

MindFlex³⁶⁵

Journaling

In this exercise, you'll keep a daily self-compassion journal for one week or longer if you want. To start, at the end of your day, find a quiet place to review the day's events. In a journal, write down situations when you experienced painful thoughts or feelings. Maybe you judged yourself or others, and that brought up anger. For example, "I got angry at my boss because he took longer than usual to respond to an email I sent him. I thought he didn't care, so I made a rude comment when he finally called me about the email. Later, I felt terrible and ashamed." For each day's painful situation, use mindfulness, a sense of common humanity, and self-kindness to process your painful thoughts or feelings in a self-compassionate way.

Mindfulness. Bring awareness to any painful thoughts or feelings that arose during the situation and write them down. As you write, accept your experience and write it without being judgmental or dramatic. For example, "I was frustrated because it took my boss a long time to get back to me. I got angry and was aggressive. I felt terrible and ashamed later."

Common Humanity. Write down how your experience is connected to the larger human experience. This might include acknowledging that being human means being imperfect and that all people have these experiences. For example, "Everyone overreacts sometimes. It's only human."

Self-Kindness. Write kind and understanding words to yourself: tell yourself you care, writing gently and reassuringly. For example, "It's okay you messed up. It isn't the end of the world. I understand how frustrated you were, and you just lost it. I know how much you value being kind and respectful to others and how badly you feel right now. I forgive you. Maybe you can try being more patient with your coworkers this week."

References

Gallo, F. J. (2016). *A practitioner's guide to using the acceptance and commitment therapy matrix model*. Frank J. Gallo.

Neff, K. (2015). *Self-compassion: The proven power of being kind to yourself*. New York, NY: William Morrow.

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