

# SELF COMPASSION THROUGH WRITING



We continue the theme of **cultivating Self Compassion** which is very important for HSP-Es as we tend to be our own worst critics and so much harder on ourselves than we are on others. These exercises are from **Dr Kristin Neff**.

## **Part One:**

1. Think about some of the things that you don't like about yourself or that make you feel not 'good enough'. Choose one of these things that is most salient at the moment.
2. Take note of how you feel when you think about it. Notice the emotions that come up, and let yourself experience them. We are so often desperate to avoid feeling anything negative, but negative feelings are an inherent part of life. Additionally, negative feelings can often provoke positive outcomes, like self-compassion.

**Simply feel the emotions that thinking about your insecurity dredges up, then write about them.**

## **Part Two:**

Writing a letter to yourself from the perspective of an unconditionally loving imaginary friend.

Similar to the first exercise (How Would You Treat a Friend? Can be found in 23rd September session), this exercise will call upon your tendency to show compassion

and understanding to your friends, and encourage you to apply it to yourself as well.



1. Imagine a friend who is unconditionally loving, kind, compassionate, and accepting.
2. Next, imagine they have all of your strengths and all of your weaknesses, including the feelings of inadequacy you just wrote about.
3. Think about how this friend feels about you: **they love you, accept you, and act kindly towards you.** Even when you make a mistake or do something hurtful, this friend is quick to forgive and understand.

Not only is this friend completely understanding and compassionate, but he or she knows all about your life. They know how you got to where you are, they know about all the millions of little choices that you made along the way, and they understand that several factors have contributed to the person you are today.

4. **Write a letter from the perspective of this imaginary, unconditionally loving friend. Focus the letter on the inadequacies you wrote about in part one. Think about what this all-compassionate friend would say to you.**

Would they tell you that you must be perfect, and any weakness is unacceptable? Or would this friend tell you that he or she understands why you feel that way, but that we are all human and that we are all imperfect?

Would they berate you for your feelings of insecurity or inadequacy? Or would they encourage you to accept yourself as you are, and remind you of your strengths?

**Write this letter with the friend's feelings for you in mind; make sure that their love, compassion, and kindness are at the forefront of their message to you.**

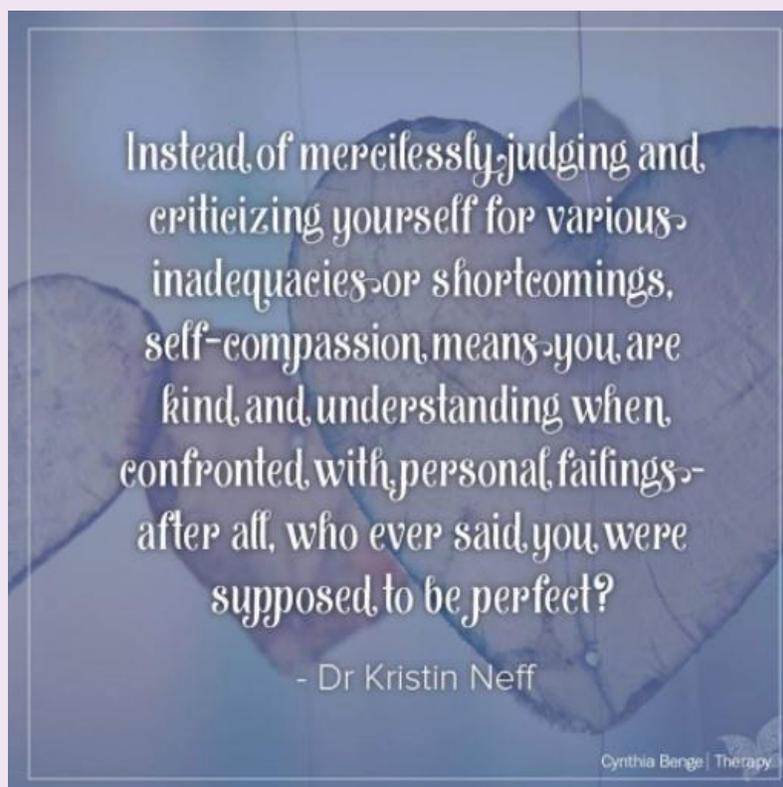
### Part Three:



Next, **put the letter down and walk away for a while.** Give yourself some space from the letter.

**When you come back, read it again – but read it with the intention to really let the words sink in. Don't read it as a note that you wrote a few minutes or hours ago; read it as if it is really from this unconditionally loving friend.**

**Open yourself up to their compassion and let yourself experience it, soothing and comforting you. Allow their compassion to sink into you, and become your own compassion for yourself**



Source:

[https://positivepsychology.com/self-compassion-exercises-worksheets/?fbclid=IwAR18Xqy5RKw2MMnFAvoE4Da91ektvtI4yI2aIDCH61BdkdW9\\_vwPcDOxzGk](https://positivepsychology.com/self-compassion-exercises-worksheets/?fbclid=IwAR18Xqy5RKw2MMnFAvoE4Da91ektvtI4yI2aIDCH61BdkdW9_vwPcDOxzGk)