



Microlearning Summary - Self Compassion

Self Compassion is the practice of turning compassion inward — responding to our own mistakes, limitations, and struggles with the same kindness we offer others. According to Dr. Kristin Neff, self-compassion includes three elements: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. Practicing self-compassion reduces harsh self-criticism, supports emotional regulation, and strengthens our ability to show up compassionately for students, colleagues, and ourselves.

Why This Matters

- Self-compassion is a protective factor against compassion fatigue and burnout.
- Harsh self-criticism increases stress, shame, and emotional exhaustion.
- When we treat ourselves with kindness, we model healthy emotional regulation for students.
- Teams that practice self-compassion experience greater psychological safety and connection.
- Self-compassion helps us stay grounded and present, even when we make mistakes.

Link to Microlearning Video

Self Compassion [School Self Compassion - YouTube](#)



When you feel like you have fallen short, how do you practice self-compassion?

Micro-Reflection for after the micro-learning

- [Self Compassion Reflection Questions for Staff](#)
- [Self Compassion Leadership Considerations](#)



Signals to Notice

You may need to strengthen self-compassion when you observe:

Signal	What It Might Mean
You criticize yourself for mistakes	Self-kindness may be lacking.
You feel alone in your struggles	You may be forgetting common humanity.
You suppress or exaggerate your emotions	Mindfulness may be needed to balance your response.
You feel inadequate or “not enough”	Unrealistic expectations may be driving self-judgment.
You ruminate on perceived failures	You may be stuck in self-criticism rather than self-support.

What This Looks Like in Practice

A teacher forgets to upload an assignment and immediately thinks, “I can’t believe I messed that up — I’m so disorganized.” She feels embarrassed and tense. After learning about self-compassion, she pauses and practices mindfulness: “I’m noticing I feel stressed and disappointed.” She reminds herself of common humanity: “Everyone makes mistakes — I’m not alone.” Then she offers herself kindness: “I’m doing the best I can today.” She corrects the mistake, communicates with students, and moves forward with more calm and clarity.

Grade-Band Strategies You Can Use Tomorrow

The following grade-band strategies offer quick, practical ways to apply this microlearning in your daily work. They are not required steps — simply additional options you can use to deepen the learning, strengthen resilience, and support students and colleagues in developmentally responsive ways. Choose the strategies that fit your role, your context, and your current needs.



K–2 Strategies

1. Model Gentle Self-Talk
Steps: Say aloud, “Oops, I made a mistake — I can fix it.”
Why it’s beneficial: Normalizes imperfection and teaches children self-kindness.
2. Use “Feelings Check-Ins”
Steps: Pause during the day to name your feelings alongside students.
Why it’s beneficial: Builds mindfulness and emotional awareness.
3. Share Stories of Common Humanity
Steps: Use picture books that show characters learning from mistakes.
Why it’s beneficial: Reinforces that everyone struggles sometimes.
4. Create a “Kindness Toward Self” Corner
Steps: Add visuals or phrases that remind you to breathe, pause, or reset.
Why it’s beneficial: Supports regulation during challenging moments.

3–5 Strategies

1. Replace Self-Criticism with Curiosity
Steps: When you make a mistake, ask, “What can I learn from this?”
Why it’s beneficial: Reduces shame and increases problem-solving.
2. Use a Self-Compassion Phrase
Steps: Try: “This is hard, and I’m doing my best.”
Why it’s beneficial: Interrupts negative self-talk.
3. Normalize Struggle in the Classroom
Steps: Share examples of times you learned from mistakes.
Why it’s beneficial: Builds connection and reduces pressure.
4. Practice Mindful Pauses
Steps: Take one slow breath before responding to stress.
Why it’s beneficial: Supports emotional regulation.



6–8 Strategies

1. Identify Your Self-Critical Patterns
Steps: Notice when you say “I’m terrible at...” or “I should have...”
Why it’s beneficial: Builds awareness of internal narratives.
2. Use Common Humanity Statements
Steps: Say, “Everyone struggles — I’m not alone in this.”
Why it’s beneficial: Reduces isolation and shame.
3. Reframe Mistakes as Data
Steps: Ask, “What information is this giving me?”
Why it’s beneficial: Encourages growth mindset and reduces self-judgment.
4. Share Self-Compassion with a Colleague
Steps: Tell a teammate what you’re working on and ask them to check in.
Why it’s beneficial: Builds supportive team culture.

9–12 Strategies

1. Practice Balanced Mindfulness
Steps: Notice your emotions without minimizing or exaggerating them.
Why it’s beneficial: Supports clarity and reduces reactivity.
2. Use Evidence-Based Self-Talk
Steps: Ask, “Is this thought accurate or just harsh?”
Why it’s beneficial: Counters distorted thinking.
3. Create a Self-Compassion Ritual
Steps: Repeat a grounding phrase at the start or end of each class.
Why it’s beneficial: Reinforces resilience throughout the day.
4. Acknowledge Your Humanity
Steps: Say, “I’m a human doing my best in a complex job.”
Why it’s beneficial: Reduces perfectionism and increases self-kindness.

*Refer back to the Compassion Resilience Schools Toolkit
(<https://eliminatestigma.org/compassion-resilience-toolkit/schools/what-is-compassion-resilience/>) to
explore more resources and information*