

Self-Compassion Practice for Moms

By Ashley Davis Bush, LICSW

How you love yourself becomes a template to your children for how they will love themselves! And self-compassion is the foundation of self-love. When you have compassion for each part of yourself (your struggling self, your fragile self, your wild self, your precious self) then it's easier to model self-care and self-love.

The three key components of self-compassion are

- Noticing (being mindful of body and thoughts)
- Connection (being aware that you are not alone)
- Kindness (being gentle with yourself)

Research shows that a self-compassion practice is intensified if you add a gesture of tenderness. Popular movements include placing your hand on your heart, on your chest, or on your cheek. Experiment with what gesture feels the most comfortable for you.

The Practice:

Notice: *Notice when you have a moment of mom stress – the kids are too loud, too chaotic, too demanding. Or maybe you are simply tired or hungry.*

Place your hand in a gesture of tenderness.

Connect: *Say silently or aloud to yourself, “I am not alone. Others mom feel this way.” Say whatever words resonate for you regarding the fact that moms throughout all of time have now and again felt overwhelmed by the task of mothering.*

Kindness: *Say silently or aloud to yourself, “I’m ok. I’m going to get through this. This too shall pass.”*

Then, ask yourself “What do I need? Do I need a time out for myself? Do I need to lie down for 5 minutes? Do I need a deep breath? Do I need a change of scenery? Do I need some protein?”

Once you're in a place of self-compassion, you can more easily notice and respond to your needs. Taking care of yourself puts you in a better position to mother those you love. When you take care of you, your children naturally benefit.

Be mindful, Foster connection, Be kind.

