



LESSON 15: SELF-COMPASSION

Misunderstood by Allyson Blythe



The world can be brutal at times and everyone needs a soft place to land. Are you adding to the stress and strain of the outside world by creating a harsh inner world? Are you your own worst enemy with the battering and bruising you're doing to yourself? Would you ever speak to others the way you speak to yourself?

There are a lot of misconceptions about self-compassion – that it makes you weak or that it is pity. These are misperceptions for sure. Positive motivation is far more effective and uplifting than degradation and disrespect.

Though the inner critic may have its purpose and place, if you find it is beating the crap out of you, you may want to introduce the tool of self-compassion. This is the ability to be kind, respectful, and understanding towards yourself. It is the willingness to be decent and gentle as you meet yourself where you are without ridicule, scrutiny, or personal assault. It's finding positive ways to acknowledge and motivate yourself rather than beating yourself mercilessly. Self-compassion allows you to think, act, and speak to yourself with respect and kindness.

- Use words, thoughts, and behaviors that show respect and understanding for yourself
- Manage your internal story and core belief systems
- Speak to and about yourself as you would a best friend or small child
- Be kind and considerate about your triggers, struggles, and tender spots
- See your mistakes and flaws in right size
- Acknowledge and celebrate your strengths
- Be curious and inquisitive to gain a better understanding of yourself
- You are probably quick to judge, scrutinize, or chastise yourself so instead, create a kind, playful nickname for yourself.
- This nickname can be helpful when you fall prey to criticism or judgment. It can remind you of the work you're trying to do. For example - You make a mistake and notice your immediate thought "Way to go dumbass". You stop yourself and redirect "Oh, not like that Bud, try that again" or "Hey darlin, that wasn't your best, how about if you start over". See the gentleness it allows?
- Recognize flaws, mistakes, and imperfections with understanding, decency, and kindness rather than shame and scrutiny
- Differentiate between feeling badly vs guilt. Guilt indicates you've done something wrong. If you have, then guilt is appropriate. If you haven't, perhaps you simply feel bad about something and your tendency is to take on responsibility and feel guilty. Check yourself.
- Separate shame from guilt. Remember, if you've mis-stepped, guilt is an appropriate emotion that can tune you into your moral compass. Guilt is a reflection that you've done something wrong, shame reflects that you are something wrong. Shame may be your default emotion but it is often far too heavy and a misrepresentation of the situation.

Is your inner critic chiming in on everything you do? Are you treating yourself like you would your best friend? What is it that you most need to hear or feel? Try practicing that.

Two things I will begin saying to myself daily:

1.

2.