Mindful Self-Compassion Daily Activities

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**Actively** create small pockets of space in everyday life on the job and care for yourself, so that you can resource, refuel and keep going.

Here are some quick - on the spot practices - you can do.

Please try one or all of them and of course see what works for you!

It’s not me or anyone telling you what to do. You are the best authority on what you need and what works for you. You have CHOICE and agency. You decide.

Daily Care: Can be quick – On the Spot

Step 1

1) **Mindfulness** - Actively notice your own stress / struggles in the present moment.

Check in with yourself: How am I doing right now?

Notice stressors, little and big. You can say to yourself: “I’m struggling right now: this is hard!” “Whoa – this is hard!” Sometimes it’s hard to function, can’t think, can’t see clearly.

 Take back control. You have CHOICE to do something NEW; something different. Noticing when YOU are hurting, in any way, is the first step.

Step 2

2) **Self-Compassion** – Respond to yourself with some form of Self-Compassion on the spot. You can ask yourself the core Self-Compassion question: “What do I need?” in ANY MOMENT. Then you can CHOOSE what works best for you.

Below are some options:

* **Grounding**: Tap your feet – we all have feet (for the most part). We can tap them when we are standing, sitting, or walking from one patient to another at work. Or passing colleagues on your way to another patient or duty. **Feel** the tapping in your feet. When your mind wanders, simply bring it back to the sensations in your feet.
* **Feel your breath**: We are all breathing – so this is not something extra you have to do!

Just Pause every now and again and NOTICE the breath. Better yet FEEL the breath moving in and out of your nostrils, chest or belly. 5 times or more. If focusing on your breathing is uncomfortable for you, do something else.

* **Supportive Touch**: Have your own back. Have your own heart. (Put your hand on your upper back, heart, hold your own hands). *Really feel* the support and warmth you are giving to yourself. This is a quick, easy way to change your physiology and activate the care system as well as your parasympathetic nervous system. This can pretty quickly help you to feel cared for, safe, well. But you just need to do it!
* **Wiggling** – when no one is looking OR when others are looking and then inviting them IN for a quick jig ☺
* **SMILING**

The good news is that all of these are portable. Your feet, your hands, your breath, wiggling your body, smiling. They are always with you; always available to you. You just need to remember them! Work together with them as a team. You have a built in team!

Focusing on them and especially ***feeling*** them can shift your nervous system and move

you into a state that is more grounded, clear and calm.

Connecting with things outside of you. Can calm your nervous system.

* Photo - Can carry around a photo of someone or something that has meaning to you. And EASILY makes you smile. Dog, cat, friend, grandparent. Pull it out. Look at it. Let yourself feel good. Feel your smile. Then do a U-Turn and smile at yourself. And if you would like tell yourself a few words you might need to hear:

 “It’s going to be okay”, “I will come through this”, “I’ve got this”

 Optional: Can do this with a gesture of support for yourself (Supportive Touch).

* Post Visibly The Equanimity Phrases at work:

Everyone is on their own life journey.

I am not the cause of this person’s suffering,

nor is it entirely within my power to make it go away,

even though I wish I could.

Moments like these are difficult to bear,

Yet I may still try to help if I can.

We can practice the practice below in the midst of difficult care-giving situations at work - on the spot.

Feel free to listen to these practices outside of work to get comfortable with them. Then you can apply a quick version of them at work in a difficult situation.

Links to Kristin Neff, PhD and Christopher Germer, PhD: Compassion with Equanimity practices.

Kristin Neff, PhD - Compassion with Equanimity 6-minute practice: <https://self-compassion.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Compassion-with-Equanimity_Kristin-Neff.mp3>

Chris Germer, PhD – Compassion with Equanimity, approximately 15-minute practice: <https://chrisgermer.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Compassion-with-Equanimity-Germer.m4a>

What do you need to make this part of your day?

* Buddies: Pass each other and put hand or fist on heart, or on upper back (like I’ve got your back) as a signal / reminder to each other).
Pick a buddy and send daily texts: a few supportive words, reminders to breathe, smile. A few emojis.
* Proactively make space for yourself – even just for a few moments by pausing and noticing how you feel. If you feel stressed, give yourself some compassion, kindness, support.
* Put Reminders in your calendar
* Text yourself reminders / Text a Buddy

This Doesn’t add burden to your day. In fact, it is like having little vacations in the midst of a tough day.

There is hard science supporting that this works!

Compassion Fatigue vs Empathy Fatigue: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebJTV5kTIU0>