

## ACTIVITY: Practicing Self-Compassion

- Self-compassion is defined as being kind and understanding to one's self in times of suffering, failure, or when we feel inadequate
- Self compassion also involves recognizing our shared humanity. The experiences of suffering and being imperfect are true for **everyone**, not just you.
- People who practice self-compassion can take responsibility for negative experiences but don't get overwhelmed by bad feelings.
- The purpose of this activity is to learn one way to practice self-compassion.

### Try This!

*Write down your responses to the following questions:*

- 1) Think about a time when a friend or family member was going through a hard time or felt bad about themselves. What did you do in that situation (how did you act, what did you say, what tone did you use)?
- 2) Now think about a time when you were struggling or feeling bad. What did you do in that situation (how did you act, what did you say to yourself about the situation, were you self-critical or kind)?
- 3) Is there a difference between how you treat a friend who is suffering and how you treat yourself? If so, why?
- 4) How could you treat yourself more like you would treat a loved one the next time you are suffering or feel "not good enough"?

### Try This!

The next time you find your are criticizing yourself or questioning your self-worth, take a few minutes to write about the situation as if you were speaking to a close friend. First, describe the situation – what happened, why did it happen, why do you feel bad? Next, write down all the things you would say to your friend if this was their situation. This exercise can help you look at the situation objectively and practice self-compassion.

**For more information on self-compassion, visit Dr. Kristen Heff's website:**

<http://self-compassion.org>

*The writing activity above was adapted from "How Would You Treat a Friend?" at:*

<http://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/#exercises>