

Caring Safely®

Strategies to increase self-esteem and compassion

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Individual Worth for Self-Esteem

- Our own unique thoughts, feelings and behaviors are personal characteristics that no one else can possess in exactly the same way as we do. It is for this reason that all humans are born with individual worth.
- Where does your individual internal worth come from?
 - Roles
 - Goals
 - Talents/Abilities
 - Personal Thoughts/Beliefs

Handout

Personal Statement of Acceptance

- One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself is the gift of acceptance. We can be judgemental/critical/shameful about ourselves, our current situation, why we are in it, how long it's taking to change. I invite you to create a personal statement about your process of growth or use the following:

"I accept my current situation, completely as it is, in this moment. This doesn't always mean I am happy with it or that it isn't difficult at times, I simply accept it, releasing any judgement I had about it. I am currently taking steps to change my situation, so that my life is more aligned with my values and I can live/work/care in a sustainable way. Some days I may take more actions than others, and that's okay. I know accepting my situation, instead of triggering the stress response when I judge it, is actually a big step towards my value-based life and that a series of small changes will lead to significant results."

Compassionate Curiosity

- What a person is thinking/feeling/doing, at any given moment, is a result of all previous experiences to that time. Think about all previous experiences that could have led up to the moment in question.
- What could have contributed to what is happening with that person? Wonder. Be Curious. Knowing that genetics, nurturing, experiences, opportunities and support have all contributed.
- What would be most helpful in the moment? Moving from judgment/critic to curiosity and compassion.
- Practice compassionate curiosity with yourself as well.

Practice Compassionate Curiosity

Each day, for one week, practice compassionate curiosity, at least once.
Either on yourself, with a colleague/friend/family member or with a client
Think of what could be behind their present behavior/comment/feeling
Think about what could be the most nourishing/helpful thing you can do in that moment

Handout

Creating Compassionate Feelings with Memories

- There are ways that you can evoke feelings of compassion.
 - Get in a comfortable position – focus on breath
 - Think about someone who was kind or caring to you
 - Focus on the details of what was happening
 - Pick something that wasn't stressful
 - Think about how you felt when receiving this kindness
 - What was that person's facial expression, voice, body language?
 - What feelings were directed at you?
- Could you feel those emotions come at you?
- What did you feel in your body?
- What senses are activated when you feel kindness?
- When finished you may want to write out this experience – your thoughts, feelings and body sensations.

Compassionate Imagery

- Get in a comfortable position and focusing on the breath and then generate the experience of compassion from compassionate memories – either receiving or giving compassion.
- Focus on all the senses and sensations you experienced while receiving or giving compassion.
- Now imagine that compassionate warmth flowing into your heart and radiating throughout your chest into the rest of your body.
- Take your right hand and place just over your heart – imagine compassion flowing into your heart from your hand.