

Be Kind to Yourself

Focus on language you use to talk to yourself:

Thoughts are 'mental events' that pop up in our minds and enable us to make sense of ourselves and the world around us. They allow us to gain knowledge, make decisions and function in our daily lives and are dependent on our mood. The thoughts that we have about ourselves – and how we speak to ourselves – is called our 'self-talk'. These thoughts tend to be relatively automatic and pop into our minds unintentionally and outside of our control but see if you can introduce more compassion into your internal dialogue by offering yourself encouragement and support when you can. Speak to yourself gently, as you would to a loved one, with phrases such as:

- You're doing the best that you can.
- You can't be perfect. You don't need to be.
- You're human; you will make mistakes sometimes.
- You're allowed to make mistakes; you can consider what you've learned and do things differently next time.
- You have your limitations, and that's okay.
- You're allowed to feel ... (sad; angry; disappointed; anxious; happy; hopeful; proud of yourself, etc.)
- Your feelings are real, important and understandable.
- Your best is good enough.

Don't put too much pressure on yourself:

Working towards small personal goals in a time of crisis can provide a sense of accomplishment and routine that may otherwise be lacking. Doing things that make us feel good and maintaining a sense of routine is going to be incredibly important for our mental wellbeing. But so is not putting too much pressure on ourselves. You are not expected to have all of the answers right now and you don't need to spend every free minute doing something. It's important to acknowledge when you need a total break and to just sit and be still for a little while or be distracted by a film or a book.

