Imagining my compassionate self

An imagery exercise for practising being wise, strong and kind towards yourself.

Actors step into a character by imagining how that person thinks, stands and speaks. You can do the same with your own compassionate side. It does not matter whether you feel compassionate. You are practising, as you would a skill.

1. Begin with a minute of soothing rhythm breathing.
2. Imagine you are a deeply compassionate person. Bring to mind three qualities:

- **Wisdom.** You understand that life is hard, that we did not choose our brains or our past, and that everyone is doing their best with what they have.
- **Strength.** You are steady and grounded, like a mountain or a deep-rooted tree. You can face difficult things.
- **Caring commitment.** You want to help, yourself and others, and not to condemn.

3. Sit as this person would sit. Let your face take on their expression.
4. Imagine their voice: warm, slow, steady.
5. From here, look at the part of you that is struggling. What do you see? What do you want for that part?

Wisdom	Strength	Caring
What does my compassionate self understand?	How does it stand, sit and breathe?	What does it want for me?

What its voice sounds like, and what it says to me

A situation this week where I could bring this part of me in

From Compassion Focused Therapy, developed by Paul Gilbert.

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