

Compassion Worksheet

Name:	Date:
Instructions:	
Use the prompts below to reflect on your experiences with compassion—for yourself and others. There are no right or wrong answers. Take your time to think about each question, and write as much or as little as feels right for you.	
I. Self-compassion	
Reflect on a situation where you felt you needed compassion from yourself. Describe the situation.	
What thoughts and feelings came up during that situation?	
If a friend were in your situation, how would you comfort or encourage them?	
How can you apply that same kindness to yourself?	

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II. Compassion for others

Reflect on a recent situation where you felt you needed to be compassionate for someone. Describe the situation.

How did you respond to this situation in terms of thoughts, feelings, and actions?

Did you feel you were compassionate?

Reflecting on this experience, is there anything you wish you had done differently?

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III. Obstacles to compassion

What situations make it difficult for you to show compassion to yourself?

What situations make it difficult for you to show compassion to others?

Reflect on what steps you could take to overcome these obstacles.

IV. Benefits of compassion

Reflecting on this experience, is there anything you wish you had done differently?

Reflect on how showing compassion to others strengthened your relationships?

V. Overcoming compassion fatigue

Compassion fatigue occurs when the emotional and physical demands of caring for others lead to exhaustion, decreased empathy, or feelings of burnout. It is common among caregivers, healthcare workers, and those who regularly extend compassion to others. Recognizing and addressing compassion fatigue is essential to maintaining personal well-being and sustaining the ability to care for others effectively.

Use the checklist below to identify whether you might be experiencing compassion fatigue:

- ☐ Feeling emotionally drained or detached from others.
- ☐ Difficulty experiencing empathy or compassion for others.
- ☐ Increased irritability or frustration.
- ☐ Physical symptoms such as headaches, fatigue, or insomnia.
- ☐ Avoidance of situations that require emotional investment.
- ☐ Reduced sense of personal accomplishment.

Compassion recharge plan

Use the space below to outline a plan for recharging your compassion:

1. What activities or practices help you recover from emotional exhaustion?

2. Who can you turn to for support when you're feeling overwhelmed?

3. What boundaries or limits will you set to maintain balance?

VI. Strategies for practicing compassion

Practicing compassion takes time and effort. Below are some strategies to guide you in cultivating compassion for yourself and others.

Practicing mindful compassion- Mindfulness is key to recognizing and responding to suffering without judgment.

- **Notice:** Pay attention to signs of struggle or discomfort in yourself and others.
- **Stay present:** Avoid the urge to dismiss or avoid pain. Sit with it, acknowledging its presence.
- **Self-inquiry:** Ask yourself:
 - “What is this person (or myself) feeling right now?”
 - “What can I do to alleviate or ease this pain?”

Shifting to a compassionate mindset - Train yourself to see challenges and mistakes through a lens of compassion.

- **Replace judgment with curiosity:** Instead of blaming, ask, “Why might this person (or I) be acting this way?”
- **Practice understanding:** Reflect on the causes of struggles, such as stress, fear, or past experiences.
- **Cultivate hope:** Focus on how kindness and care can make a difference, even in small ways.

Showing compassion through active listening - Listening deeply and without interruption shows others that their feelings are valid.

- **Be fully present:** Eliminate distractions and focus entirely on the person speaking.
- **Acknowledge emotions:** Use phrases like:
 - “That sounds really hard.”
 - “I’m here for you.”
- **Avoid problem-solving:** Sometimes people just need to be heard rather than fixed.

Taking compassionate action- Compassion is not just a feeling; it involves action to reduce suffering.

- **For others:**
 - Offer help, even in small ways, like carrying groceries or sending a kind message.
 - Ask, “How can I support you right now?”
- **For yourself:**
 - Write down three small actions you can take to improve your well-being.
 - Celebrate your efforts, even if they feel imperfect.

Strategies to prevent and manage compassion fatigue - Recognizing and addressing compassion fatigue is essential to maintaining personal well-being and sustaining the ability to care for others effectively.

- **Set boundaries:** Create limits around your caregiving responsibilities to prevent overextension.
- **Practice self-compassion:** Use self-compassion exercises such as mindful breathing or self-compassionate pauses to recharge.
- **Seek support:** Share your feelings with a trusted friend, therapist, or support group.
- **Engage in restorative activities:** Prioritize activities that replenish your energy, like exercise, hobbies, or quiet time.
- **Monitor your energy levels:** Regularly check in with yourself and adjust your commitments as needed.

Notes: