

## Self-Compassion Exercise

This exercise is to allow yourself to be open-minded about having self-compassion towards YOURself.

1. Think about a time you were struggling with eating, body image, self-acceptance, or anything really. How do you typically respond (self-talk)? Think about what you typically do or say to yourself. Be sure to notice the tone of your thoughts.
2. If you had a close friend, child, spouse, significant other, parent, etc who was struggling with this same issue, how would you respond? What would you say? Be sure to notice the tone you would use with your loved one.
3. Is there a difference between the way you would talk to your loved one compared to yourself? If yes, what factors or fears come into play that lead you to treat yourself and others differently?
4. How might things change if you respond kindly to yourself? You know the same way you did to your loved one?

Pause for dramatic effect.

5. Bullying or fearmongering yourself does not work and may actually worsen the struggle in the long run. Does self-criticism or self-bullying work as a self-motivator for the struggle? Reflect on a recent struggle, as you recall, can you actually feel the emotional discomfort? How does it feel?
6. What compassionate words or phrases could you use to replace the inner bully?

Now you may feel guilt or shame wash over you during this exercise. Let it and then let it wash away. This exercise is to remind YOU that your self-talk should be as long as you would to a loved one. You deserve self-love.