

Self-Compassion

Self-compassion is responding to yourself with acceptance, understanding, and love when you have a difficult time, fail, or notice something you don't like about yourself. Practicing self-compassion can help promote positive mental health and enhance overall well-being. The three components of self-compassion are: mindfulness vs self-identification, self-kindness vs. self-judgement, and common humanity vs. isolation.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a non-judgemental, receptive mind state. In this state, you observe thoughts and feelings as they are without trying to suppress or over-identify with them.

Mindfulness in the classroom:

1. **Deep Breathing:** Ask students to close their eyes and inhale and exhale on your count. Count slowly to 4 for each inhale and exhale. (K- Grade 4)
2. **Mindful Minute:** Invite students to close their eyes and focus on their breathing. Ask them to notice their breathe as they inhale and exhale, as well as the emotions they are feeling (Grades 5 to 12)

Common Humanity

Common humanity is recognizing that suffering and making mistakes is part of the shared human experience. It's something that we all go through, so you are never alone in your feelings of failure.

Common humanity in the classroom:

1. **Reminder Affirmation:** When students are struggling, add to your daily affirmations with a statement that acknowledges their emotions and reminds them that they are not alone. For example, "this hurts, but I am not alone. Other people are having a hard time too." (K to Grade 4)
2. **Shared Experiences:** Ask student #1 to share a difficult experience with their peer. Then ask student #2 to share a similar experience that they have had. Switch roles and repeat. (Grades 5 to 12)



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Self-Kindness

Self-kindness is being understanding and warm towards yourself, especially when you suffer, fail, or feel inadequate.

Self-kindness in the classroom:

1. **Positive Affirmations:** Ask students to repeat a daily affirmation, such as "may I be kind to myself" or "may I be strong." (K to Grade 4)
2. **Positive Self-Talk:** Ask students to write down 3 things they say to themselves when they fail and then 3 encouraging things they can say to themselves instead. (Grades 5-12)



References

1. Bluth & Neff. (2018). New frontiers in understanding the benefits of self-compassion. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2018.1508494>
2. Neff, K. (2021). Self-compassion. Retrieved from <https://self-compassion.org>