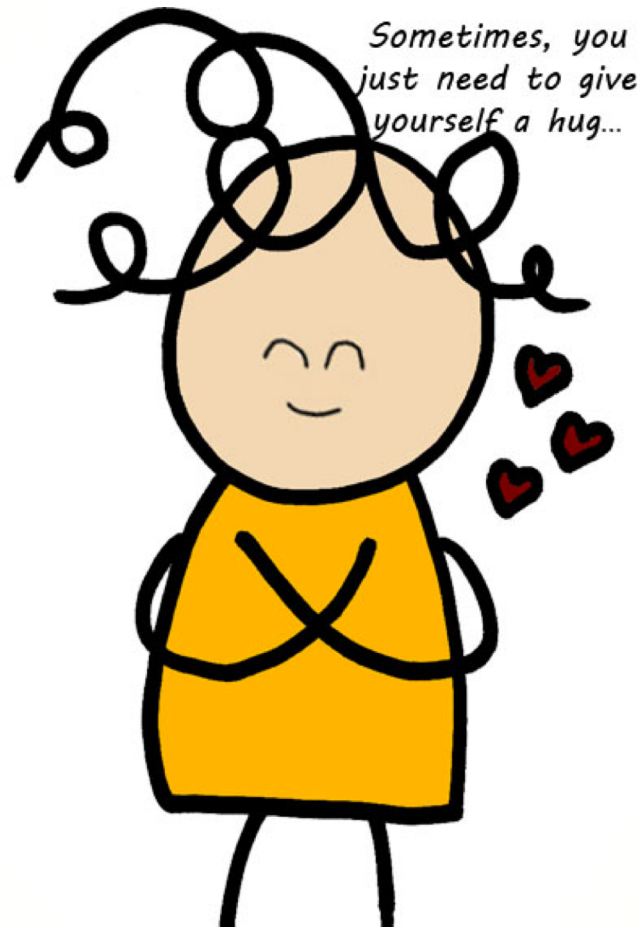


# Practicing Self-Compassion

----- For Young Adults -----





## Practice Forgiveness

Stop punishing yourself for your mistakes. Accept that you are not perfect and be gentle with yourself when you are confronted with your shortcomings. You are valued by your friends and colleagues because of who you are, not because you are faultless.

Become aware of times when you derive a sense of self-worth from performance or perfection. Understand that you do not need to be a certain way to be worthy of love.

One way to remind yourself that you are worthy, even when you're not performing well, is to put a sticky note near your desk or in your wallet with a message reminding you to be gentle and kind with yourself.

*"There is no sense in punishing your future for the mistakes of your past. Forgive yourself, grow from it, and then let it go." ~ Melanie Koulouris*



# Employ a Growth Mindset

Individuals who believe their talents can be developed through hard work, good strategies, and input from others have a growth mindset. They tend to achieve more than those with a more fixed mindset; those who believe their talents are innate gifts and cannot be changed.

Individuals with a growth mindset find fulfillment from the learning/growing process itself and also see the potential for prospects to continually lead to better opportunities. They don't focus on what the outcome says about them, but what can be achieved from taking part in an endeavor.

Employing a growth mindset means embracing rather than avoiding challenges, persisting in finding meaning in them, and not giving up on oneself. When you find you are criticizing yourself and negatively comparing yourself with others, try to find inspiration in their successes and strengths instead of feeling threatened.

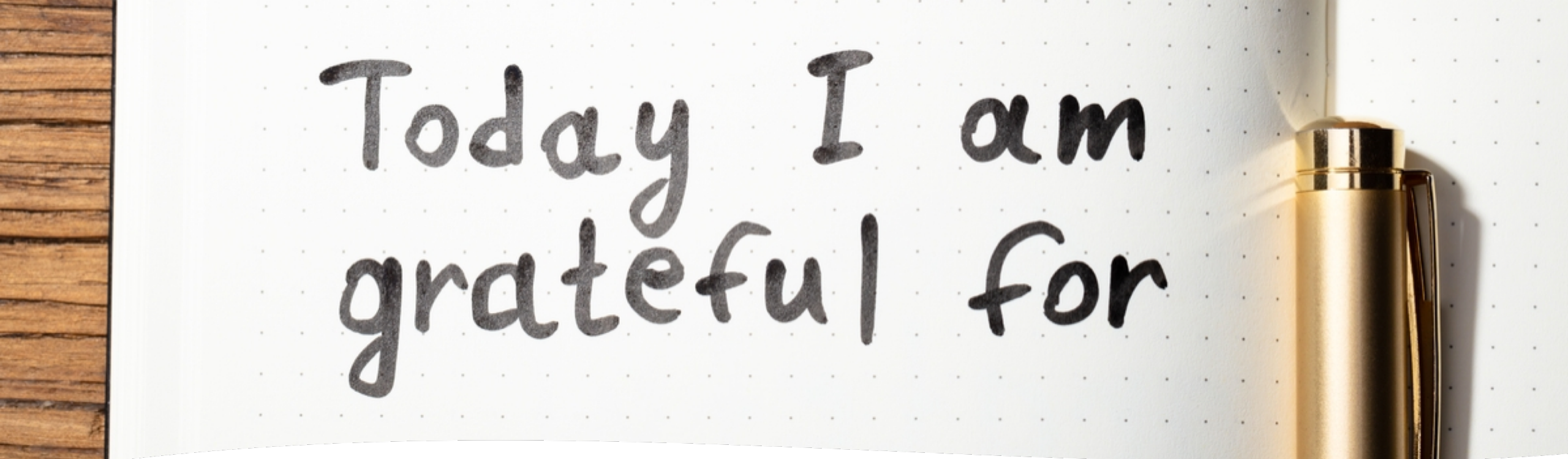


# Ways to Develop a Growth Mindset

- Acknowledge and embrace imperfections/weaknesses.
- View challenges as opportunities for self-improvement.
- Try different learning tactics. What works for one person may not work for you.
- Replace the word “failing” with the word “learning.”
- Stop seeking approval. When you prioritise approval over learning, you sacrifice your own potential for growth.
- Value the process over the end result.
- Cultivate a sense of purpose.
- Celebrate growth with others.
- Emphasize growth over speed. Learning fast isn’t the same as learning well, and learning well sometimes requires allowing time for mistakes.
- Reward/praise actions, not traits.
- Disassociate improvement from failure.
- Provide regular opportunities for consistent self-reflection.
- Place effort before talent.

**Adapted from:** <https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/develop-a-growth-mindset/>





Today I am  
grateful for

## Express Gratitude

Feeling gratitude is very powerful. Rather than wishing for what we do not have, there is strength in appreciating what we do have.

You can choose to write a gratitude journal, go on gratitude walks or keep a gratitude jar. By focusing on our blessings we employ a gentler inner voice and move the focus away from our shortcomings and outward to the world, with all its beauty.





# Find the Right Level of Generosity

There are three different reciprocity styles: giver, taker, and matcher. Givers are the most generous individuals, and generosity is a great way of employing compassion. However, givers can be both the most successful and least successful people, as they may fall into a pattern of selfless giving that ignores their own needs.

For generosity to work in favor of your well-being, it cannot be selfless. So, when being generous, make sure you are aware of your own needs before progressing. Then consciously choose the recipient of your generosity, the resources you have available, and your level of energy based on what will support your own well-being.

Also, have fun being generous. See the difference you make and do not forget to give back to yourself. Doing good for others makes us happy, but only if it does not reduce our own levels of well-being.

# Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness has been found to have a positive impact on self-compassion, as it has a tendency to lessen self-judgment. Strive to always be in the moment and to be aware of what is happening right now, without judgment and labeling.

Allow what you think or feel to have its moment; don't give it the microphone or hide it in the corner. Allow it to come. Explore what emotions or internal thoughts arise.

How would you prefer to think or feel in these moments? What phrases can help transform your emotional reactions to your triggers?





# ‘How Would You Treat A Friend?’ Exercise



- Think back to a time when a friend or loved one has been struggling in some way: perhaps through a big life change, a relationship break-up, or a health issue. If you can't recall a direct experience, try to envision someone close to you going through a difficult experience.
- Next, ask yourself how you would respond. What would you say? How would you say it? What questions would you ask? What little gestures would you make to show your loved one you care? Write out what the best version of you would do in this scenario.
- Now think about a time when you have been in a similar situation, or envision yourself in a similar situation. Write down what your immediate thoughts and feelings about yourself are in this situation. How do you talk to yourself? What words, language, and tone do you use to describe yourself in this scenario? How do you treat your thoughts, emotions or your body?
- Compare the two ways you react with one another. Do you notice any differences? What are they? What fears are being played out in how you treat yourself versus others? Why do you think this is?
- On a fresh piece of paper write out how you want to be treated. What words, gestures, and behaviors do you need to feel more accepting and supportive of the self when you experience difficulties? Use this to guide your mindfulness when reflecting on self-compassion.



## ‘Identify What You Want’ Exercise

- Think about a specific goal or aim you’ve been wanting to achieve. This could be big or small: a weight goal, savings/financial goal, self-care goal, etc. How long have you wanted to achieve this goal? How many times have you started and stopped?
- Now, think about the language, words, and tone you use when working towards this goal. How do you describe or think about yourself? How critical is this language? How positive is this language? Often, we think that being critical of ourselves will help motivate us to change, but this is rarely true.
- Reflect on how the process of criticism actually makes you feel. Do you feel motivated or let down? Positive or deflated? Start seeing how this way of thinking really makes you feel versus how you think it might make you feel.
- Now, focus on flipping the language. Write down words or phrases that do actually make you feel motivated. With your goal or aim, think about why you want to achieve it, and write these out in positive affirmations with a focus on how good it can make you feel.
- When you catch yourself being critical or overly judgmental about yourself, your goals, or lack of achieving them, reflect back on this exercise. Use mindfulness to start amending your thinking to be more compassionate and motivating.