

## SELF-COMPASSION BREAK

This brief exercise may be useful for times when you are feeling stressed and overwhelmed

Talk yourself through the following three steps:

### Step 1. “This is a moment of suffering”

Acknowledging a moment of stress is a type of mindfulness. If you are able, you may like to name the emotions present – *“this is what it feels like when I feel stressed/angry/overwhelmed...”*

Other options include: *“This hurts”*; *“Ouch”*; *“This is stress”*

### Step 2. “Suffering is a part of life”

It is useful to connect to our common humanity. Remind yourself that other people have also had challenges in their lives. You are not broken or damaged because you are struggling. Tell yourself one of the following:

*“Other people feel this way”*

*“I’m not alone”*

*“We all struggle in our lives”*

### Step 3. “May I be kind to myself”

Offer yourself kindness in this moment. Ask yourself *“What do I need to hear right now to express kindness to myself?”* Is there a word you need for this such as compassion, acceptance, forgiveness, strength or patience. Imagine what you would say to a close friend in a similar situation.

It can be useful to practice these three steps when you are not stressed by calling a stressful situation to mind. Practice offering yourself self-compassion. If helpful, you might like to place your hand on your heart, or somewhere else that feels comforting for this exercise. This exercise can help you get grounded during difficult times and ready to take effective action.

Adapted from Dr Kristin Neff’s teaching on mindful self-compassion – For more wellbeing content visit <https://blogs.flinders.edu.au/student-health-and-well-being/>