

Fierce Self-Compassion Meditation

This practice helps us develop fierce self-compassion in the service of self-protection. This manifests as brave empowered clarity. This is adapted from a meditation by Kristin Neff.

1. Close your eyes.
2. Get comfortable in your body.
3. Think of a situation in your life where you need to protect yourself. To stand up for yourself. To prevent someone from taking advantage of you. Perhaps there is someone imposing themselves or their views on you.
4. Recall the situation in your mind's eye. Try not to focus too much on the person causing the situation. Focus on the harm itself. What is happening? What's going on?
5. Try to allow yourself to feel whatever emotions come up for you. Fear, anger, frustration, fear.
6. Note that you can drop the story of what's happening and just contact the physical sensation. Allow the physical sensations to be there.
7. Now embody a posture of strength. Sit up. Roll your shoulders back. Feel the power in your body.
8. Now say a few phrases to yourself to cultivate self-compassion in an empowered form:
 - a. First just be mindful of what's happening, focusing on the harm, not the person causing the harm. You might say, "I clearly see the truth of what's happening and it's not ok. This person is crossing the line. This isn't fair." Bring mindful clarity to what's happening.
 - b. Second, say, "I'm not alone in this" Empower yourself by remembering our common humanity. Say, "I'm not alone in this. Other people experience this often. I'm going to stand up for myself and I'm going to stand up for everyone." Contemplate your connection with others.

Fierce Self-Compassion Meditation

c. Now put a fist over your heart if you like. This is a gesture of strength and bravery. See if you can commit to being kind to yourself by keeping yourself safe. That's a kindness. Assert confidently, "I will stand up for myself. I will not yield. I'm strong enough to take this on. I can say No." Whatever feels right to you. If you're having difficulty finding the right words, what would you say to someone you care about to help them stand up, be strong, and have courage? Can you offer a similar message to yourself?

d. Finally, put your other hand over your fist so you are holding your fist tenderly. Combine fierce energy, brave and empowered clarity, with the tender nurturing energy of self-compassion. Give yourself full permission to feel the force of your resolve. Let his force be fierce and caring. Aim your fierce energy at the situation, not at the person causing harm. Remind yourself that they're still human. Commit to take action to protect yourself, but don't dehumanize the other person. Keep the thread of lovingkindness for this person alive.

9. Let these fierce and tender energies mingle in your body.

10. If you're feeling a little activated, ask yourself what you need to take care of yourself, and make sure you do so.

© 2021 Michael McGee