



RECREATING RESILIENCE

Self-Compassion in the Helping
Profession, a Heuristic Inquiry

Sarah Cake & Chelsea
Lazar

WHAT COMES TO MIND?

ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY



cow







WORK





**SHOW
ME THE
MONEY!**



PTSD





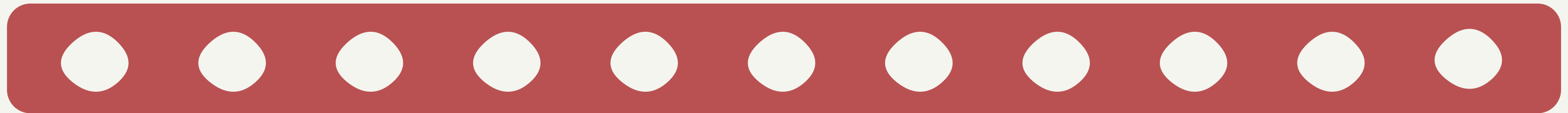


EMPATHY IS AT THE HEART OF ALL HELPING



- “Therapists who have high empathic capacities are more likely to approach sessions with authentic curiosity that supports a dialogue in which the client unveils their experiences with honesty and integrity, and ultimately creates a relationships that is secure an supports the process of change” (Cripps & Hood, 2017)

70% of adults experience trauma at least once in their lifetime



“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet”

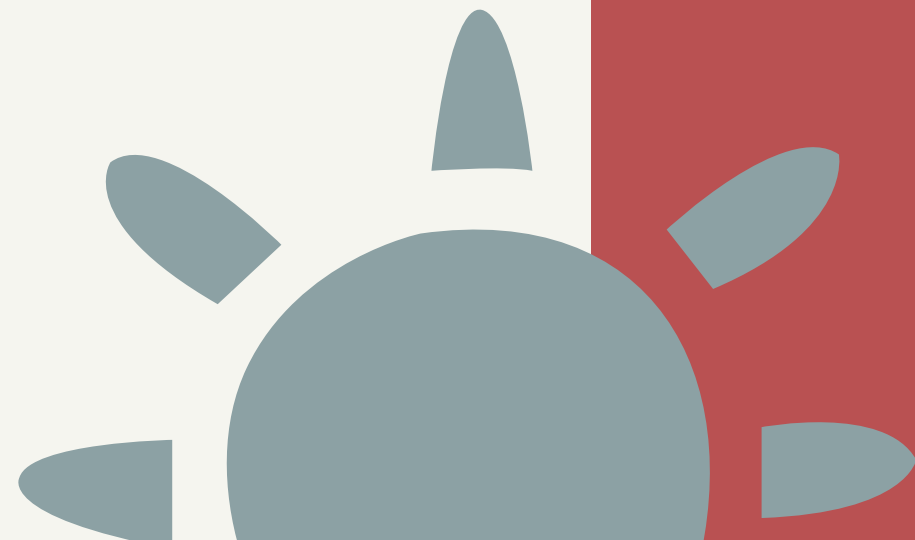
Naomi Rachel Remen



- Rewarding experience
- Daily contact with people supported
- Engaging positive emotions each work day



- Stressful environments
- Heavy caseloads
- Dwindling resources
- Cynicism and negativity from coworkers
- Low job satisfaction
- Risk of harm from people supported



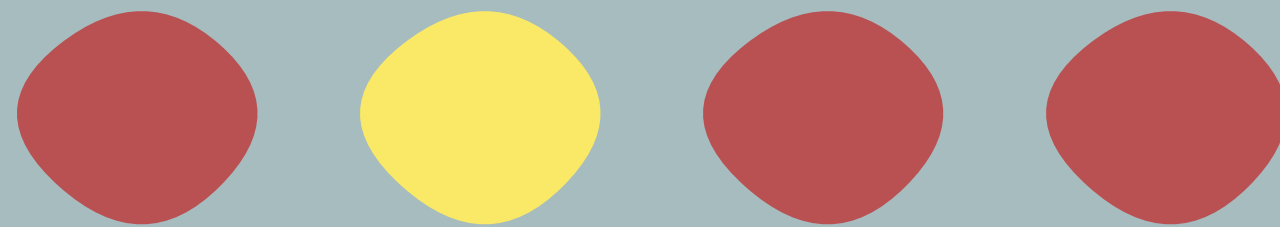
BURNOUT

Emotional and physical exhaustion related to low job satisfaction and feelings of powerlessness at work



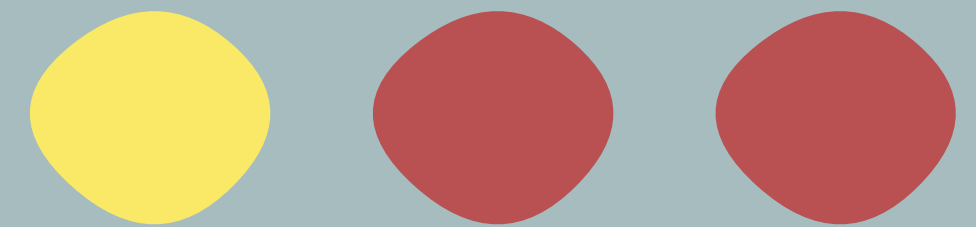
VICARIOUS TRAUMA

When the stories we hear from people supported transfer onto us and shifts our world view



COMPASSION FATIGUE

Reduces the interest in and capacity to bear the suffering of others



THE COST OF CARING

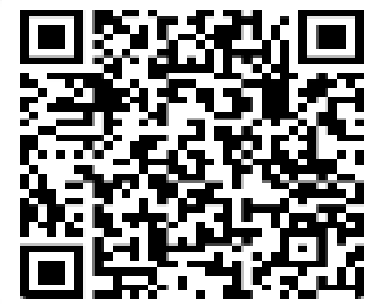
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How do the Big 3 show up for you?

All responses to your question will be shown here

Each response can be up to 200 characters long

Turn on voting in Interactivity to let participants vote for their favorites



THE COST OF CARING

Physical

- Exhaustion
- Insomnia
- Headache, migraines
- Illness
- Hypochondria

Behavioural

- Absenteeism
- Irritability
- Exaggerated sense of responsibility
- Impaired thinking
- Harmful coping

Psychological

- Self-image
- resentment
- dreading work
- helplessness
- avoidance
- world view
- hypervigilant



**EMPATHY IS TO HELPING
AS
SELF CRITICISM IS TO
COMPASSION FATIGUE**

Practicing self-compassion is your biggest protective factor - in the form of self-care and personal renewal, all other care can flow



Self Compassion Scale



Strongly agree

I am easily consumed by feelings of inadequacy or imposter syndrome.

I assume most other people are probably living a happier life than me.

I often distract myself from feelings I don't want.

If I fail at something I feel alone in that failure.

There are several aspects of my personality I wish to change.

Strongly agree



SELF-COMPASSION BREAK



WHAT IS SELF-COMPASSION?



Mindfulness vs Over-identification

Common Humanity vs isolate

Self-Kindness vs self-judgement

“Treating yourself with kindness, whatever the outcome”

- Self-Compassion Break
- Soothing Touch
- Affectionate Breathing
- Letter to Yourself - From a Friend
- Letter to your Inner Child
- Loving Kindness Meditation
- Self-Compassion Journal
- Self-Compassion Language
- Self-Compassion Vows

CULTIVATING SELF-COMPASSION





**RECREATING
RESILIENCE:
CULTIVATING SELF-
COMPASSION
EXERCISES**

These exercises have been collected through the sources cited in the reference page and were not developed by or credited to Sarah Cake & Chelsea Lazar

RECREATING RESILIENCE

EXERCISES TO CULTIVATE SELF-COMPASSION

Taking care of the caregiver If you work in a care-giving profession (and that certainly includes being a family member!), you'll need to recharge your batteries so you have enough energy available to give to others. Give yourself permission to meet your own needs, recognizing that this will not only enhance your quality of life, it will also enhance your ability to be there for those that rely on you. For instance, you might listen to relaxing music, take a yoga class, hang out with a friend for an evening, or get a massage. Of course, sometimes our time is limited and we aren't able to take care of ourselves as much as we'd like. Also, one limitation of self-care strategies is that they're "off the job," and can't be done while you're actually caregiving. Thus, it's important to also engage in "on the job" selfcare. When you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed when with the person you're caring for, you might try giving yourself soothing words of support (for example "I know this is hard right now, and it's only natural you're feeling so stressed. I'm here for you."). Or else you might try using a soothing touch or the self-compassion break. This will allow you to keep your heart open, and help you care for and nurture yourself at the same time you're caring for and nurturing others

SELF-COMPASSION BREAK

Think of a situation in your life that is difficult, that is causing you stress. Call the situation to mind, and see if you can actually feel the stress and emotional discomfort in your body.

Now, say to yourself:

1. This is a moment of suffering.

That's mindfulness.

Other options include:

- This hurts.
- Ouch.
- This is stress.

2. Suffering is a part of life.

That's common humanity.

Other options include:

- Other people feel this way.
 - I'm not alone.
- We all struggle in our lives.

Now, put your hands over your heart, feel the warmth of your hands and the gentle touch of your hands on your chest. Or adopt the soothing touch you discovered felt right for you.

Say to yourself:

3. May I be kind to myself.

You can also ask yourself, "What do I need to hear right now to express kindness to myself?"

Is there a phrase that speaks to you in your particular situation, such as:

May I accept myself as I am

May I forgive myself

May I be patient

May I be free from fear

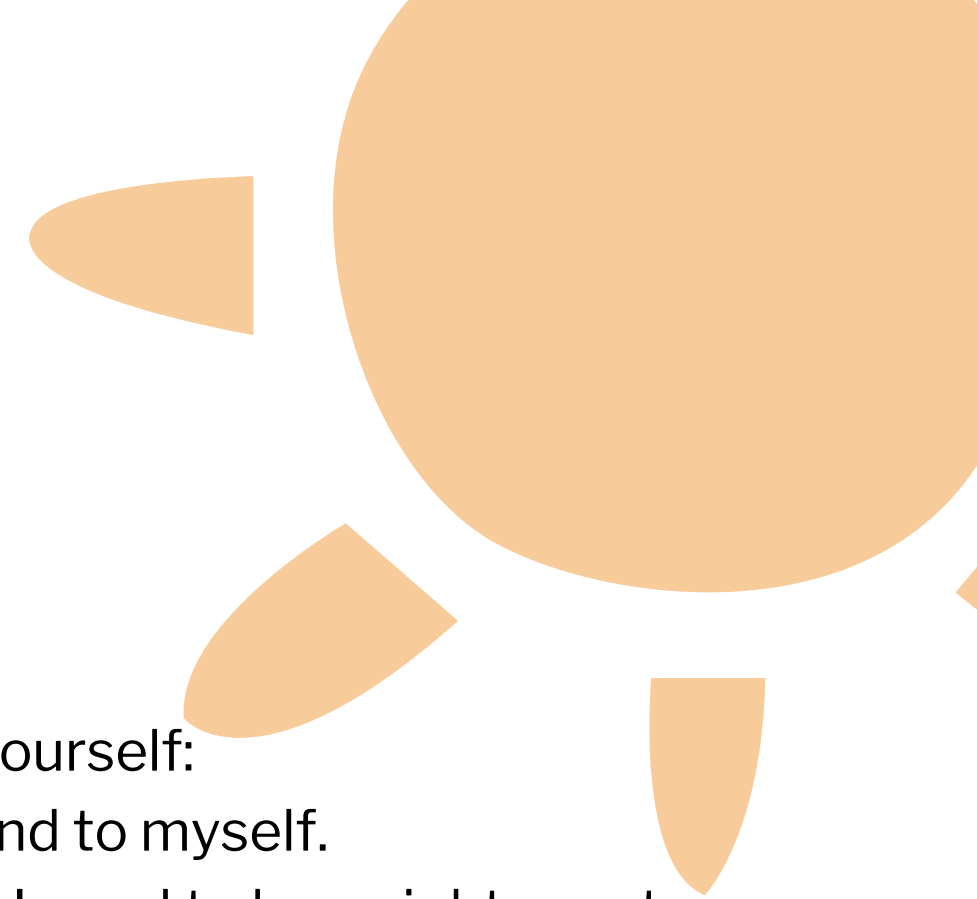
May I treat myself with kindness

May I love myself just as I am

May I know my own goodness

May I give myself the compassion that I need

This practice can be used any time of day or night, and will help you remember to evoke the three aspects of self-compassion when you need it most.



SOOTHING TOUCH

If you notice that you're feeling tense, upset, sad or self-critical, try stroking your arm or face, or gently rocking your body. What's important is that you make a clear gesture that conveys feelings of love, care, and tenderness. If other people are around, you can often fold your arms in a non-obvious way, gently squeezing yourself in a comforting manner. You can also simply imagine hugging or caressing yourself if you can't make the actual physical gesture.

Try stroking your skin or putting your hand over your heart during difficult periods several times a day for a period of at least a week. Eventually, you will develop the habit of comforting yourself when you need it.

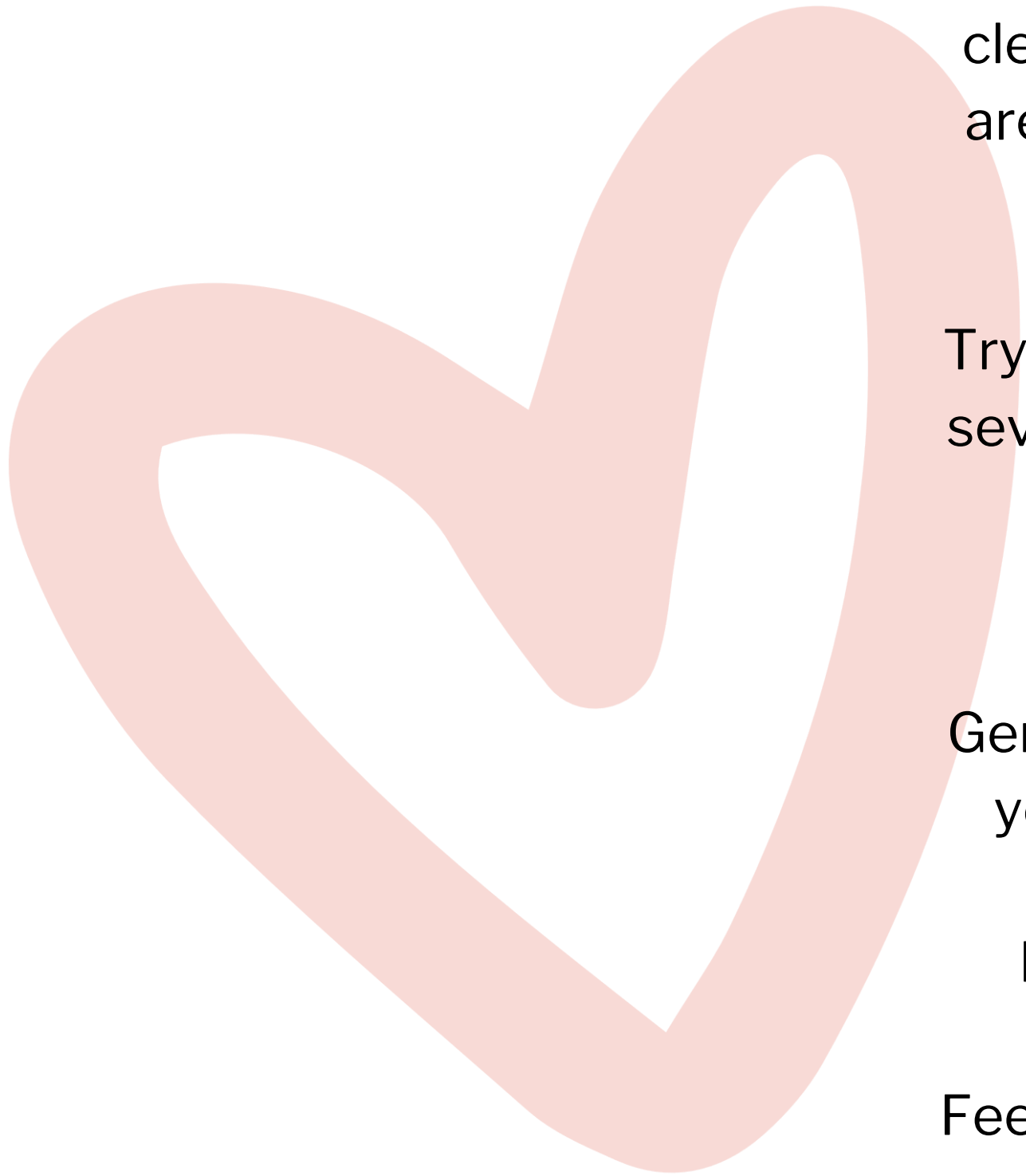
Hand on Heart

When you notice you're under stress, take 2-3 deep, satisfying breaths. Gently place your hand over your heart feeling the gentle pressure and warmth of your hand. If you wish, place both hands on your chest, noticing the difference between one and two hands.

Feel the touch of your hand on your chest. If you wish, you could make small circles with your hand on your chest.

Feel the natural rising and falling of your chest as you breathe in and as you breathe out.

Linger with the feeling for as long as you like.



AFFECTIONATE BREATHING

Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit, in a way where your bones are supported without the strength of your muscles. Keep your back straight, shoulder blades slightly dropped and your chin gently tucked toward your chest. Take three, slow easy deep breaths to relax and let go of whatever burdens you are carrying with you.

Bring your attention to your breathing. Pay attention to where you're breathing most easily. Feel the air enter and exit your nostrils; feel the air fill your lungs or diaphragm.

Explore where your breathing is most easy to notice.

Just feel your breath for a while. When you notice your mind has wandered, feel your breath again.

Some people find it easy to pay attention to only part of the breath cycle - the inbreath of the outbreath. If you like, notice when you feel your breath more easily - when you exhale or when you inhale. Just feel it then, and then take a little vacation. Just wait for the inbreath of the outbreath to return. Feel that breath, then wait again for it to return.

Let your body breathe you - it does that automatically anyway.

Now put your hand on your heart for a moment to remind yourself that you will be bringing kind attention to your breathing.

Be aware how your breath nourishes you whether you are paying attention to it or not. Let yourself appreciate this automatic process that sustains your life wherever you go.

Your mind will wander away from the sensation of the breath many times every minute.

Don't worry about how often your mind wanders, gently return to the feeling of your breathing when you notice that your mind has wandered.

Now just for a moment, rest in the experience of your body, and then slowly come back to alertness when you are ready.

A LETTER FROM A FRIEND

First, think about times when a close friend feels really bad about him or herself or is really struggling in some way. How would you respond to your friend in this situation? Write down what you typically do, what you say, and with what kind of attitude or tone of voice.

In response to a stressor, feelings of inadequacy, or a moment of unkindness, write a letter to yourself as though you were talking to a friend. Really imagine yourself talking to a loved person in your life - be supportive, validating, non-judgemental and hopeful.



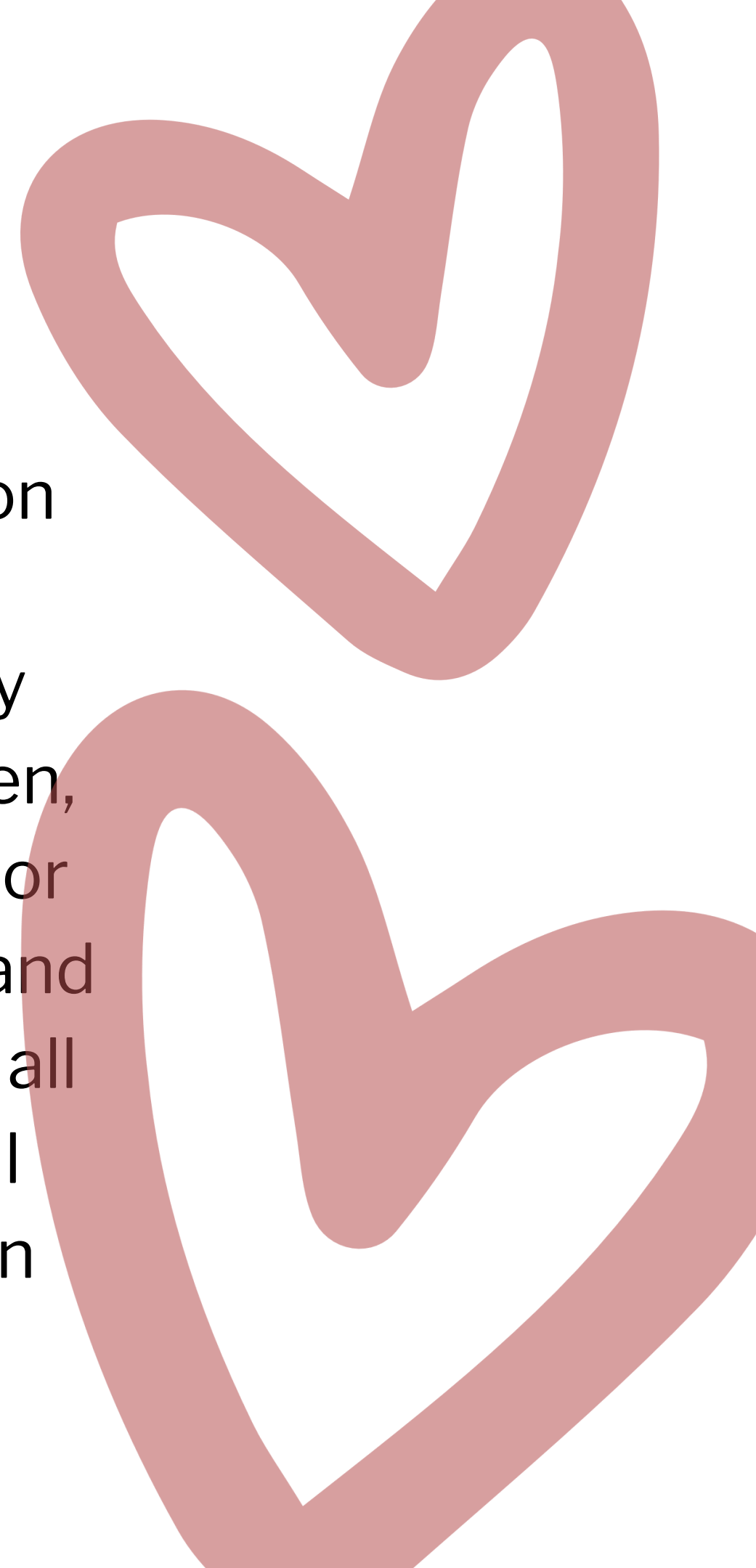
TALKING TO YOUR INNER CHILD

First, think about times when you provided comfort to a child who was in distress. Write down what you typically do, what you say, and with what kind of attitude or tone of voice.

In response to a stressor, feelings of inadequacy, or a moment of unkindness, write a letter to yourself as though you were talking to a child. Imagine using the words, attitude and affection that you would for a young child.

LOVING-KINDNESS MEDITATION

Loving-Kindness for All Beings Once you have found a comfortable sitting position, spend a few moments offering loving-kindness toward a benefactor, yourself, a neutral person and a difficult person. Now, as best you can, expand your awareness to include individuals and groups who are, in many ways, unknown to you. For example, you may wish for all women, or men, to be happy. It sometimes helps to categorise people, or beings, into opposites. For example, may all children be happy and may all adults be happy. Alternatively, you may simply wish for all beings to be happy. As you extend loving-kindness toward all beings, notice the spaciousness in the body and see if you can notice your breath extending out, past the body.





SELF-COMPASSION JOURNAL

Try keeping a daily self-compassion journal for one week. At some point during the end of the work day when you have a few quiet moments, review the day's events. Make time for this in your agenda. In your journal, write down anything that you felt bad about, anything you judged yourself for, or any difficult experience that caused you pain. For each event, use mindfulness, a sense of common humanity, and kindness to process the event in a more self-compassionate way.

Mindfulness. This will mainly involve bringing awareness to the painful emotions that arose due to your self-judgement or difficult circumstances. Write about how you felt: sad, ashamed, frightened, stressed, and so on. As you write, try to be accepting and non-judgmental of your experience, not belittling it nor making it overly dramatic.

Common Humanity. Write down the ways in which your experience was connected to the larger human experience. This might include acknowledging that being human means being imperfect, and that all people have these sorts of painful experiences. ("Everyone overreacts sometimes, it's only human.")

You might also want to think about the various causes and conditions underlying the painful event.

Self-Kindness. Write yourself some kind, understanding, words of comfort. Let yourself know that you care about yourself, adopting a gentle, reassuring tone. Practising the three components of self-compassion with this writing exercise will help organise your thoughts and emotions, while helping to encode them in your memory. If you keep a journal regularly, your self-compassion practice will become even stronger and translate more easily into daily life.

SELF-COMPASSION LANGUAGE

What types of things do you typically judge and criticise about yourself?

What language do you use with yourself when you notice a flaw or make mistakes?

How could you reframe your language to be more kind, supportive, and understanding, to remember that you're only human, and to acknowledge things as they are without blowing them out of proportion?

As you go about your day, notice when you're using harsh or unkind language with yourself, and then try to reframe your language so that it's more self-compassionate.

Examples:

I am not meant to be perfect, I am human.

I forgive myself for what I did when I was still learning.

It is not a reflection of my worth, if I am not what's best for them.

I made a mistake, but I am not a mistake.

I can celebrate trying my best when things don't go as planned.

I have stuff to work on, but I am worth the work.

I may not be where I want to be, I still have time to get there.

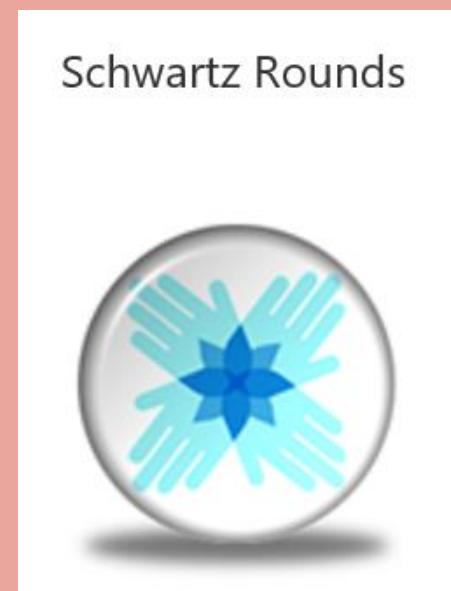
SELF-COMPASSION VOWS

In your own words, write out a promise you make to yourself that describes how you will live according to your core values. For example, "may I be patient with myself when I make mistakes"



RESTORATIVE COMPASSIONATE WORKPLACES

St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton
Compassionate Practices Employer



Self-Compassion Strategy

MINDFUL MOMENTS

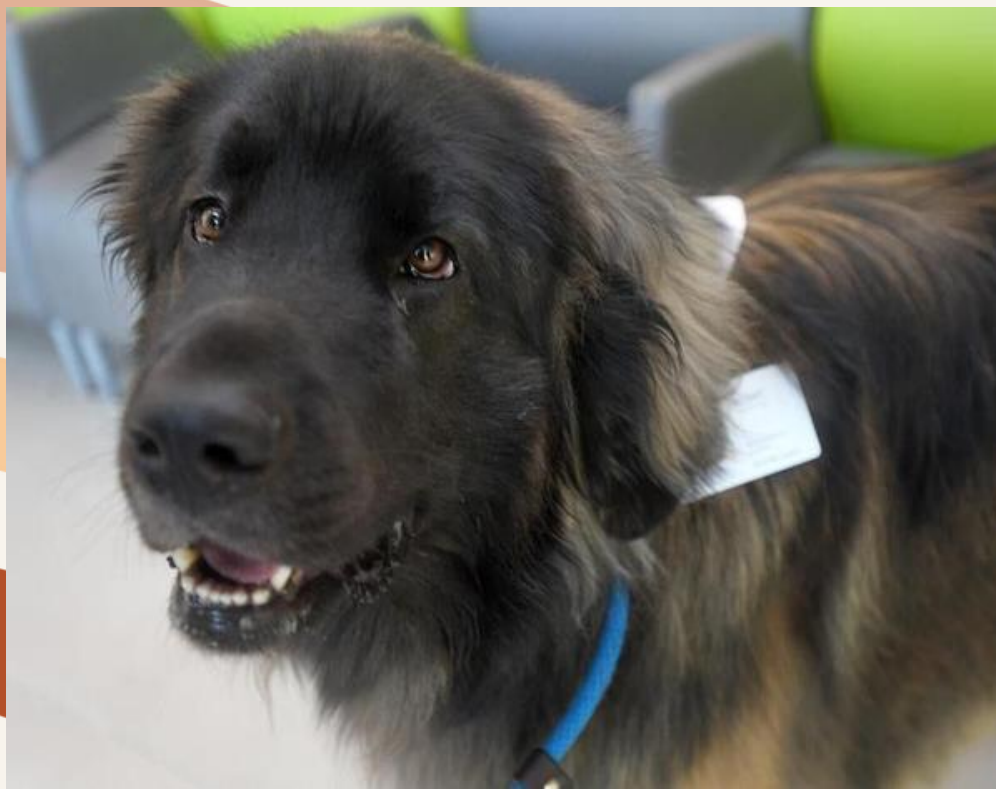
Welcome to Mindfulness in Healthcare

"Mindfulness is a state of active, open attention on the present. When you're mindful, you observe your thoughts and feelings from a distance, without judging them good or bad. Instead of letting your life pass you by, mindfulness means living in the moment and awakening to experience."
-Psychology Today



YouTube:

St. Joe's The Mindful Hospital
[short version]



St. Joseph's
Healthcare Hamilton Employee Wellness
Program

Angie Bailey ART AND SOUL

Stretch & Unwind....

Unit/Department Weekly Stretch Breaks

Sign your team up for an in unit or department stretch break by Wellness Coordinator, Heather Buist. Click the link below to schedule your team or contact wellness@stjoes.ca

 **Book A
Stretch Break**



COMMON HUMANITY



Coping and Resilience Support

Mental Health Support Portal



EDDI

DROP IN

Self-Compassion Strategy

SELF-KINDNESS



7 C's of Stress First Aid

Evidence based actions to promote recovery from adversity and stress



Learn more about Stress First Aid at [MyStJoes > Employee Wellness > Stress First Aid](#)

Wellness Programming

◀ ▶ May 2024							Go to Date	Today	Week	Month
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday				
28	29	30	1 May	2	3	4				
	Open Gym	Wellbeats Yoga Class	Open Gym	Wellbeats Yoga Class	Core/Mobility Class					
		Open Gym	EDI Drop-in							
		EDI Drop-in								
5	6	7	8	9	10	11				

Employee and Family Assistance Program :
Homewood Health



Wellbeats





Self-Compassion in Reflective Practice

Essence of Growth
and Resilience



C.A.R.E. REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Centre yourself: take a moment to yourself. Take a few deep breaths. Gently reflect on, acknowledge if it was difficult or stressful.

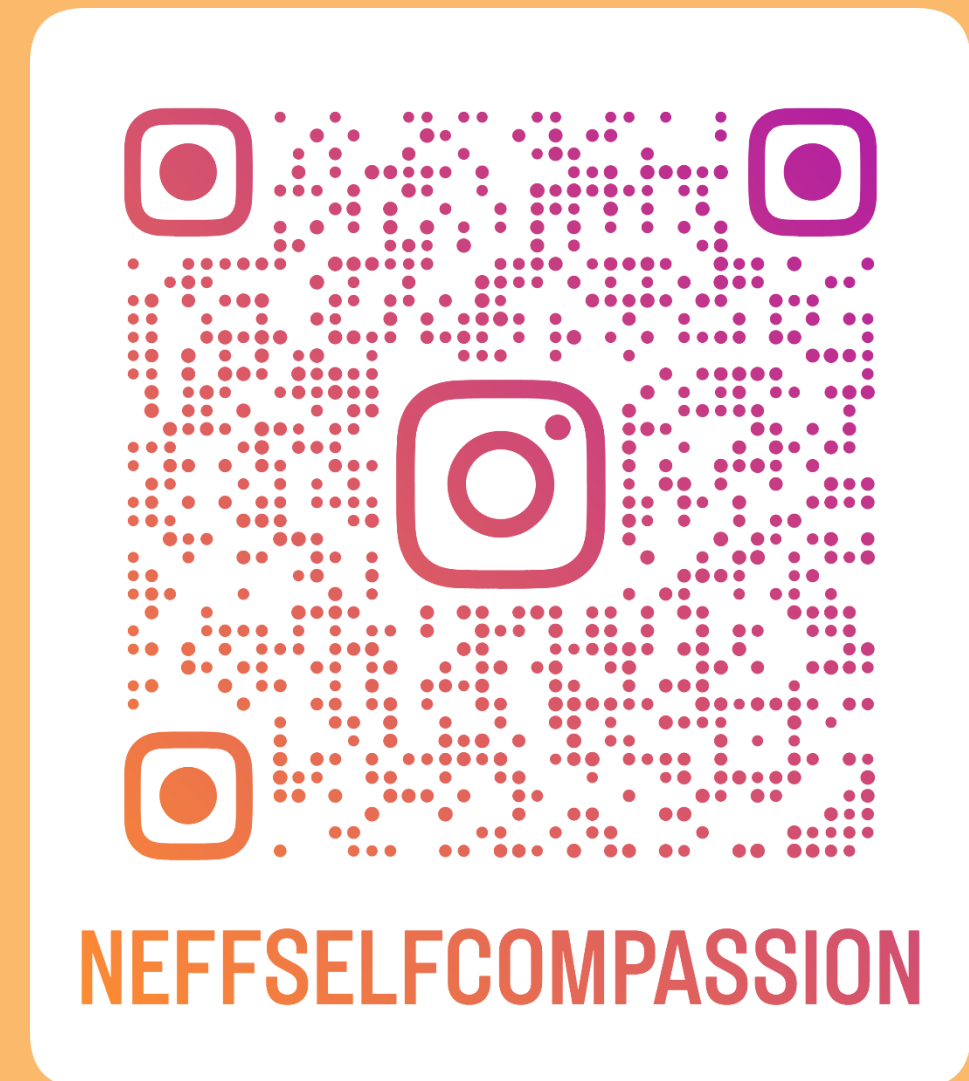
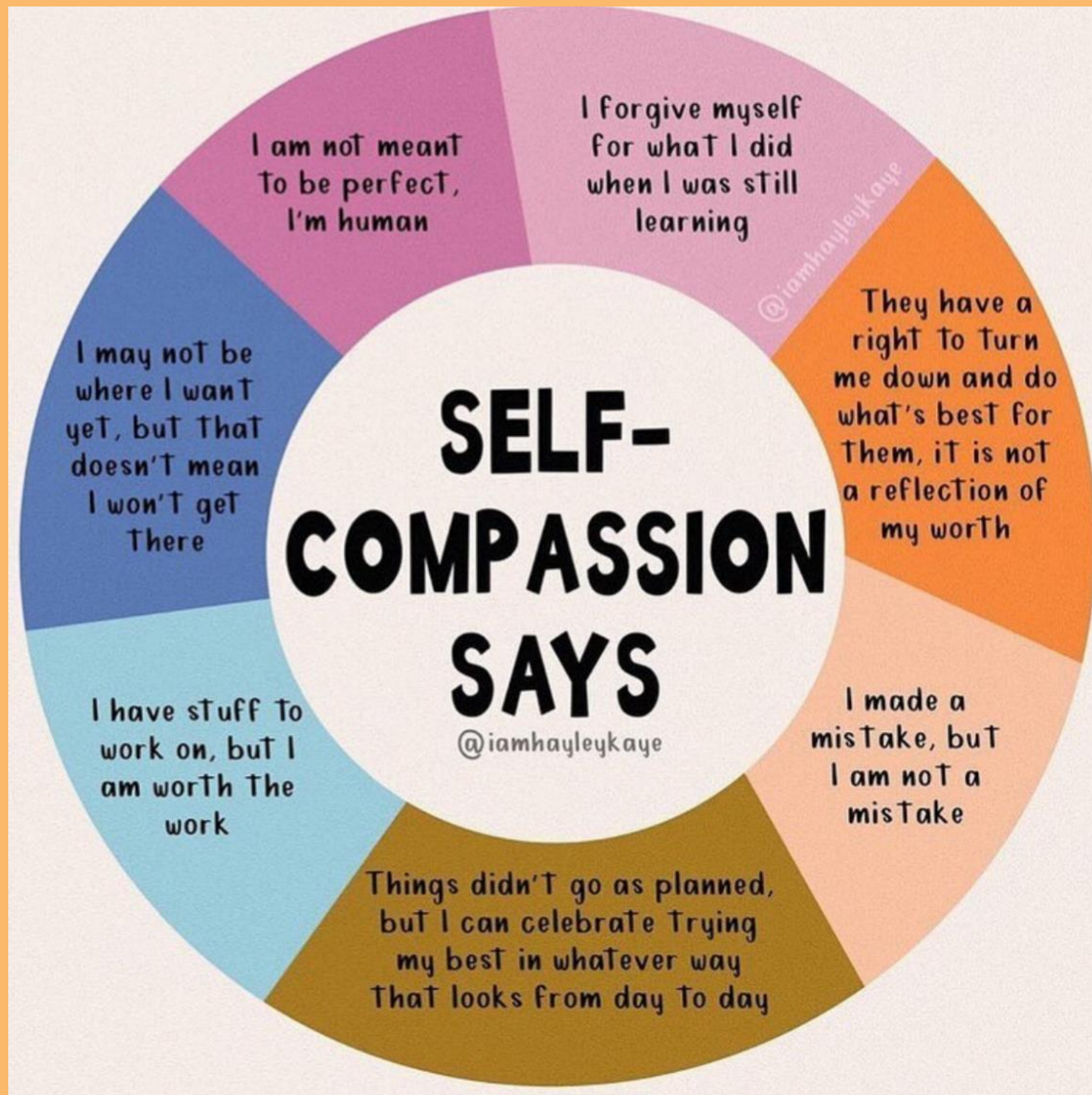
Acknowledge the 1:3 rule: Identify 1 thing that may have been stressful. Let this go. Identify 3 things that went well or you are grateful, savour this.

Review that state of your colleagues and yourself: Check in with colleagues. Check in with yourself. Consider debriefing, peer support, or using formal supports.

Energize yourself: As you leave for the day and head home, plan to engage in self-care or an enjoyable activity to rest, relax and recharge.

Self-Compassion in Recreating Resilience

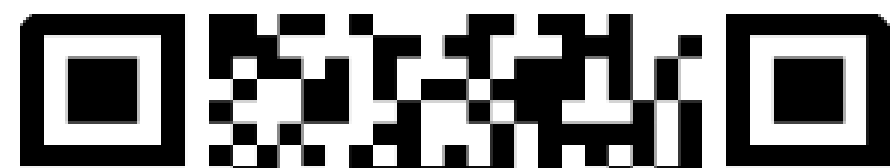
- Incorporate self-compassion as an intervention with people you support
- Advocate to your teams to create Reflective Practice Groups
- Engage in peer to peer reflective practice monitoring
- Become the self-compassion champion in your workplace
- Use the Self-Compassion journal at the end of each day or during documentation
- Build self-compassionate language



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Self Compassion Vows

32 responses



i am smart and sassy
look what you accomplish
i'm enough and i can be m
i did
i am perfectly able
i am alv
relax everythings okay
i am a good person
everyone makes mistakes
im a work in progress
im doing great
i am capable
i am enough
love yourself
but you tried
thy

RELEVANT RESOURCE LINKS

[The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit | Compendium of Resources | Office for Victims of Crime \(ojp.gov\)](#)

[Schwartz Rounds - The Schwartz Center](#)

[Compassion In Action - The Schwartz Center](#)

[Stress First Aid - The Schwartz Center](#)

[Mental Health and Well-being Resources for Healthcare Workers - The Schwartz Center](#)

[Virtual Schwartz Rounds - The Schwartz Center](#)

[Self-Compassion Development Training | Creating Compassion](#)

[Self-Compassion at Work Top Tips and Reflective Practice | Creating Compassion with Dr Amanda Super](#)

Body Of Knowledge

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