

We developed a mindstate induction, control condition and compliance check to examine self-compassion in experimental settings. For more information on its use, please see: Neff, K. D., Tóth-Király, I., Knox, M., Kuchar, A. & Davidson, O. (2020). The development and validation of the State Self-Compassion Scale (long and short form). *Mindfulness*. Advance online publication. DOI: 10.1007/s12671-020-01505-4. [PDF](#)

Self-Compassionate Mindstate Induction

[Bolded text in brackets is information for researchers only. Note that the examples of self-compassionate writing given below should be changed so that they are appropriate for the cultural context of participants and the purposes of the study.]

Please think about a particular situation you are experiencing right now that is painful or difficult. It could be some struggle in your life, or perhaps you are feeling inadequate in some way. Please don't think of a situation in which you are upset with someone else, but instead think of a situation where you are feeling badly about yourself or else you are going through a hard time. Decide on a single situation that you will focus on throughout this study.

[State measures inserted here, answered in reference to the painful or difficult situation.]

We would now like you to take part in a brief exercise, to see if it is helpful in dealing with this painful or difficult situation.

[1. Mindfulness writing prompt]

Please complete this brief writing exercise and follow the instructions as closely as possible.

In the space below, please write about what thoughts and emotions are coming up for you right now regarding this difficult situation.

Note any uncomfortable emotions you may have, such as feeling stressed, ashamed, sad, anxious, and so on.

As you write and notice your feelings, see if you can validate your experience with an attitude of acceptance and non-judgment. Try not to downplay your feelings, but at the same time please try not to exaggerate them either.

(For example, *"I feel frustrated about the fact that my mom doesn't understand why I don't want to come home for Thanksgiving. It's only natural that I want to spend time with my friends. I also feel guilty though because I don't want to hurt her feelings. This is really hard for me right now..."*)

*Remember-- your responses are completely anonymous and your writing is confidential. Don't worry about spelling, sentence structure, or grammar.

[SPACE FOR WRITING]

[2. Common humanity writing prompt]

In the space below, please write about how other people may share similar feelings when encountering situations like this.

Consider that experiencing difficult situations is a part of being human, and that you are not alone. Although the way people struggle is different and the amount of challenge varies, all people face difficulties in life. What you are experiencing is not abnormal, but is a part of life.

(For example, *“I am not the only one who struggles with these types of holiday situations. Part of being human is learning how to get through times like these. Most people have a difficult transition when they go away to college. It's not just me...”*)

*Remember-- your responses are completely anonymous and your writing is confidential. Don't worry about spelling, sentence structure, or grammar.

[SPACE FOR WRITING]

[3. Self-kindness writing prompt]

In the space below, please write any words of support, encouragement and kindness to yourself that would be helpful to hear right now.

If you are not sure what to say, imagine what you would say to a close friend who was struggling with a similar difficult situation. What words would you use to convey compassion, support, and non-judgmental understanding? Now see if you can use this as inspiration for what to say to yourself.

(For example, *“You're doing the best you can. I'm so sorry you're struggling with this. It's going to be okay. I will help you and support you to get through this...”*)

*Remember-- your responses are completely anonymous and your writing is confidential. Don't worry about spelling, sentence structure, or grammar.

[SPACE FOR WRITING]

Please take some time to read what you wrote to yourself and see how it feels to hear these words of kindness and concern directed towards you.

Notice if anything is particularly comforting or helpful.

Take a few slow, deep breaths as you read your own words. Let yourself receive this support.

[Compliance check and post-test state measures completed in reference to the difficult situation inserted here.]

Appendix D

Control Condition

[Bolded text in brackets is information for researchers only. Note that the examples of self-compassionate writing given below should be changed so that they are appropriate for the cultural context of participants and the purposes of the study.]

Please think about a particular situation you are experiencing right now that is painful or difficult. It could be some struggle in your life, or perhaps you are feeling inadequate in some way. Please don't think of a situation in which you are upset with someone else, but instead think of a situation where you are feeling badly about yourself or else you are going through a hard time. Decide on a single situation that you will focus on throughout this study.

[State measures inserted here, answered in reference to the painful or difficult situation.]

We would now like you to take part in a brief exercise, to see if it is helpful in dealing with this painful or difficult situation.

[1. Description writing prompt]

Please complete this brief writing exercise and follow the instructions as closely as possible.

In the space below, please write about what exactly is occurring in this difficult situation. Try to be as descriptive as possible.

(For example, *"Our family is having an argument about whether or not I should go home for Thanksgiving break. I want to stay in Austin but my mother feels upset because..."*)

*Remember-- your responses are completely anonymous and your writing is confidential. Don't worry about spelling, sentence structure, or grammar.

[SPACE FOR WRITING]

[2. People involved writing prompt]

In the space below, please write about who is involved in the situation if it involves more than just you. Please describe the people involved with as much detail as possible, even if you are the only one involved (in this case describe yourself).

(For example, *"My mother, sister, and brother are taking different sides in the dispute over Thanksgiving. My brother supports me, but my sister doesn't. My sister is two years older and my brother one year younger..."*)

*Remember-- your responses are completely anonymous and your writing is confidential. Don't worry about spelling, sentence structure, or grammar.

[SPACE FOR WRITING]

[3. Words spoken writing prompt]

In the space below, please write any words that have been spoken in the situation, either what you have said to yourself, what other people have said to you, or what you have said to other people. Please use as much detail as possible.

(For example, *"I told my mom that I really didn't want to come back for Thanksgiving and that I wanted to rest and hang out with my friends. She told me that I should think of her feelings more..."*)

*Remember-- your responses are completely anonymous and your writing is confidential. Don't worry about spelling, sentence structure, or grammar.

[SPACE FOR WRITING]

Please take some time to read what you wrote and see if anything particularly stands out for you.

[Compliance check and post-test state measures completed in reference to the difficult situation inserted here.]

Compliance check. [It is important to include a compliance check because many participants spontaneously write to themselves self-compassionately in the control condition, especially when it directly follows completing a state self-compassion measure.]

Please indicate what you were just asked to do: (A) Write about your feelings in an accepting and validating way, consider how going through difficult situations is part of being human, write to yourself like a supportive friend; (B) Write about the situation and try to figure out how to solve the problem; or (C) Write the details of the situation, who is involved and what was said with as much detail as possible.

Those in the SCMI condition pass the compliance check if they respond A and the neutral controls if they respond C.