

I love
This for You!



SELF COMPASSION WORKSHOP
AMY BACKOS, PHD. ATR-BC

COPYRIGHT DISCLAIMER

This book and class are offered as an educational tool to inspire you to reflect on values. The class is not therapy and participating does not constitute a therapeutic relationship. The assignments are offered as inspiration to increase authenticity in your relationship with yourself, and achieve your value-based goals.

Enjoy the process!

Want more? Email me!
Have any questions/concerns? Email me!
Amy@Amybackos.com

Love the class? Tell a friend!!

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WELCOME

I am delighted you joined this community of people who are excited about living more compassionately. A compassionate attitude towards ones self helps you live each day according to what is most important to you. Self compassion can transform your life, your relationships, your work, and your community.

Kindness directed at yourself creates a life of more ease, as well as space for loving relationships and personal success. This workshop utilizes evidence-based strategies from psychology and art therapy to enhance your relationship with your thoughts. These tools help you relate to yourself in positive ways and give you the opportunity to move towards your values and dreams with excitement.

The "I love this for you" workshop will guide you towards self compassion and kindness, and allow you to bring a positive and compassionate attitude to your family and community. This workbook offers the resources you need to create personal satisfaction and a life you love. Enjoy the process of self-discovery with curiosity and joy!

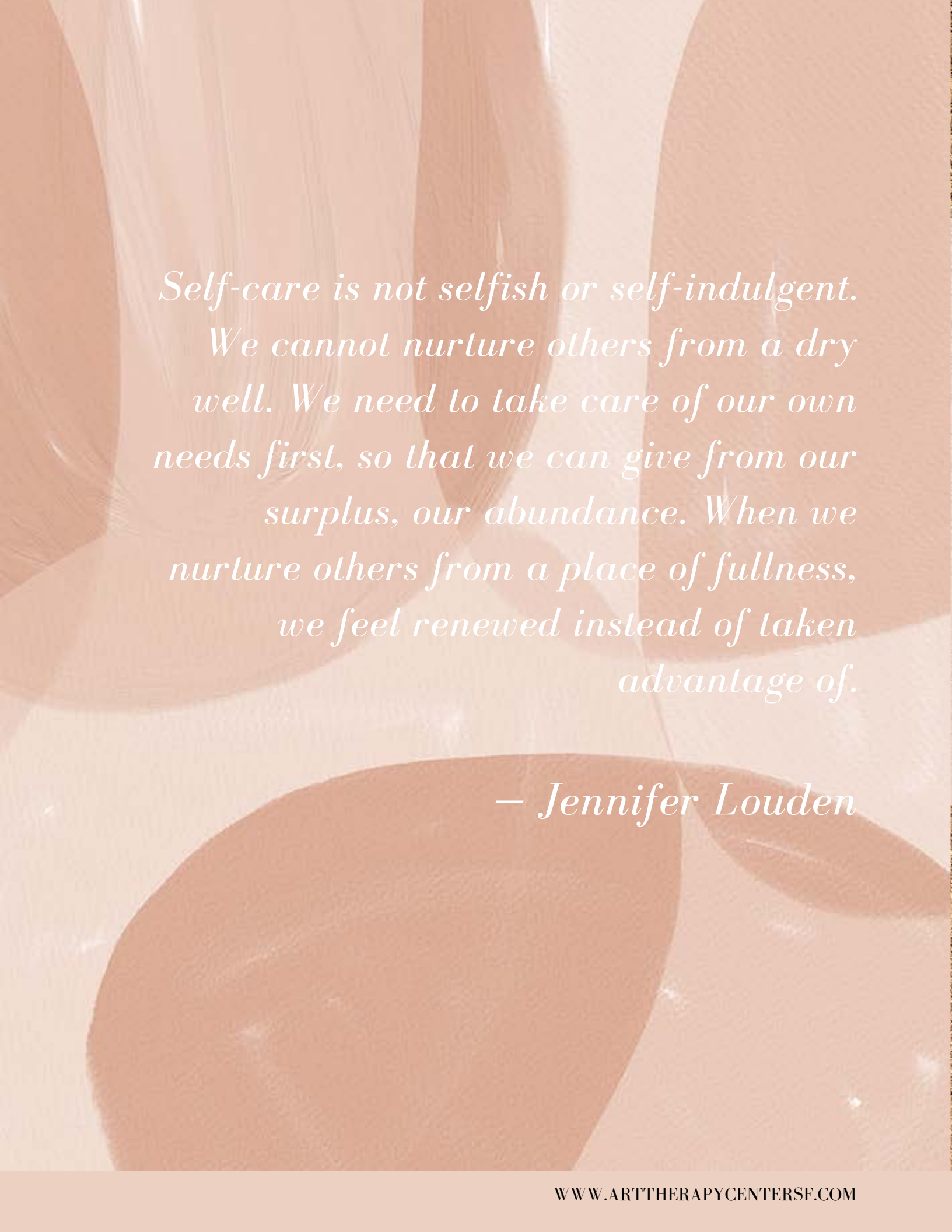


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Licensed Psychologist & Board Certified Art Therapist

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*Self-care is not selfish or self-indulgent.
We cannot nurture others from a dry
well. We need to take care of our own
needs first, so that we can give from our
surplus, our abundance. When we
nurture others from a place of fullness,
we feel renewed instead of taken
advantage of.*

— Jennifer Louden



BEGINNING

The truth is, there is more than
enough love, creative ideas, power,
joy & happiness to go around

-Rhonda Byrne

Before class starts

1

Plan your mode of writing

Print this workbook and find a lovely binder to keep it all together, or have it bound at an office store. If you prefer to skip printing, get a blank journal for the writing and art exercises.

2

Schedule the Class

Use your calendar or the planner at the end of this book to mark the time of live classes, or the time you will watch the recordings the next day.

3

Schedule Committed Actions

Schedule time for inspired action! Use your calendar to invest 20 minutes each day on your self compassion for the next month. For maximum impact, schedule 7 days a week.

4

Find an Accountability Partner

Tell someone about your commitment to the class who can help you be accountable to your daily 20 minute commitment.

5

Get ready to create!

Gather some tools for drawing - crayons, colored pencils, markers, or pens, etc. It is unnecessary for you to have anything fancy - just pick ones you like!

Weekly Outline

1

Compassionate Self

Orientation and introduction to compassion, self kindness, and why it matters.

Inspired action (complete before class 2)

- Review pages 1-18.
- Complete week 1 writing & art.

2

Compassionate Thoughts

Barriers to self compassion; cognitive defusion and tools for success.

Inspired action (complete before class 3)

- Complete week 2 writing & art.

3

Compassionate Spirit

Creating your compassionate self; self as context; a growth-promoting environment.

Inspired action (complete before class 4)

- Complete week 3 writing and art.

4

Compassionate Action

Bringing compassion and kindness to others; committed actions.

Inspired action (complete after class 4)

- Complete week 4 writing and art.
- Create your plan for further action.



If each of us
would
only sweep
our own doorstep,
the whole world
would
be clean.

Mother Theresa

How to Keep a Commitment

If you have had difficulty with consistency in the past, don't worry! This time you will succeed using the best psychology strategies! You will learn and use all of these tricks for success this month.

If you have taken a class with me before, you know some of these tips. However, make sure you are calibrated to success by checking to make sure you are still using these strategies.

- **Write it down!** Research shows when you write down your goal, you are 70% likely to succeed! That's right! Simply writing down your goals gives you 70% of what you need for success. Using this workbook and your calendar will give you the leverage you need for consistency!
- **Discipline before motivation!** We often wait until we "feel" inspired to take action. Motivation is a feeling and discipline is an action. Take action through a consistent schedule and you will soon feel the motivation to continue.
- **Slow and Steady!** Making small daily progress is more likely to lead to big success! Research shows people making small incremental movement towards goals ultimately surpass people attempting to tackle multiple goals at once or trying to do too much.
- **Changing Habits!** Research shows pairing a new habit with an old one is the recipe for success. Pair your 20 minute a day for this class with another well established habit. For example, brushing your teeth in the morning, eating your breakfast or lunch, washing your face at night. Schedule 20 minutes before or after one of these times or pick another regular habit and schedule 20 minutes around that.

More about Commitments

- **Pleasure!** There is decades of research demonstrating you can increase a new behavior with a reward! All you have to do is pair a new behavior with something pleasurable. Add something you enjoy to your 20 minutes and you are significantly more likely to succeed! For example, you can fix a cup of hot chocolate or tea to drink while you write and make art (I encourage you to choose a non-alcoholic beverage). Deciding you don't need a reward, is the opposite of self-compassion! Really do this!
- **Location! Location! Location!** Research demonstrates if you practice in the same location, your mind will be ready for learn just by going to that location! Pick a comfortable spot and work there each day.
- **1% more!** All you need for this workshop is 20 minutes a day. This is about 1% of your day! You have already made an important commitment to complete this workshop...all it requires for success is 1% of your day for the next month.
- **Be decisive!** Make your commitment and stick to it! Keep self-compassion as your priority for one month. Practicing indecision reinforces that habit, prevents us from making progress, and increases stress. Stick to your commitment!
- **A word of caution!** Reading and knowing these strategies is not enough for success. Actual implement and practice is required! Avoid letting your mind fool you into thinking you can skip these steps. The next page is where you make your commitment. Tempted to skip this step? Go back and reread the research above about success. You have probably been thinking about your being kind to yourself and others for a long time - now is the time for commitment to make compassion a priority in your life.

Your Personal Commitment

I _____

(Your name)

commit to 20 minutes each day for my self-compassion this month.

&

I will focus on self-kindness, self-love, and joy.

I will complete my 20 minutes a day at this time:

I will complete my 20 minutes a day in this location:

I will complete my 20 minutes a day with this additional pleasure:

Your signature _____

date

Commitments



Joyful actions

We make time for self care. We create an internal environment to welcome joy. Each week we create a healthy environment by attending to our mental and physical health, nutrition, rest, friendships, education, and fun.

Commitment

We commit to a life-long process of learning and relearning self-compassion. We seek new actions to show kindness to ourself and others. We look for and find joy in each day.

Self Compassion

We speak kindly to ourselves. We patiently redirect ourselves to speak with love and compassion.

Kind Thoughts

We learn to relate to our thoughts in new ways. We see thoughts for what they are - just thoughts. In this way, we free up time and psychological energy for things we love.

Authentic Presence

We show up for others with our self compassion and love. Our kind example to ourselves is a gift to others in our family and community.



Instructions

You've been criticizing yourself for years and it hasn't worked. Try approving of yourself and see what happens.

Louise L. Hay

Committed Actions

Now that you have identified to the time and place, the additional pleasure, and made your commitment, it is time to get started!

You have just made a life changing commitment to yourself to prioritize 1% of your day for self-compassion, kindness, and joy.

Each week, you will have a lesson and then work on the topic for the whole week. You have journaling and art prompts to complete each week and 20 minutes a day is plenty of time. Once you complete the worksheets and art each week, you can use any remaining 20 minutes as you wish - writing and making art, reading, silent contemplation, and written reflection about how to put your compassion into action.

Here is a sample schedule you can use each day - always use your timer for maximum focus:

1 minute breath and relax, get comfortable, smile

9 minutes write / make art

1 minute breath and relax, stretch, smile

It is most important that you stick to your 20 minute schedule each day! No need to try and catch up if you miss a day - just return to 20 minutes a day. Whatever you do to enhance your self-compassion, kindness and joy will be great!

Instructions: Write

Now it is time for you to reflect on your thoughts and feelings about yourself. Why is this important? A compassionate attitude towards yourself uplifts your spirits, makes room for happiness, and allows you to move forward with what is important to you.

Negative and critical thoughts towards yourself makes everything more difficult, limits happiness and joy, and likely stops you from going towards your values. Each week of the "I Love this for You" workshop includes practice for 20 minutes each day where you will write and art. It is up to you to expand your self compassion throughout the day. You will work on your self compassion in two ways: writing and art.

Writing

Writing offers an efficient way to explore your thoughts - we write to "know" ourselves and to learn more about our thoughts. We tend to think the same thoughts every day for years. The writing will allow you to unpack your thoughts and decide if you want to keep thinking them or change them.

We pick up negative self talk from childhood and from uncomfortable experiences. Because our brains tend to focus on the negative, we engage in negative thoughts a lot! You may find you feel a little sad, angry or surprised at the negative thoughts you discover this month. Remember, the point of this workshop is self-compassion, so when you have uncomfortable feelings arise, you have the chance to practice kind thoughts with yourself.

Try telling yourself something gentle like this:

Hello old thought. I see you are here again. I am learning to relate differently to you. I am not trying to get rid of you. I am learning to love myself, even when you are here with me and when I feel uncomfortable.

You might want to write that sentence (or create your own) on a note card to hang by your bed, on your mirror, or in your car. Text it to yourself or make it your screen saver.

Instructions: Art

Art

Art Therapy is a creative process to understand ourselves, express feelings, clarify thoughts, promote flow, and feel great. In fact, creative expression is a human need! The use of Art Therapy dates back to the early 1900's and art for healing is as old as human history!

The art process helps you solidify feelings and allows your brain to deeply explore why some thoughts seem to have so much power. The creative process incorporates more parts of your brain than the writing can do alone. You can use what you learn in this class about your creative process anytime you want to understand yourself more, increase your self compassion, or figure out how you want to act.

You can spend as much or as little time on the art as you wish - however, it is important to have a creative expression each week. Avoid thinking too long about what to create - be spontaneous and have fun!

When you are done with each drawing, take a moment to reflect (without judgement) on the PROCESS of creating. It's important to suspend judgement about what your art looks like. Whatever you create will be great for understanding yourself more and generating self compassion! If you are tempted to skip this step, please reconsider so you get the most value from this class!

Remember to aside 20 minutes each day to complete these inspired actions. You are committed to one month of self compassion, kindness, and joy. Give yourself the gift of completing your commitment each day to get the most value from this class!

If you want to work with an Art Therapist, reach out to The Art Therapy Center of San Francisco and always look for a Registered and Board Certified Art Therapist (ATR-BC). Registered and board certified art therapists are trained artists and mental health professionals who can help you express yourself to the fullest using visual art, movement, and creative thinking.



Please secure
your oxygen mask
before
assisting others.

Our flight attendants

Summary

Remember - start small, only 20 minutes a day. Be easy on yourself when you discover uncomfortable feelings, or have thoughts with a lot of strong emotion. This is normal so avoid judging yourself. Acknowledge the thought and call it by its name - an unkind thought, an unhelpful thought, or an old negative story. Even if you have piles of evidence that a thought might be true, you are learning to relate to thoughts differently. They are only thoughts.

Research shows that when we push away or distract ourselves from an unwanted thought, it will definitely come back and even feel worse the next time. Take a deep breath, notice the thoughts and feel the feelings. Then move on. No need to mull it over or ask why you keep having the thought. Just "be" with it for a moment and then move forward. If you are really stuck on a memory, be compassionate with yourself, take time to write about how you can take care of yourself, and consider talking with a therapist.

Remember, research shows, that making a small commitment and sticking to it leads to success, while taking on too much leads to burn out, frustration in lack of progress and ultimately giving up. You can succeed here by being consistent with just 20 minutes a day. Avoid trying to complete all the tasks in a day or two. Focus on small, daily actions.

TO SUCCEED

- Work only 20 minutes a day.
- Practice self-compassion - gently redirect yourself when you notice unkind thoughts.
- Work everyday at the same time and place.
- Pair your time with another habit (eg., right after your brush your teeth).
- Pair your time with a simple pleasure (hot tea, flowers, a chocolate, etc.).
- If you skip a day, get right back on track with 20 minutes a day. Do not work 40 minutes to try and "make up" for a missed day. Avoid judgement. Just move forward.

20 minutes a day can change your life!



Week 1

Compassionate Self

You are the sky.
Your feelings, thoughts and
mood are just the weather.
Focus on the sky.

-ACT metaphor



We have to
pay
ourselves
first.

Dr. Amy Backos

Compassionate Self

Here are the areas you will cover this week.
Spend 20 minutes a day, take your time, and savor them over the week.

1

Brainstorming

Here you let your creative thinking flow to generate a list of behaviors you have done in the past, currently do, or could do in the future to demonstrate your self compassion.

2

Acknowledging and Accepting

Time to explore old, negative thoughts. It might feel uncomfortable to write your negative thoughts, however, you need to know what you are moving away from so you can create and practice new, compassionate thoughts.

3

Identifying values

This week we start by identifying your values in self care. Values are aspirational and guide us, like a map, towards the compassionate ways we want to treat ourselves.

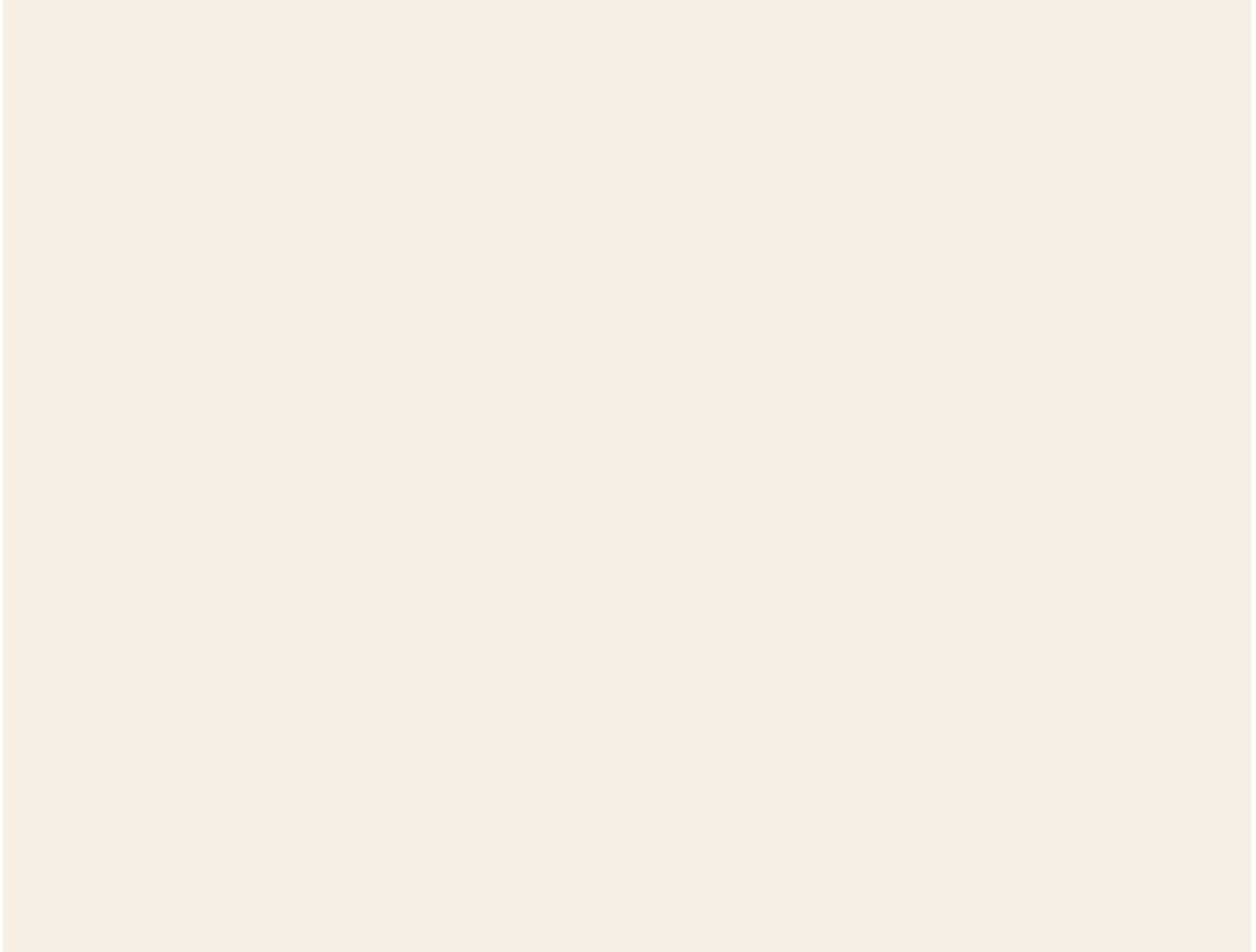
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Creative Expression and Reflection


Creativity hones in on emotions and helps you connect your feelings with your values and your brainstorming. Enjoy this process and see what emerges for you! Reflect on the week and note what you have learned.


Valuing Self Compassion

Spend 20 minutes writing about your values in the area of self compassion. Focus on what is most important to YOU, and how you want to feel, think and act in alignment with the value of self compassion, love and care. These are values and aspirational - they give you a map of where you want to go. Answer the question, "Why is self compassion important to me at this point in my life?"



Reflect on what you just wrote and highlight the words which are exciting and interesting to you. Condense your writing into three main points which describe your values in self compassion, care and love. Below, write three sentences describing what you value. For example, I value setting a great example for my child, feeling at ease with myself, and accomplishing my goals with fun and happiness.

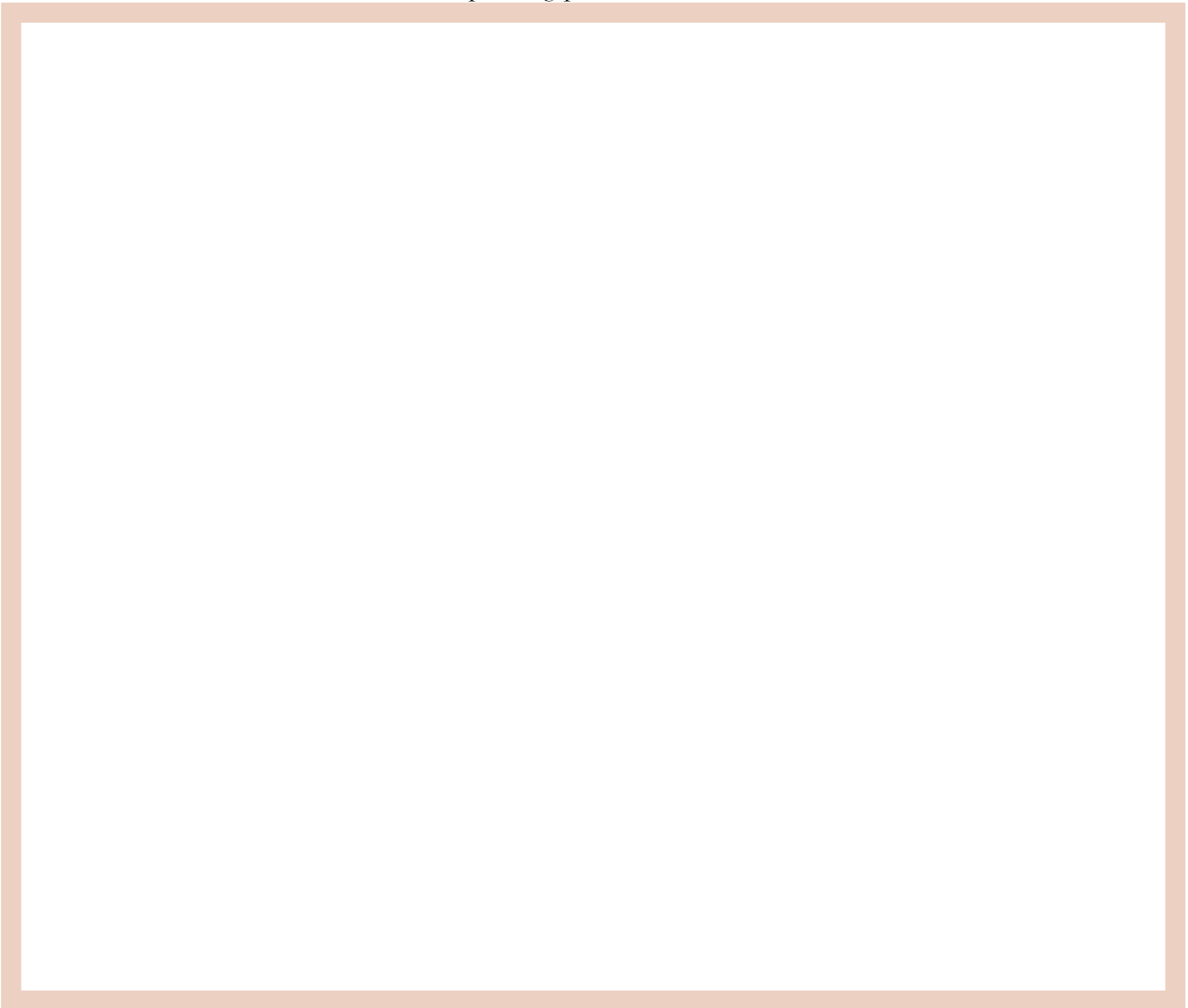
 *I value:*

 *I value:*

 *I value:*

Value Brainstorm

Reflect for a moment on the ways you already act in alignment with self compassion, care and love. Now brainstorm on paper all ways you **currently** demonstrate this value, have in the **past**, or easily could in the **future**. Make these actions specific, short and simple. For example: walk every day, smile in the mirror, make your bed, journal, take a bubble bath, schedule an appointment with a therapist or other health care provider, do dishes before bed, schedule 8 hours of sleep, listen to uplifting podcasts, etc.



- Draw a star next to all the actions you could or would like to do this week. Be realistic! Identify small actions, and select ones that you can reasonably accomplish in a few seconds or a few minutes. You may select actions that you are already doing and you can even pick the same action and commit to do it each day. However you decide to act on your values this week is up to you, and whatever you choose will be great!
- For maximum success schedule your value-based actions for the week - write them on your calander. Writing is your commitment and a reminder to follow through.

Imagine...

Take a few deep breaths and imagine a person who is kind to themselves: an actor, someone you know, a favorite character in a movie or book, a person you admire, or someone you create in your mind. Ask them what sorts of things they tell themselves when they growing, changing, or have a disappointment Write a list of 9 kind, compassionate thoughts they tell themselves.

01

...

02

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03

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04

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05

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06

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07

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08

...

09

...

Visual Expression

Take a few moments to show the what self compassion looks like using lines, shapes and colors. It could range from just one line to a fully fleshed-out, abstract or representational picture. Avoid thinking too long about it and be spontaneous. This will help you connect to your feeling of self-compassion. Remember, this is how you want self compassion to look when you are being your most compassionate. Enjoy the process of creating and don't worry about the finished product.

However you do it will be great!



Title:

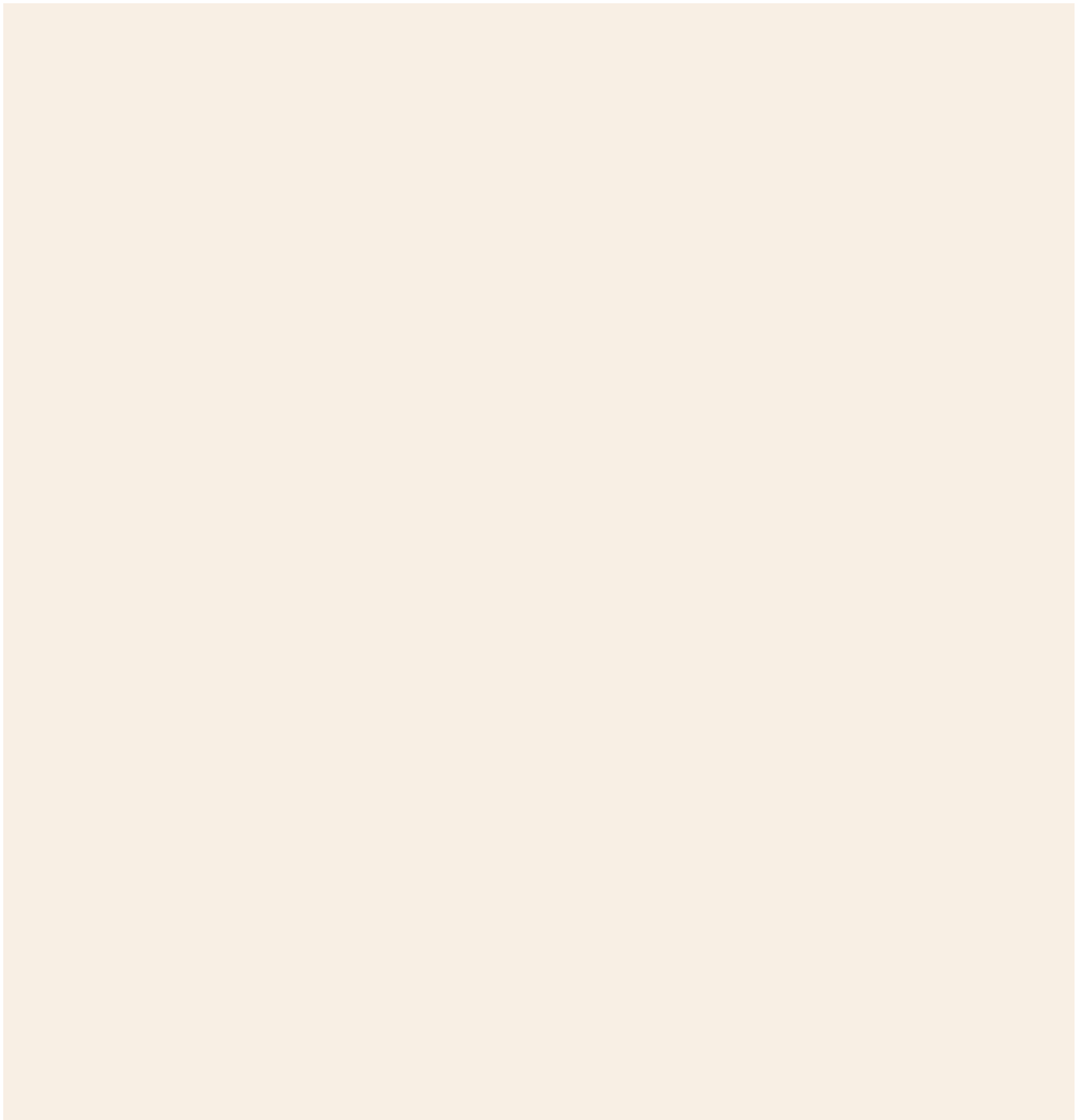
Three words or phrases to describe your art.

-
-
-

How do you feel?

REFLECTION

Reflect on what you have learned about your self compassion, care and love this week. Appreciate your strengths, and focus on your positive actions. Notice your thoughts, feelings and actions in alignment with the value of self compassion. Avoid judging yourself for what you did or did not do this week. How did you feel paying such close attention to your self compassion thoughts and actions?





Week 2

Compassionate Thoughts

You must give everything to
make your life as beautiful as
the dreams that dance in your
imagination.

-Roman Payne

Compassionate Thoughts

Here are the areas you will cover this week.
Spend 20 minutes a day, take your time, and savor them over the week.

1

Judging Thoughts

This week we start with identifying your judgmental thoughts. These are just old thoughts. They are not something true about you - they are only thoughts.

2

Positive Thoughts

Begin to train your mind to focus on positive, self compassionate thoughts. When you give yourself honest compassion, you will find life becomes easier.

3

Practice Positive Thoughts

Any change requires lots of practice in the beginning before it becomes automatic. Here you create new habits of positive thinking using psychology research about behavior and thoughts.

4

Creative Expression and Reflection

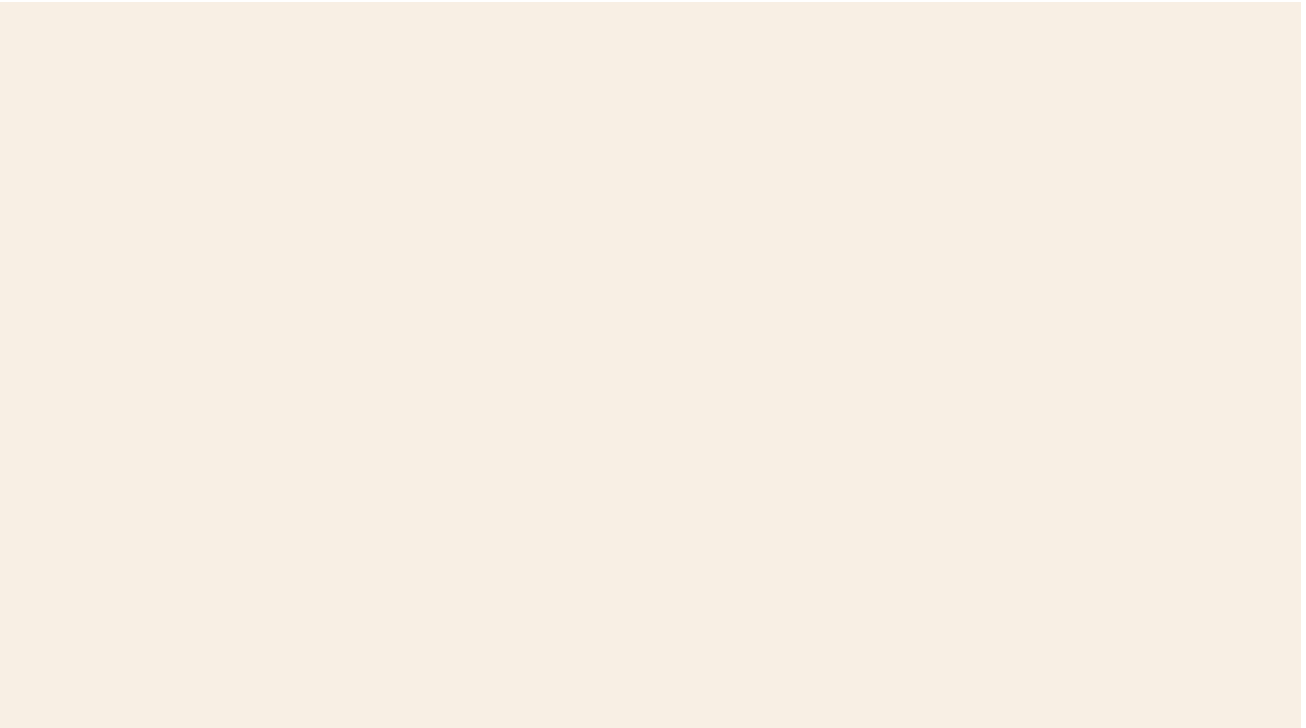
Creativity hones in on emotions and helps you connect your feelings with your values and your brainstorming. Enjoy this process and see what emerges for you! Reflect on the week and note what you have learned.

Judging Thoughts

Our brains scan constantly for threats safety and focus on the negative. As children, we learn quickly what we need to feel safe and survive. When stressed or unsure of ourself, our brain generates thoughts about safety, which can stop us from learning or reaching towards dreams.

Instructions: Take a deep breath and write a list of your judgmental thoughts. These are just old thoughts. They are not something true about you - they are only thoughts. If you have a difficult time believing that, you are in the right place to learn about your thoughts!

After this exercise, take care of yourself, breathe, smile and remind yourself you are growing!



Would you ever talk to anyone else like this? We tend to be much kinder to others than we are to ourselves. It's time to change this! Write down three statements which are kind, generous and joyful. Write uplifting statements, even if you don't quite believe them yet.

For example, "I am an idiot" becomes "I know lots of things and learn more everyday."

"I am too much" becomes "I am passionate and enthusiastic and enough."

"I am not good enough" becomes "I am worthy of love and kindness at all times."

Craft three sentences that are as strong and bold as you can imagine and write them below.

If you get stuck, imagine what you would tell a friend. It's time to be your own best friend!

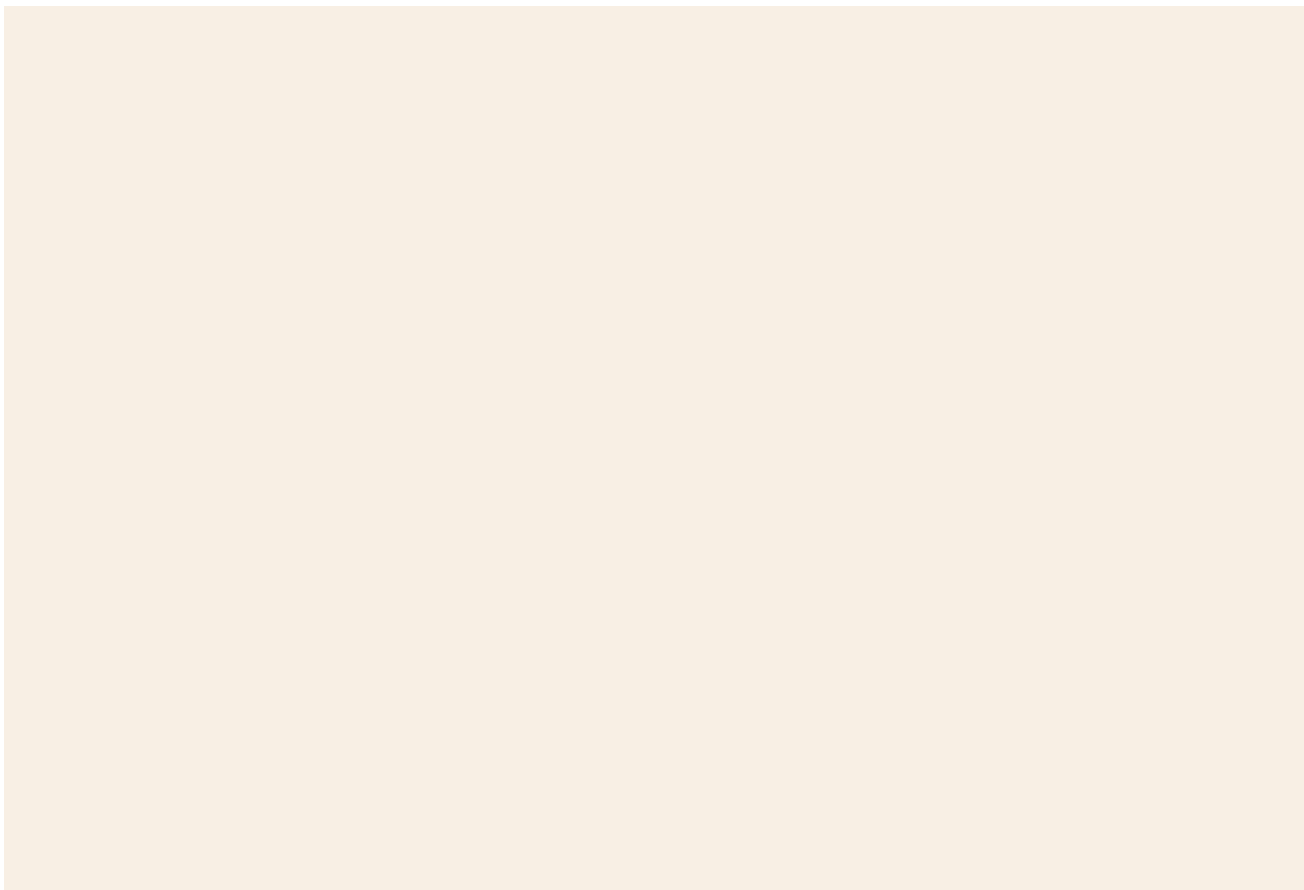
I...

I...

I...

Compassionate Thoughts

With practice, you can train your mind to focus on positive, self compassionate thoughts. When you give yourself honest compassion, you will find life becomes easier...you can move easily past a bad mood, and recalibrate yourself after a disappointment. You will find it possible to manage a stressful situation without feeling overwhelmed. Set your timer for five minutes and create a list of kind, self compassionate statements you can say to yourself. Keep writing until the timer stops. It's ok to go longer, but make sure you get at least five whole minutes of writing kind thoughts. If you get stuck, imagine what you would tell a friend. Remember you are now your own best friend.



Read your list OUT LOUD - don't skip this step! Put a star next to five statements where you felt excitement or interest when you read it out loud. Perhaps you liked how it sounded, or that one day you could imagine really believing it. Finally, pick three statements you liked the best and write them below.



...



...



...

Practicing Positive Talk

Write all three of your positive statements in each category below. You can rewrite them on cards, or cut this page into three strips and place them where you will see them: 1) first thing in the morning, 2) mid-day, and 3) before bed. During each of these times, first read them out loud to yourself, then whisper them to yourself, and finally read them silently. Do this everyday for a month. If you live with someone and they ask about your notes, tell them about what you are learning in class! Research demonstrates this is how you retrain your mind!

GOOD
MORNING!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

(Read out loud, read in a whisper, read silently)

HAPPY
DAY!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

(Read out loud, read in a whisper, read silently)

SWEET
DREAMS!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

(Read out loud, read in a whisper, read silently)

Visual Expression

Take a few moments to show the what self compassion looks like using lines, shapes and colors. It could range from just one line to a fully fleshed-out, abstract or representational picture. Avoid thinking too long about it and be spontaneous. This will help you connect to your feeling of self-compassion. Remember, this is how you want self compassion to look when you are thinking compassionate thoughts and feeling self compassion. Enjoy the process of creating and don't worry about the finished product. However you do it will be great!



Title:

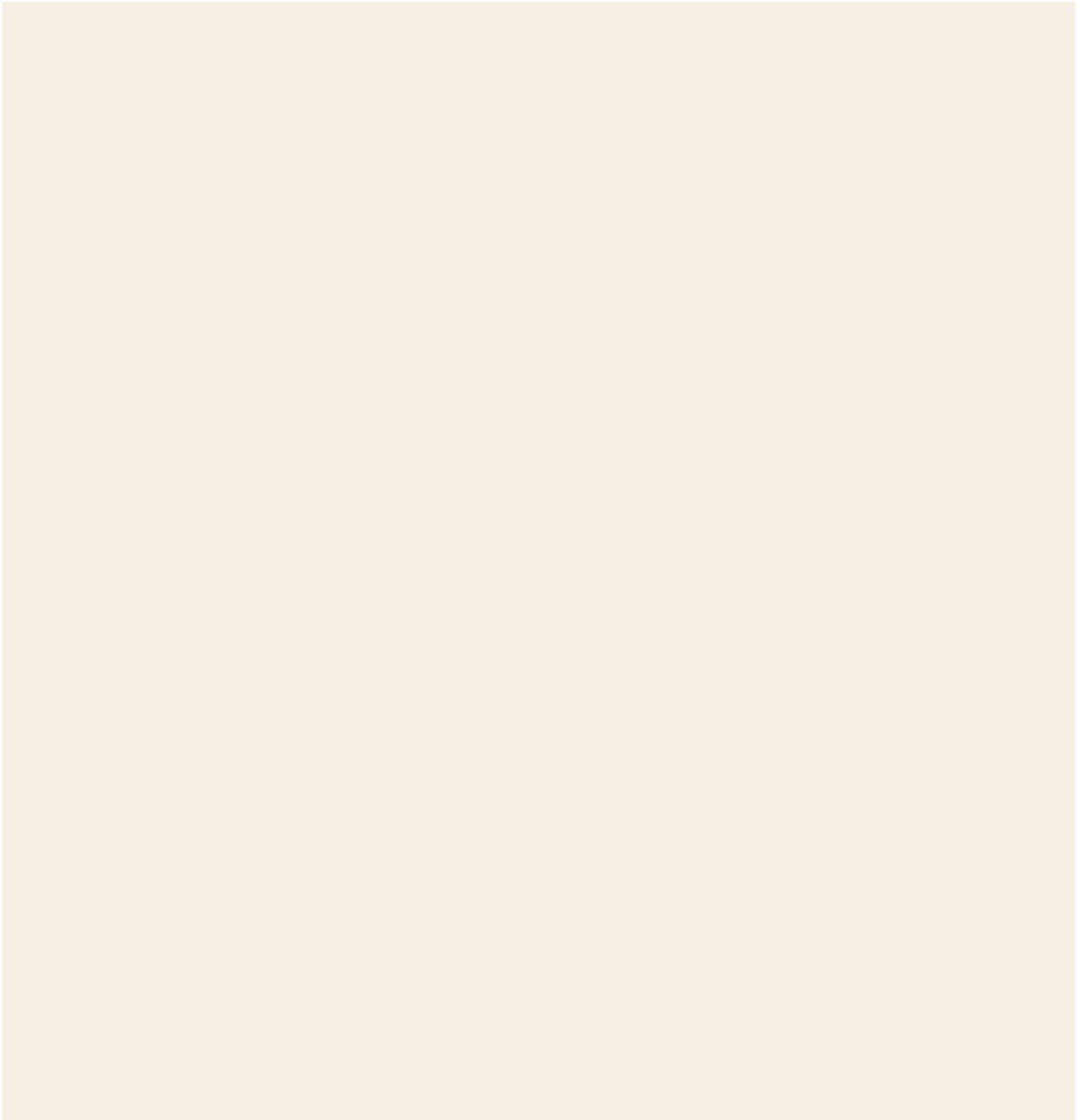
Three words or phrases to describe your art.

-
-
-

How do you feel?

REFLECTION

Reflect on what you have learned about your self compassion, care and love this week. Appreciate your strengths, and focus on your positive actions. Notice your thoughts, feelings and actions in alignment with the value of self compassion. Avoid judging yourself for what you did or did not do this week. How did you feel paying such close attention to your self compassion thoughts and actions?

A large, empty rectangular box with a light beige background, intended for reflection.



Week 3

Compassionate Spirit

If you do not respect your
own wishes, no one else will.
You will simply attract
people who disrespect you as
much as you do.

- Vironika Tugaleva

Compassionate Thoughts

Here are the areas you will cover this week.
Spend 20 minutes a day, take your time, and savor them over the week.

1

Asking High-Value Questions

Time to start asking yourself high-value questions to get high value answers. You will find asking better questions gives you the answers you are seeking.

2

Notice Compassion

Recall a moment where you observed self compassion this week. Savoring this moment will strengthen your positive thoughts.

3

Copassionate Spirit

Tapping into your spirit will help you find your motivation for self compassion when you are in moments of struggle. Getting in touch with your higher self assists you tremendously in self care and self compassion.

4

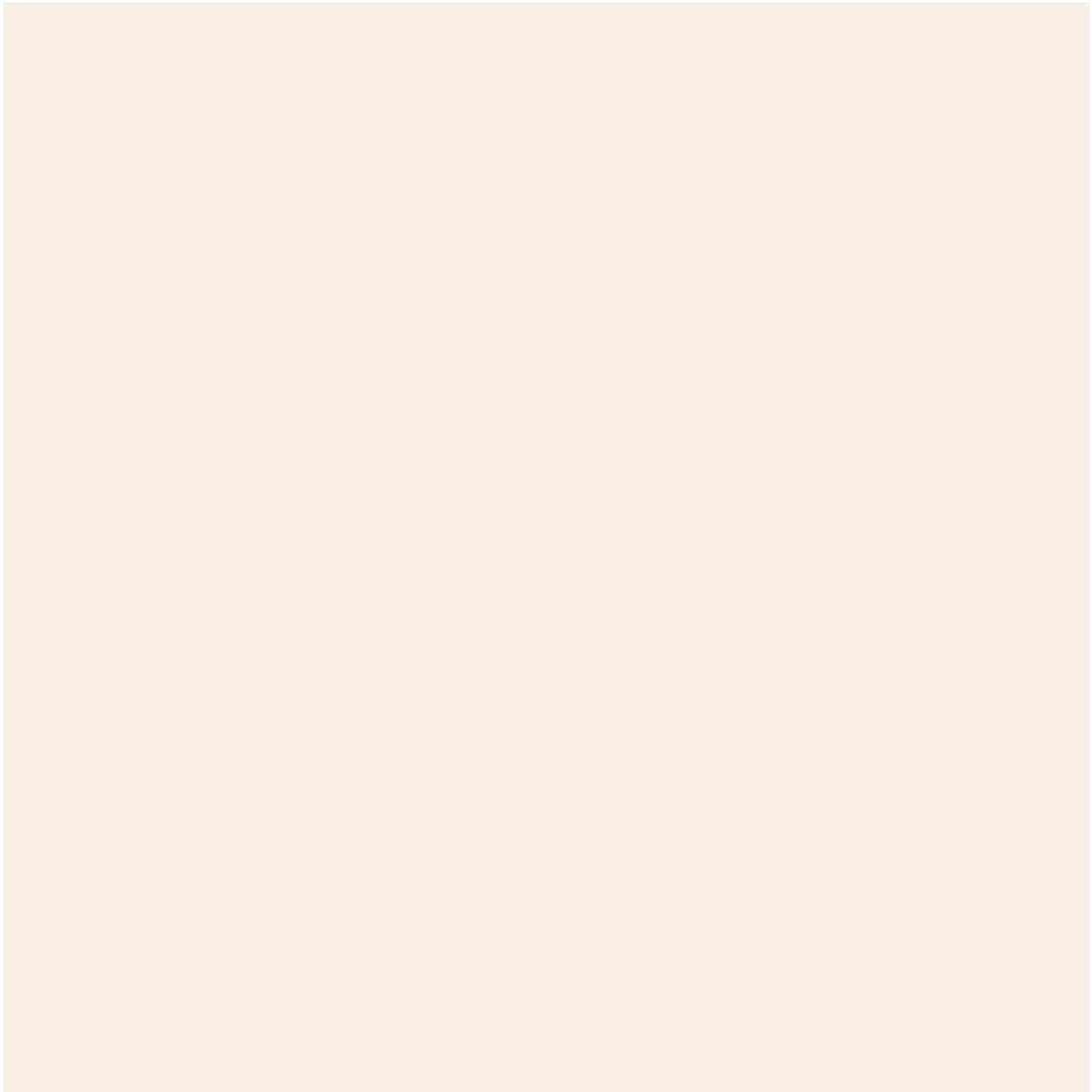
Creative Expression and Reflection

Creativity hones in on emotions and helps you connect your feelings with your values and thoughts. Enjoy this process and see what emerges for you! Reflect on the week and note what you have learned.

Asking high value Questions

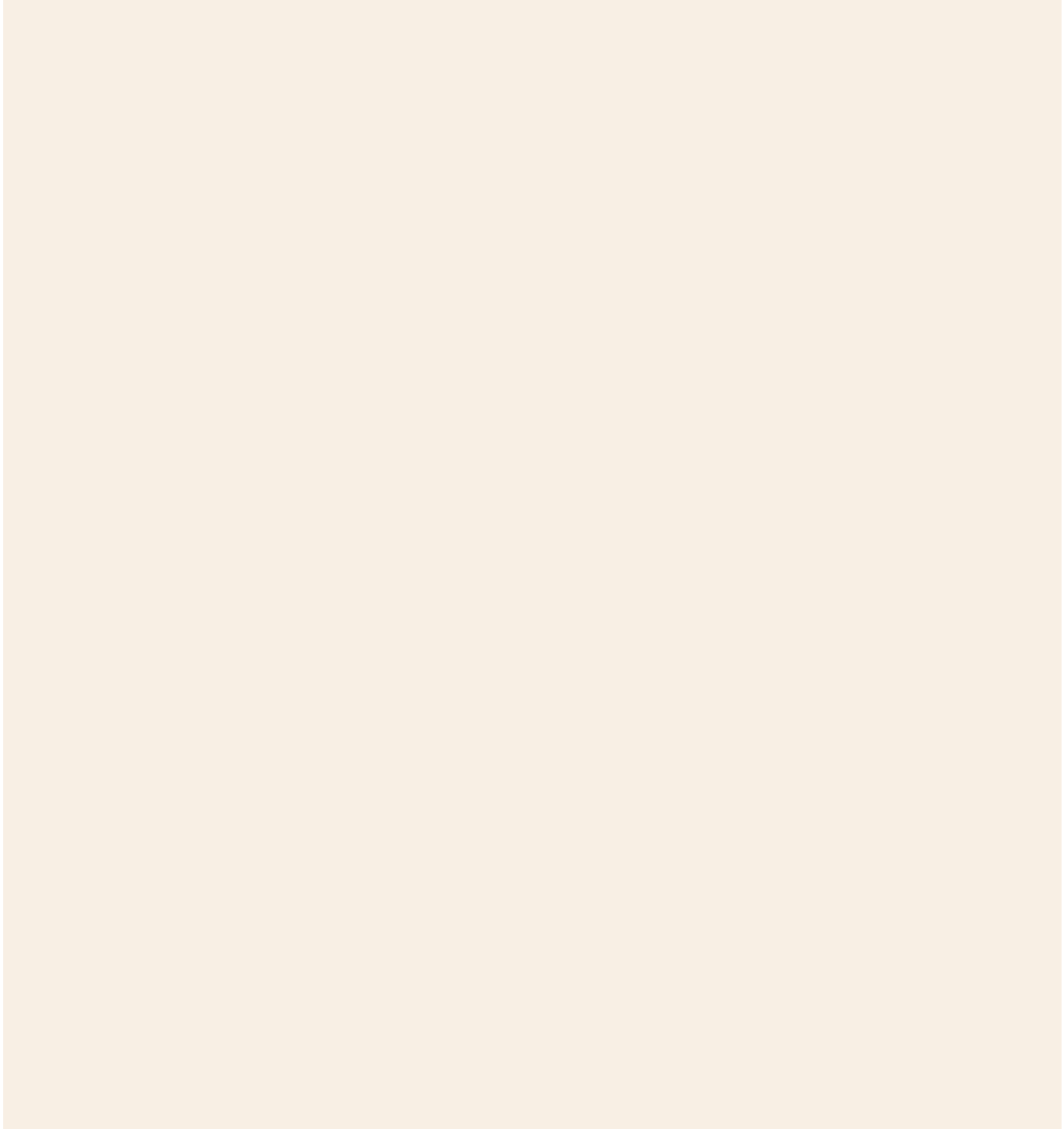
You may have asked yourself questions like, "What is wrong with me?" or "Why am I so stupid?" Asking these kinds of questions invites your brain to look for the negative, and tell you terrible things about yourself!

Instead, ask yourself this high value question: What is amazing, interesting, cool, fun, or enjoyable about me? What did I do well? How much have I accomplished? Set your timer and write for five minutes straight without stopping. If your mind tries to give you negative answers, thank your mind for generating so many ideas and answers. Then recalibrate your your mind to the question by reading the question out loud. Keep writing. Tonight before bed, read what you wrote. Smile.



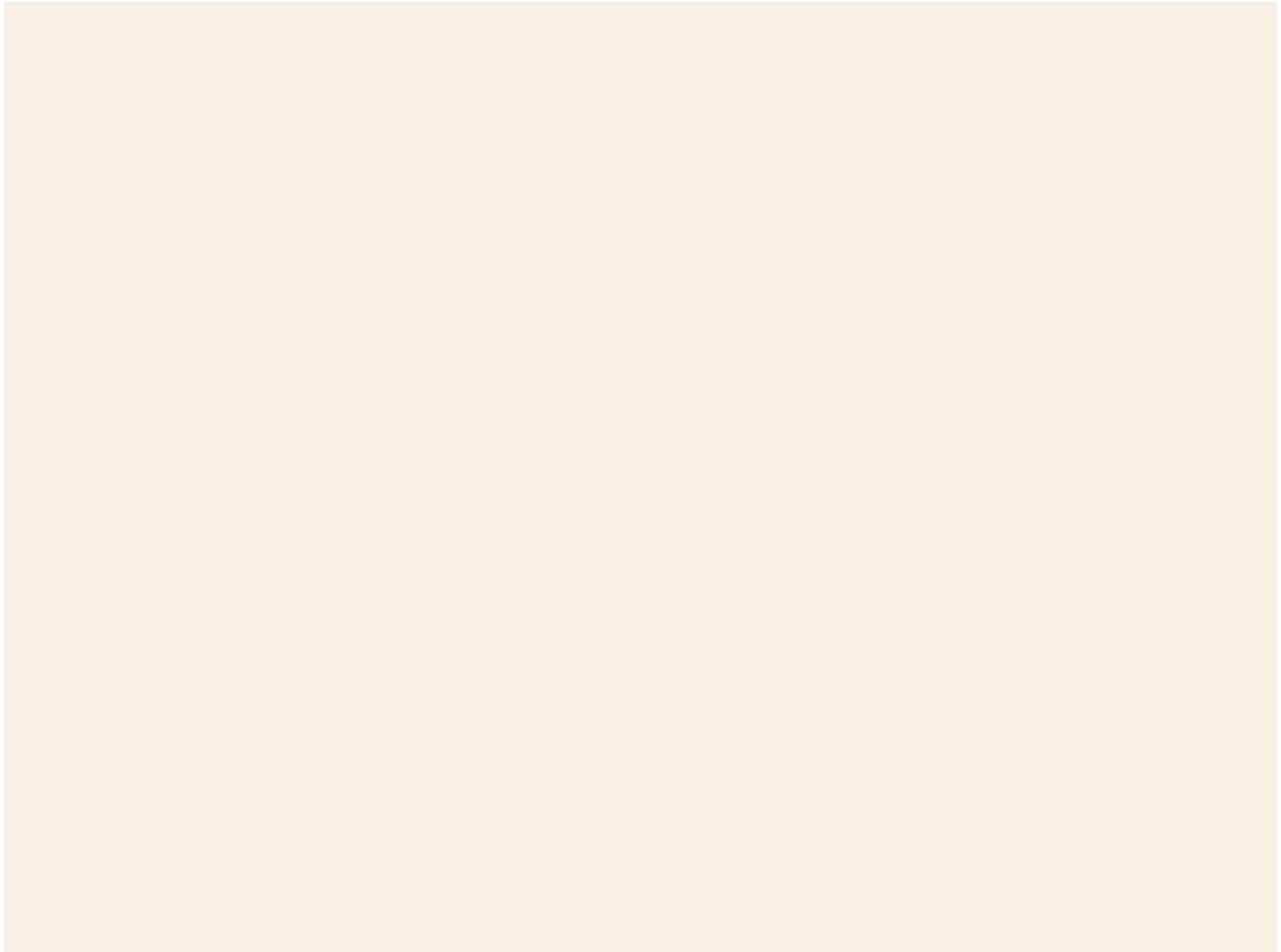
Noticing Compassion

What compassionate thoughts have you noticed this week? Describe in details what was happening before and after your moment of self compassion. What was happening when you were feeling more compassionate? Where were you? What were you wearing? What were you doing? Was anyone else there? How did you feel after your moment of compassion? How can you use this experience to create more self compassion?



Compassion in Spirit

Imagine your highest self...take 10 deep, slow breaths, counting each one out loud. Imagine you are full of light and energy and embodying your highest values. How do you see this kind, generous part of yourself treating others? Treating yourself? How does this part of yourself respond to mistakes and disappointments? How does this wise part of yourself navigate uncomfortable feelings? Set your timer and write for 10 minutes without stopping. Read it out loud.



Reflect on what you just wrote. Underline the words which are exciting and interesting to you. Condense your writing into three main points. Below write three words or phrases describing your higher, compassionate self. Read these before bed this evening.



:



:



:

Visual Expression

Take a few moments to show some aspect of your highest, most compassionate self by using lines, shapes and colors. It could range from just one line to a fully fleshed-out, abstract or representational picture. Avoid thinking too long about it and be spontaneous. This will help you connect to your feeling of self-compassion. Remember, this is an image to reflect aspects of your highest self when you are being your most generous and kind. Enjoy the process of creating and don't worry about the finished product. However you do it will be great!



Title:

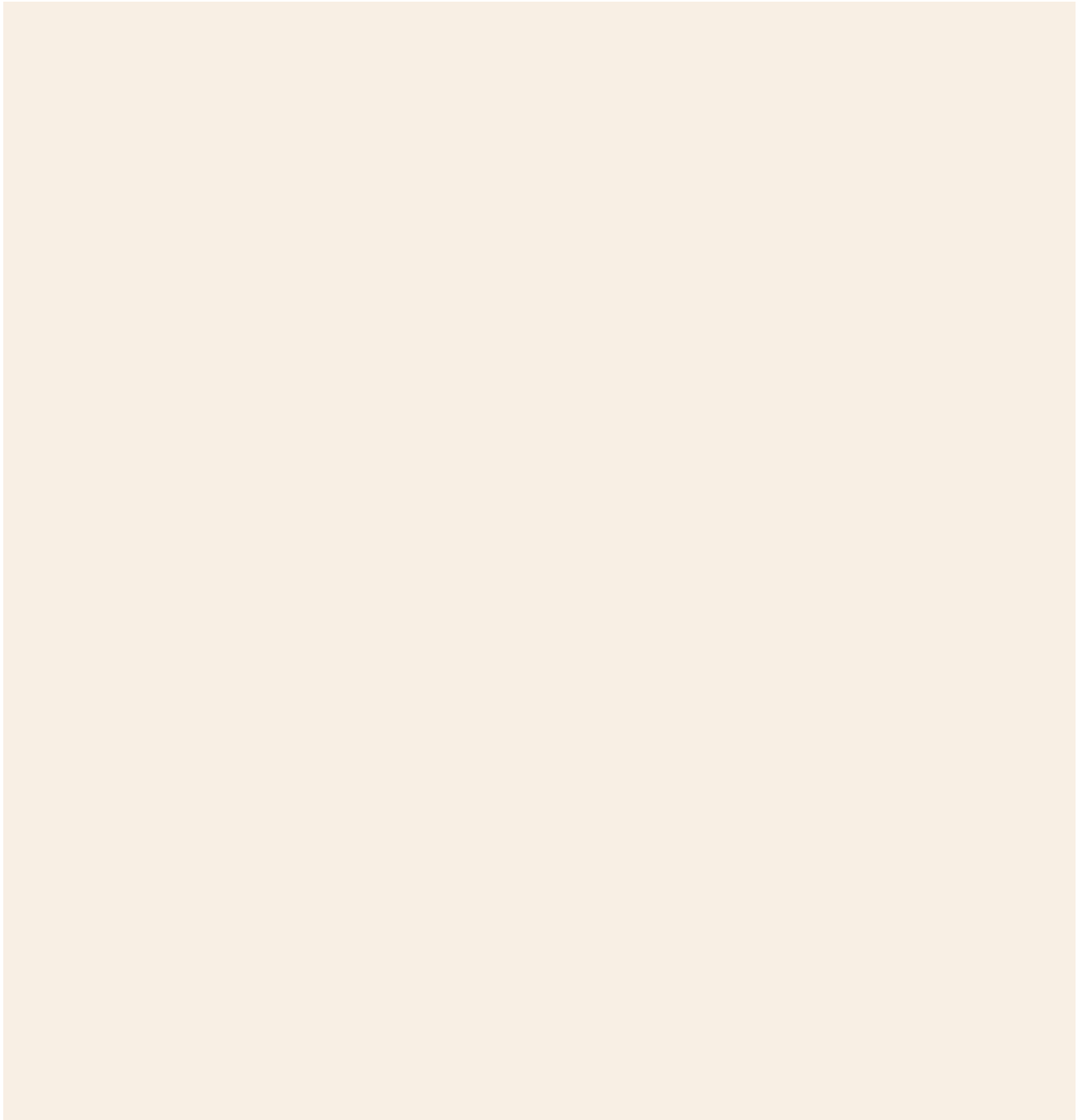
Three words or phrases to describe your art.

-
-
-

How do you feel?

REFLECTION

Reflect on what you have learned about your compassionate, higher self this week. Appreciate your strengths, and focus on your positive actions. Notice your thoughts, feelings and actions in alignment with the value of self compassion. Avoid judging yourself for what you did or did not do this week. How did you feel paying such close attention to your higher self?





Week 4

Compassion in Action

Nurturing your self
compassion is anti-oppression
work within yourself

-Joy Donnell

Compassionate Thoughts

Here are the areas you will cover this week.
Spend 20 minutes a day, take your time, and savor them over the week.

1

Compassionate World

This week you begin identifying with an aspirational goal of making the world a more compassionate place. Indeed, this is possible through your committed actions.

2

It All Starts with YOU!

Philosophers, peace makers musicians poets, and spiritual leaders remind us that change in the world happens when YOU begin to change yourself.

3

Compassionate Action Plan

Time to put all that you have learned into an action plan. Remember writing your goals and plans down gives you the boost you need to succeed!

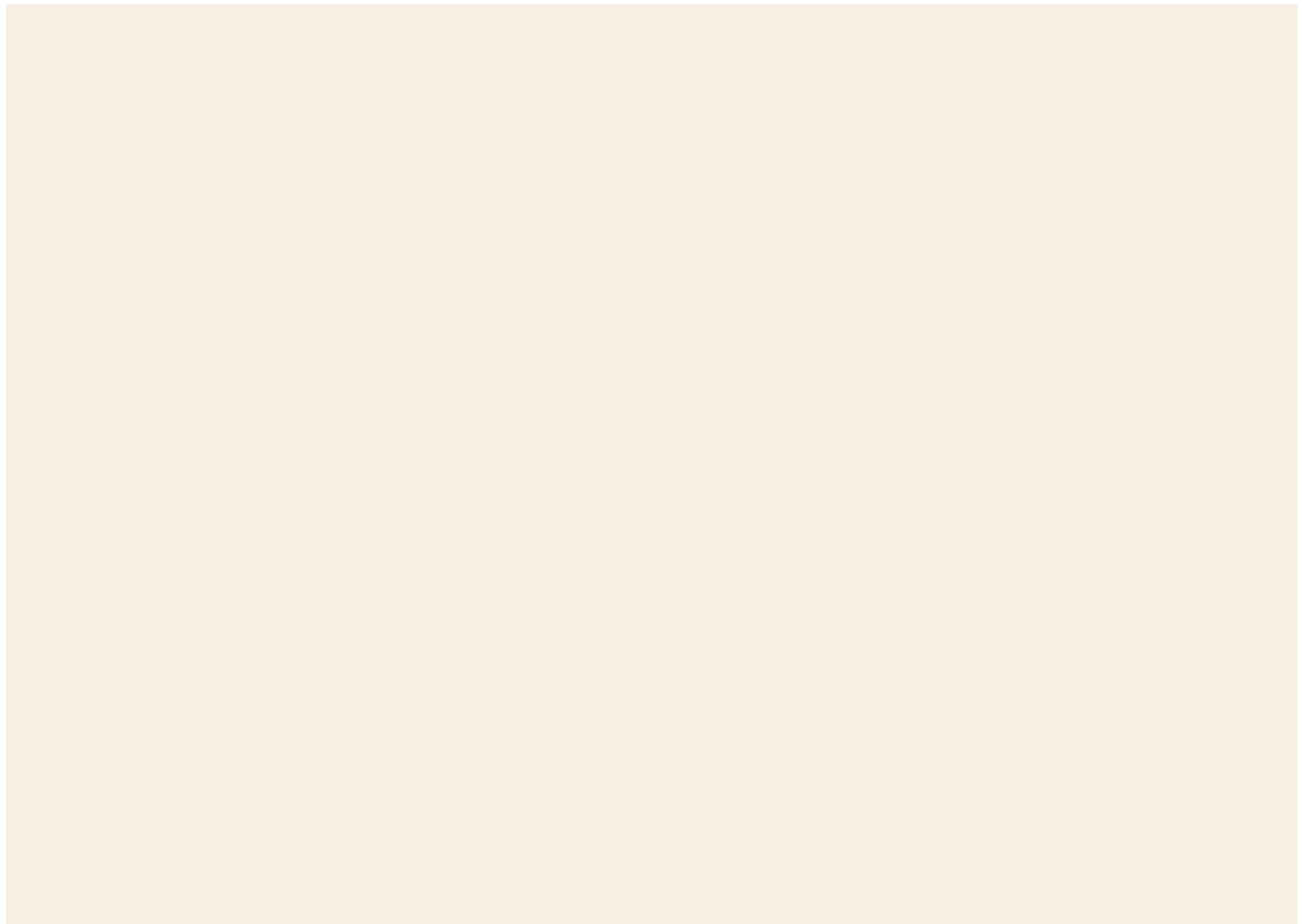
4

Creative Expression and Reflection

Creativity hones in on emotions and helps you connect your feelings with your values and thoughts. Enjoy this process and see what emerges for you! Reflect on the week and note what you have learned.

Creating a Compassionate World

It is time to create an aspirational vision of compassionate in the world. Ask yourself: "What is my vision for my more compassionate world?" Imagine what your world would look like if you and others used compassion. What would your daily interactions be like? How would your school or work place be different? How would the systems you interact with be different? When your mind tells you an idea is silly or impossible, thank your mind for all its thoughts and recalibrate by rereading the question out loud. Dream big! Imagine compassion!



Reflect on what you just wrote and underline the words which are exciting and interesting to you. Condense your writing into three main areas where would like to see compassion. For example, you might want a more compassionate experience at your workplace, with family or in your community and be sure to describe how you imagine compassion looks in each area.



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Begin with yourself

Philosophers, peace makers musicians poets, and spiritual leaders note that change in the world happens when we begin to change ourselves. You are not being asked to change the whole world, simply your presence in it. Using your aspirational vision of a more compassionate world on the previous page, start creating your action plan to cultivate more compassion towards yourself and others in the three areas you identified. Brainstorm as many ideas as you can in 10 minutes. Remember, a brainstorm is quick, designed to generate lots of ideas wioth zero evaluation of them. Each idea leads to the next, so suspend judgement. Only evaluate when the brainstorm is over. If you mind interrupts you with challenging thoughts like "You could never do that" or "You have already tried that," thank your mind for all the ideas and recalibrate by saying the word "Brainstorm" out loud.

Compassion Action Plan

From your previous brainstorm, identify two ideas you can implement for increasing your compassion. Be very specific including what and when you will engage in your compassionate acts.

You can choose something that increases compassion towards yourself or towards others. Make it something very small that takes only a minute or a few minutes, and can be completed each day.

For example, here are some of my daily compassion commitments. I smile at myself in the mirror each morning right after I brush my teeth. I say hello to one person every time I walk the dog. I kiss my partner when I come home each day. I wake my child up with a smile and a cheerful good morning.

Write it as if you are already doing it...in other words, write "I smile in the mirror" instead of "I will" smile in the mirror.

Now pick just one of these and schedule it by writing it in your calendar. Do not skip this step! Make sure you know exactly when will you complete the act of compassion. Pair it with an existing habit such as brushing your teeth, walking the dog, having breakfast, etc.

Visual Expression

Take a few moments to show some aspect of bringing compassion into the world by using lines, shapes and colors. It could range from just one line to a fully fleshed-out, abstract or representational picture. Avoid thinking too long about it and be spontaneous. This will help you connect to your feeling of self-compassion and how you can bring it to the world. Enjoy the process of creating and don't worry about the finished product. However you do it will be great!



Title:

Three words or phrases to describe your art.

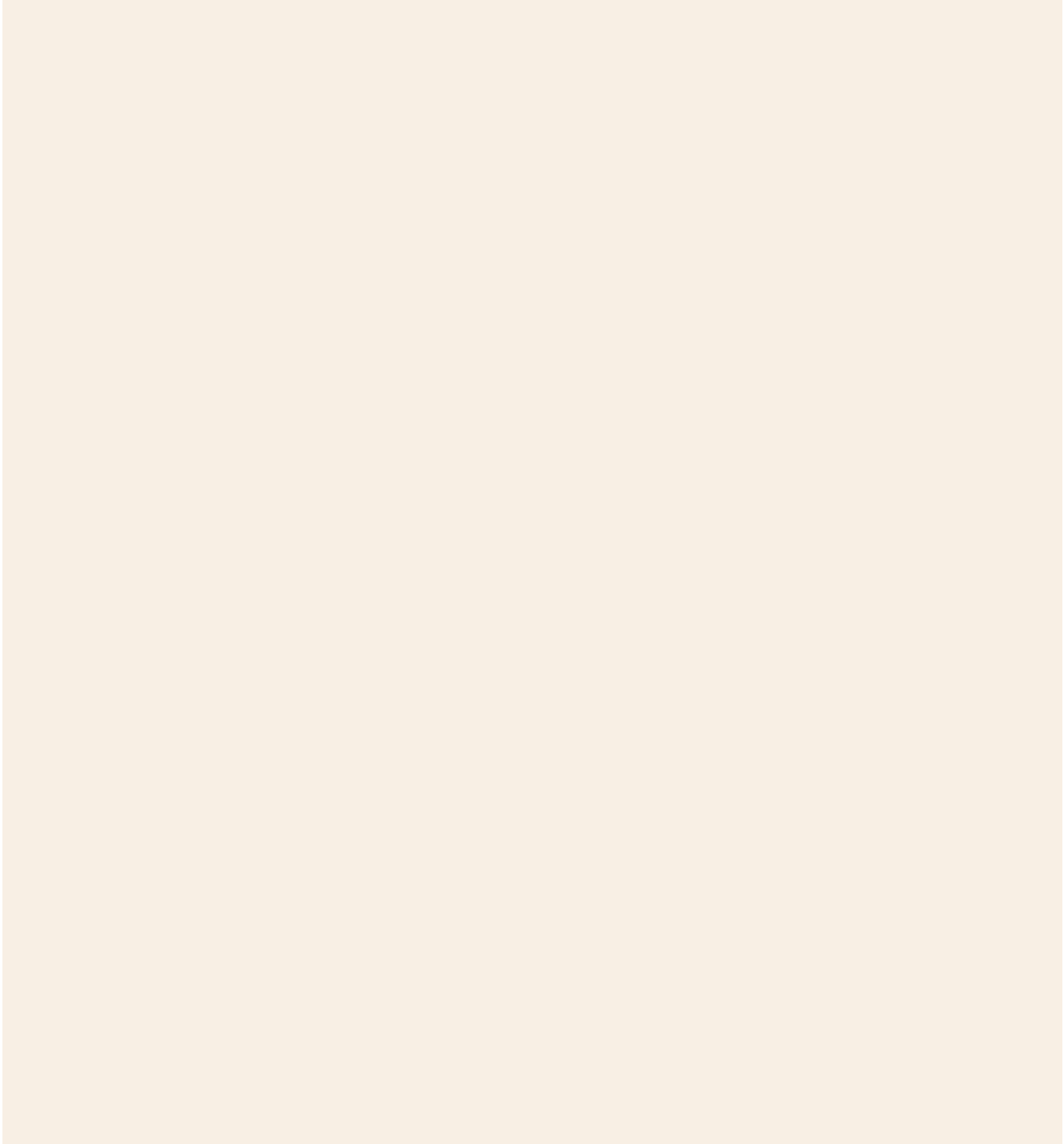
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How do you feel?

REFLECTION

Reflect on what you have learned about your compassion and how you can bring it to the world. What do you know about yourself now? How will you create compassion for yourself and others?

Remember being self compassionate is a real gift to you AND everyone around you. As a self compassionate person, you become kinder to others and you set an example for others for how they can treat themselves. Notice your thoughts, feelings and actions in alignment with the value and action of self compassion.



NEW BEGINNINGS

You have completed a month of self compassion. Congratulations on all your progress! What new thoughts will you keep? What new actions will you take with you into the world? I am delighted you joined this community of people who are living more compassionately and making the world a better place. Your compassionate attitude towards yourself and others is a significant contribution to your life and the lives of those around you.

If you are excited about continuing this work, please reach out to The Art Therapy Center of San Francisco for more workshops and see our new advanced classes, which are available to you now that you have completed this workshop.

It was my pleasure to share the evidence-based information which has helped people all around the world build a more compassionate sense of self and improve their relationships. I look forward to hearing from you about what you learned in this workshop and I hope to see you in future workshops or advanced classes. It is my wish that you continue to enjoy the process of self-discovery with curiosity and joy!



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Amy Backos, PhD, ATR-BC
Licensed Psychologist & Board Certified Art Therapist



More Smiling,
Less worrying.
More compassion,
Less Judgement.
More Blessed,
Less stressed.
More love,
Less Hate

Roy T. Bennett



RESOURCES

This is a moment of suffering.

Suffering is part of life.

May I be kind to myself in this
moment.

May I give myself the compassion I
need.

— Kristin Neff

RESOURCES

01

Art Therapy Center of San Francisco

Center for creative expression, psychological wellness, positive psychology and value-based living, including online classes and in person & online psychotherapy.

02

The Happiness Lab

Podcast by Yale Professor, Dr. Laurie Santos, offers compelling stories on the science of happiness.

03

You Can Heal Your Life

Book by Louise Hay

This best selling book offers a philosophical and spiritual approach to self compassion and healing.

04

The Four Day Win

Book by Martha Beck

A straightforward and charming book about the psychology of dropping the struggle with eating. Harvard graduate Martha Beck teaches practical tools to make lasting change.

05

Authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu

Website with resources & free assessments on happiness and positive living from the grandfather of positive psychology, Martin Seligman at the University of PA.

MY WEEK

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