



SUPERHERO IRL

SELF-COMPASSION

Part 1

WHAT IS SELF-COMPASSION?

Are you are familiar with the CW Network's TV show *The Flash* and the main character Barry Allen? Or maybe Luke Cage? Or Wolverine from the *X-Men*? Or The Doctor from *Dr. Who*?

What all of these heroes have in common is their ability to heal quickly. When they are injured, they recover much faster than other people. Their ability to self-heal allows them to continue to be the best they are capable of being. In their stories, self-healing allows them to continue to fight for what they believe in.

However, the characters in these examples seem only to be able to recover from physical wounds. But consider this: what if we could also heal our **emotional** wounds?

Think about it, have you ever been critical to yourself? Many people find that they are often harsher toward themselves than they are toward other people.

Self-compassion means responding to our own personal struggles in the same kind and caring way as we would to a dear friend. A personal struggle could be a sense of loneliness, the feelings of anxiety, depression, or frustration, or struggling with schoolwork, or family conflicts.

Self-compassion consists of three elements:

1. Mindfulness: noticing that we are struggling

For example, noticing when we are struggling with anxiety or depression, or are shaming ourselves for “not being good enough.” Mindfulness can also include feeling hungry, angry, tired, lonely, and overwhelmed.

Take a few moments to notice how you’re feeling right now.

2. Common Humanity: recognizing that we are not alone in feeling this way and that many other people are going through the same things as we are.

For example, realizing that nearly every person in the world struggles at some point with believing that they are “not good enough” or the understanding that everyone in the world feels anxious, overwhelmed, lonely, or depressed sometimes are all examples of common humanity

3. Self-kindness: treating ourselves in the same kind and caring way we would treat a close friend or a beloved family member, for example, by telling yourself that, “you are loved,” and that “you are enough.”

Self-kindness can help us to face up to our challenges and deal with them head on. Treating ourselves with kindness can **energize and motivate** us so we can pursue our goals.

What are some other ways we can practice self-kindness?
Choose at least 3 self-kindness techniques that appeal to you, such as:

- o Taking a break from your work or conversation
- o Giving/getting a hug
- o Taking a bath
- o Doing something you enjoy (like video games)
- o Listening to music
- o Reaching out to a friend
- o Watching TikTok videos
- o Positive self-talk: remind yourself that everyone has set-backs while pursuing a goal or trying to make change: keep trying!

See if you can practice a few of these skills this week, including noticing how you are feeling, reminding yourself that you are not alone in feeling this way, and practicing one or more of the self-kindness skills. Remember that it is okay for you to treat yourself the same way you would treat a dear friend. You are also a human being. Your feelings also matter.

Founded in 2013, SuperheroIRL is a project of Pop Culture Hero Coalition, the first 501c-3 non-profit to use relatable stories from TV, comics, and film, to develop tools for living, including conflict resolution, resilience, empathy, and other crucial mental health skills.

Created by pop-culture-fluent clinical psychologists and educators, our work is in schools, comic cons, children’s hospitals – and homes in the age of COVID-19.

www.PopCultureHero.org

For info and requests, please email **info@PopCultureHero.org**

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