

## Design your mentor!

We all have an inner critic that can speak pretty loudly at times. When this happens, rather than beating ourselves up, it can help to imagine we have an inner mentor to turn to for kindness and advice. This inner mentor could be made up of people you look up to that make you feel good about yourself – friends, family members, role models or even celebrities you admire. Maybe there's something of yourself you can add in too?

Design your inner mentor here and label the different parts you've borrowed from others.



**Share your mentor with your friends using our Instagram Story template.**

**Download it here.**

Next time your inner critic is being harsh, turn to your mentor and imagine what they might say. Can you listen to them?

## SELF-COMPASSION: FINDING YOUR INNER MENTOR

Self-compassion involves treating ourselves just as we would a close friend who is having a hard time. It's about being kind to ourselves when we are struggling, instead of judging and criticising. Self-compassion is more than just feeling better. It helps us navigate our way through tough times by helping us access and strengthen our inner resources such as the ability to calm ourselves down, ask for support and learn from our mistakes.

It's very common to believe that we need to criticise ourselves when we don't live up to our own (often very high!) standards; that if we're kind to ourselves we'll lose our motivation and drive to succeed. However, research suggests just the opposite. Being kind to ourselves actually gives us the sense of safety and encouragement we need to keep going when things get tough.

### TRY IT

Give these three steps a go to cultivate self-compassion:

- 1. MINDFULNESS** - Self-compassion starts by acknowledging that we are suffering or struggling in some way. We can't be kind to ourselves unless we first notice and acknowledge that we're struggling.
- 2. KINDNESS** - Next, offer yourself care and kindness. It can help to ask yourself, "what would I say to a close friend who was going through the same thing?" and "What would my inner mentor tell me right now?"
- 3. HUMANNES** - Remind yourself that you're not alone in your struggles. All humans make mistakes and struggle at times.

### REFLECT

- What do you notice you judge and criticise yourself about? Are the standards you set for yourself higher than those you hold your loved ones to?
- How do you speak to yourself when you're being self-critical? What sort of things do you say? What tone of voice do you use?
- How could you reframe your language to be more kind, supportive and understanding?
- What does your inner mentor look like? How can you use them to support yourself?

## WANT MORE? CHECK THESE OUT!

Kristin Neff Ted Talk on self-esteem and self-compassion - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvTZBUSplr4>

Kristin Neff's website for more information and resources about self-compassion - <https://self-compassion.org/>

Shauna Shapiro being interviewed about mindfulness and self-compassion - <https://resources.soundstrue.com/podcast/shauna-shapiro-good-morning-i-love-you/>

## CHECK OUT THE FEELING IT SERIES HERE!



Web app link:  
<https://app.smilingmind.com.au/programs/78>

Smiling Mind app location:  
All programs > Youth > Feeling It

## WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT

### Immediate danger

If you're in a life-threatening situation and need immediate help call 000

### Want to talk to someone?

Your school

- Reach out to a teacher or wellbeing coordinator at your school

### During business hours

If you're having difficulty coping during business hours you can also contact:

- Headspace <https://headspace.org.au>
- A local GP to arrange an appointment with them that day

### Available 24 hours every day

If you're in crisis or are having difficulty coping call one of the following services, both of which are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- Lifeline 13 11 14
- Kids Helpline 1800 551 800