



6 DAYS

to more compassion





6 Days to More Compassion

Research from [The Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education](#) out of Stanford University shows that people who have more compassion for themselves and others are happier people. They are more motivated, less afraid of failure, have less anxiety and depression, and have the resilience needed to cope with life's stressors.

Clearly, there are many physical and emotional benefits to compassion. But what does compassion look like in practice?

According to self-compassion experts [Dr. Kristen Neff](#) and [Dr. Christopher Germer](#), self-compassion includes the capacity to **comfort, soothe, validate, protect, provide for, and motivate** ourselves. Our six-day compassion challenge will encourage you to practice each of these capacities, notice how you feel, and reflect on your experience.

Six days won't change your whole world, but they might just give you the inspiration you need to make small steps toward a better you.

Let's get started!



Morning, Day 1: Comfort

We begin our deepening of compassion with the practice of comfort. In the context of self-compassion, comfort means leaning into difficult emotions and **supporting your emotional needs by encouraging yourself.**

Comfort sounds like: “Somehow it’s going to work out. Trust the process. I don’t know what to do right now, but I have what it takes to figure this out. I’ve done difficult things before.”

Today, choose one way you will practice comforting yourself. Perhaps you will place a sticky note with a kind message on your mirror, recall a proud moment when you overcame an obstacle, or even affirm yourself in a gentle voice using some of the phrases from above.

Whatever you choose, write down your practice in the space below, then give it a try! Throughout your day, do your best to notice the practice’s impact on you. You’ll reflect about it on the next page.

Today, I will practice comforting myself by ...

Night, Day 1: Comfort

Day one down! How did your comfort practice go? How did you feel starting your day that way? What did you like about it? What would you do differently next time? Take a few minutes to write a short reflection about your experience.





Morning, Day 2: Soothe

Today, we will practice the self-compassion capacity of soothing ourselves. Soothing means to **help your body become physically calmer**.

Soothing looks like: Giving your body warmth and tenderness — curling up in a soft blanket, drinking some hot tea, making your favorite food, taking a bubble bath, soaking your feet, getting a massage, or listening to calming music.

Ahhh, just reading that list is nice ...

When you're ready, choose one way you will soothe yourself today and help to calm your body. Whatever you choose, write down your practice in the space below. Give it a go, and remember to pay attention to how the practice impacts you and the way you move through your day.

Today, I will practice soothing myself by ...

Night, Day 2: Soothe

Day two — complete! How did it feel to practice soothing yourself? What did you notice about the way your body (and your mind) felt after showing yourself compassion in this way? Take a few minutes to reflect on your day and how you showed up in it.





Morning, Day 3: Validate

Today, we will practice validating ourselves. To validate means to **accept and be open to what is**. Don't deny or ignore what you are feeling or what is happening to you.

Validating sounds like: "I'm not crazy for thinking this way. This is really sad/difficult/frustrating. It's alright that I'm not at my best right now after what I've just experienced."

You can practice validating yourself aloud or by writing about what you are experiencing. Either way, let go of what you think should be happening or what you should be feeling, and embrace what is true in the present moment. Do your best to maintain this way of relating to your experience throughout the rest of your day. Notice what happens.

Today, I will practice validating myself by ...

Night, Day 3: Validate

You're half-way there! How did it feel to validate yourself today? Did you notice any resistance to this self-compassion practice? What did you learn about yourself from this exercise? Take a few minutes to journal about your day — and remember to accept it for what it was!





Morning, Day 4: Protect

It's time to set some healthy boundaries. Today, we will protect ourselves by **saying no to people, situations and practices that are harmful to us.**

Protecting looks like: Going to sleep and getting good rest instead of scrolling social media when you know it depletes you; kindly redirecting someone when they try to pull you into negative, unproductive conversation; thoughtfully refraining from over-committing to requests you know you can't keep.

In what area of your life do you need to practice protecting yourself? To whom or to what do you need to deliver a compassionate “no”? Think about those questions, then write down one boundary you will work to create or maintain today.

Today, I will practice protecting myself by ...

Night, Day 4: Protect

Saying “no” isn’t always easy, but sometimes it’s the most compassionate thing we can do for ourselves. How did it feel to protect yourself today?
Will you continue to maintain the boundary you set moving forward?
What does saying no to that person or thing make possible for you?





Morning, Day 5: Provide

What do you really need today? Your answer to that question will help you with this next compassion capacity: provide. To provide for yourself means **figuring out what you need and giving it to yourself**; don't wait for others to meet your needs.

Providing looks like: Taking a walk when you need to move your body; calling your friend when you want to connect instead of waiting for them to reach out; cooking yourself a nourishing dinner; taking a day off when you need to rest and reset; giving yourself the permission to exercise your creativity.

What do you need today? How might you meet that need for yourself? Choose one need and commit to showing up for yourself today. Then observe how providing for yourself resonates as self-compassion.

Today, I will practice providing for myself by ...

Night, Day 5: Provide

Day five — provide — how did it go? How did it feel to show up for yourself like that? Was it empowering? Reassuring? Something else? Did you realize anything new about yourself? Spend a few minutes processing how it felt to provide for yourself today.





Morning, Day 6: Motivate

It's the final day! You've made it this far; clearly you were *motivated* to cultivate more compassion ... which brings us to our final practice. To motivate yourself means to **use positive words with yourself to do something about solving your situation and getting into action.** Help yourself move from “thinking” to “doing.”

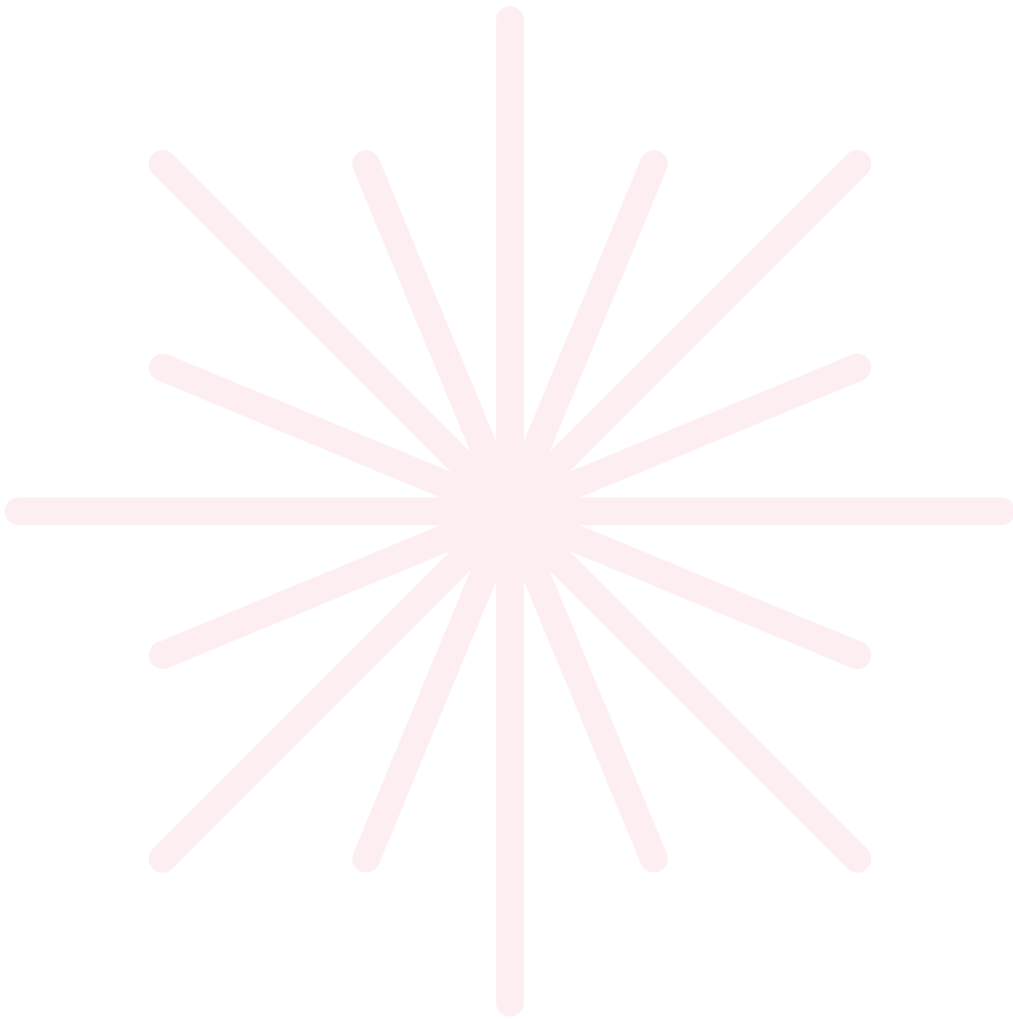
Motivating sounds like: “There is a challenge in front of me, but I can handle it. I have everything within me that I need. The first step is to ... and I am going to act on it now by ...”

What challenges are you facing today? What kind, action-oriented words can you say to yourself to inspire you to move forward and through them? Is there a motto, mantra or song lyric that primes you for action? Reflect on this questions, then move from thinking to doing!

Today, I will practice motivating myself by ...

Night, Day 6: Motivate

A day full of motivation — how did that feel? Did you do anything you thought you couldn't? Did the simple step you took today help you to more clearly see the path forward? Reflect on the self-compassion practice of motivation and how it served you today.





Day 7 ... and beyond!

Congratulations! You completed the 6 Days to More Compassion Challenge.

As you know, living with compassion for yourself and others is a life-long endeavor. Fortunately, there are many great resources to help you on your journey.

We recommend checking out Dr. Kristen Neff's website: self-compassion.org. You can take a free self-compassion assessment, download guided self-compassion practices, and explore more resources on the topic.

Be sure to also check out Dr. Christopher Germer's work at chrisgermer.com where you can download free audio meditations and learn more about mindful self-compassion.

If you would like to bring these concepts to life for the young adults in your life, Youth Frontiers offers a dynamic cohort-based workshop on compassion designed to inspire personal growth and ultimately positive change in our communities. Visit youthfrontiers.org/character-academy to learn more about this and our other powerful sessions.

Thank you for completing the challenge and for living with more compassion. Be well!