

## **Tips for practicing self-compassion and compassion for others in uncertain times**

Offer yourself compassion and kindness by acknowledging your feelings and concerns. Talk to yourself like you would a dear family member or friend who is upset or concerned. Being kind to yourself when you're struggling can help you to accept your current circumstances without becoming overwhelmed by them. Try the following steps:

- Take a few breaths
- Acknowledge that you are worthy of love and kindness
- Think of the situation that is bothering you at the present moment and try to name what you are feeling and where you are feeling it in your body
- Focus on the feeling and place in your body, allowing yourself to accept what is there and offer loving words and loving thoughts, letting go as each feeling arises
- End your practice with a few breaths

Remember our common humanity and that we are all interconnected. We are not alone in this current environment of uncertainty and we are all in this together. We all want to feel comforted, loved, and connected. We can offer kindness to each other, not only to our family, friends, and neighbors but also to those we don't know personally. Loving thoughts lead to loving words and then to loving deeds.

Think of a time you went through a hardship or an uncertain time. What lesson did you learn? What strengths or skills did you gain from coming through the other side? We are each resilient beings with so much to offer. We often come out of hardships stronger and more resilient than ever. There are many people in need of a kind word or deed, especially in today's climate of fear and uncertainty. Helping another person can increase your feelings of well-being and purpose. Even small acts or a random kind word to a stranger can make a huge impact on those around us and can spur more acts of kindness.

Make a gratitude list. Take a moment to be thankful for all you've accomplished, all the changes, ups and downs successfully navigated, and all the gifts in your life. Focusing on the things you have to be thankful for has been shown to relieve anxiety, depression and stress by reminding us that although we have challenges, the challenges are temporary.

To help alleviate anxiety when thinking about the future and things out of your control, acknowledge any anxiety thoughts, then let them pass, bringing your attention back to the present moment. It may help to focus your attention on the sights, smells and sounds of the room you are in to help ground you in the present moment.

**“When we're in touch with our common humanity, we remember that feelings of inadequacy and disappointment are shared by all. This is what distinguishes self-compassion from self-pity. Whereas self-pity says, “poor me,” self-compassion remembers that everyone suffers, and it offers comfort because everyone is human.” ~ Kristin Neff**

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