

Audio File Transcript

What Do I Need

This practice is called what do I need? The quintessential self-compassion question is what do I need or what do I need right now? If you ask somebody else this question, what do you need? In a warm and friendly way, they'll inevitably feel your compassion. And if you ask yourself the question, what do I need or what do I need now? Even if you don't feel the compassion in the question, it's actually saturated with good intentions, with goodwill, with self-compassion. The question, what do I need, is also a doorway to safe self-compassion practice. So if you ever feel emotionally overwhelmed, either from backdraft or from the challenges of everyday life. This is a good question to ask. What do I need? However, when we are emotionally overwhelmed, our rational thought process is often shut down and we're hard pressed to find an answer. So that's when we need to break the question down a little bit, make it more specific. So in a state of overwhelm, for example, it's really helpful to ask the question, what do I need now to feel safe? Maybe you need to take some time off. You need to wrap yourself in a blanket or pet your dog or do something pleasant for yourself.

So I'm going to ask six questions, three of which reflect tender self-compassion, and three, reflect fierce self-compassion. And so when you ask yourself, what do I need, it depends on the situation and the time. There might be many different kinds of things you need. So for this practice, we're just going to explore some of the options so that in daily life when you ask yourself this question, you might have some possibilities. So the first question is, what do I need to soothe myself physically? So some options, for example, are going outside, getting some fresh air, taking a long walk or getting some exercise, or maybe making dinner for yourself, taking a warm bath, going to bed early, maybe just taking three deep breaths. This is a tender self-compassion question. What do I need to soothe myself physically? What do you need? Another way of breaking down the question what do I need for tender self-compassion is what do I need to comfort myself emotionally? So what works for you? Maybe having a good cry or pampering yourself or connecting with nature or connecting with God or watching a happy movie, thinking of people who love you, maybe like to take a drive or do a hobby or listen to a meditation app. So if you ever feel emotionally overwhelmed and you need to comfort yourself emotionally, what can you do? And the third tender self-compassion question is, what do I need to validate how I feel? For example, it might help to write down what you're thinking and feeling, keeping a journal or talking with a friend or connecting online with someone, listening to a podcast, listening to music. Maybe talking to your inner child. How do you validate what you're feeling?

And then the next three questions are more fierce self-compassion questions. What do I need to protect myself? Maybe I need to say no to someone, to set a physical or emotional boundary. Find a safe space. Stop a harmful habit. Connect with supportive people. Give yourself time to rest or recover. How do you protect yourself? What do I need to protect myself? Sometimes that's the most self-compassionate thing to do. What might you do? And the next question is, what do I need to provide for myself? Providing. This is active, sometimes fierce, self-compassion. Maybe you need to respect and follow your core values. Maybe you need to savor the moment. Maybe you need to meet your physical needs, sleep, nutrition, connection. Maybe you need some relaxation. Maybe that's how you provide for yourself. Gardening, sports, art, dance. How do you provide for yourself for various needs? And lastly, what do I need to encourage myself? This too is active, sometimes fierce self-compassion. Maybe you need to get support from others. Maybe you need to take some small steps. Maybe you need to accept imperfection. Maybe you need to celebrate your achievements. Maybe you just need to encourage yourself like you can do this. So the invitation in this practice is to keep an eye on how you're feeling when you practice self-compassion more in daily life and to stay out of the overwhelm zone to the best of your ability. And if you ever feel overwhelmed for any reason, ask yourself, what do I need or what do I need right now? And especially think of behavioral self-compassion, simple physical acts of compassion. Thank you.