

Meditation: Be Kind to Yourself

by [Kristin Neff](#) October 9, 2015

A three-step contemplation to give yourself the compassion you need (and deserve).

1. Put both hands on your heart, pause, and feel their warmth. You can also put your hand anyplace on your body that feels soothing and comforting, like your belly or face.
2. Breathe deeply in and out.
3. Speak these words to yourself, out loud or silently, in a warm and caring tone:

This is a moment of suffering.

Suffering is a part of life.

May I be kind to myself in this moment.

May I give myself the compassion I need.

The first phrase, *This is a moment of suffering*, is designed to bring mindfulness to the fact that you're in pain. Other possible wordings are *I'm having a really tough time right now*, *This hurts*, or anything that describes the suffering you are experiencing.

The second phrase, *Suffering is a part of life*, reminds you that imperfection is part of the shared human experience. Other possible wordings are *Everyone feels this way sometimes*, *This is part of being human*, etc.

The third phrase, *May I be kind to myself in this moment*, helps bring a sense of caring concern to your present-moment experience. Other possible wordings are *May I love and support myself right now*, *May I accept myself as I am*, etc.

The final phrase, *May I give myself the compassion I need*, firmly sets your intention to be self-compassionate. You might use other words such as *May I remember that I am worthy of compassion*, *May I give myself the same compassion I would give to a good friend*, etc.

Find the wordings for these four phrases that are the most comfortable for you and memorize them. Then, the next time you judge yourself or have a difficult experience, you can use these phrases as a way of reminding yourself to be self-compassionate. This practice is a handy tool to soothe and calm troubled states of mind.

[About Kristin Neff](#)

Kristin Neff is associate professor of educational psychology at the University of Texas at Austin. She is a pioneer researcher in the field of self-compassion and teaches workshops worldwide. She is the author of *Self-Compassion: Stop Beating Yourself Up and Leave Insecurity Behind*.