pressure to be perfect, or find yourself comparing your worth to how you look, perform, or what others think of you. It's also a gentle starting point if you're navigating stress, anxiety, low mood, or the effects of difficult experiences from your past. Research shows that people who practise self-compassion tend to feel more resilient, more connected to others, and less weighed down by fear of failure or not "being enough".

◆ Get started with Self-Compassion with a Self-Compassion Break ◆●

This is a simple 5-minute practice you can try whenever you're feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or just having a rough day. There's no right or wrong way to do it – just go at your own pace.



1. Notice what you're feeling

Gently check in with yourself and acknowledge what you are feeling. You might say something like "This is really hard right now" or "I'm having a tough time."
You might usually downplay your distress even to yourself. Remember, honestly acknowledging your pain is not being "dramatic" or "not tough enough". It's incredibly brave to be kind to yourself.

2. Remember you're not alone

If it feels okay, place your hands somewhere comforting; maybe on your chest against your heart, wrapping your arms around yourself, or holding your hands together (you can skip this step if it doesn't feel good to you!). Remind yourself that struggling is part of being human by saying something like "I'm not the only one who feels this way" or "Everyone goes through hard stuff sometimes."



3. Offer yourself some kindness

Ask yourself what you need to hear right now. Think about what you might tell a good friend experiencing a similar problem. Maybe something like:

- "It's okay to not be okay"
- "I'm doing my best"
- "I deserve kindness"

Then, if you can, do one small thing to look after yourself: make your favourite drink, listen to some relaxing music or watch a comforting show, cuddle up with a pet, or wrap yourself up in some cosy blankets.



Want to learn more? ◆◆

Dr Kristin Neff, founder of the Self-Compassion Institute, has completed extensive research into the mental health benefits of self-compassion. You can read more about this approach, and access free resources and videos to navigate at your own pace on her website (no sign up required) self-compassion.org

This resource is for general support and self-guided learning only. It is not a substitute for professional mental health advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you're struggling, please reach out to a trusted person in your life or a mental health professional.