A compassionate letter to myself

Writing to yourself as a wise and caring friend would.

Think of something you are struggling with or criticising yourself for. Now imagine someone who cares about you deeply and sees you clearly: your strengths, your flaws and everything you have been through. Write to yourself from their point of view.

What to include

1. **Acknowledge the difficulty.** "I can see how hard this has been."
2. **Make sense of it.** How do your history and circumstances explain why you feel and react this way?
3. **Remember you are not alone.** Others struggle with this too.
4. **Be warm.** Use the tone you would use with someone you love.
5. **Offer encouragement, not orders.** What would help? What do you need?

Write without stopping to edit. If the critic interrupts, notice it and carry on.

Dear me,

Afterwards

- Read it back slowly, out loud if you can, in a kind tone.
- Notice how it feels to receive it.
- Keep it, and read it again on a hard day.

Compassionate letter writing is used in Compassion Focused Therapy, developed by Paul Gilbert.

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