

Do you get angry
with yourself?

5 ways to
improve your
relationship
with you



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emotional support for you

5 Ways to improve your relationship with you

If you get angry and impatient with yourself, using harsh words towards yourself that you wouldn't say to a good friend, it's time to start improving your relationship with *you*. The thing you're angry about is usually not something that will make much difference to the bigger picture of your life.

Here are five activities you can start to practice that will have a big impact on how you feel about yourself.

1. Take five deep breaths

Inhale for 4 seconds, exhale for 6 seconds – do this 6 times. It sounds too simple to work but research shows that slowing down your breathing when you're in a highly agitated state affects brain function. When you're feeling angry with yourself your breathing becomes shallow, so less oxygen is getting to your brain. Increasing the oxygen to your brain allows you to reconnect with your logical, rational mind that probably would be kinder to a friend than you're being to yourself.

2. Forgive yourself

If your anger with yourself is due to forgetting to do something or making a mistake, forgive yourself. Instead of beating yourself up about it look in the mirror, tell yourself what you've done – “I forgot to buy milk”, “I broke a bowl I really liked”, then look yourself in the eye and say “I forgive you”.

3. Say kind things to yourself every day

How often do you say kind things to yourself? If you're often impatient with yourself and think self-critical thoughts, make it your mission to say something kind to yourself every day.

Making this part of your morning routine will help you feel positive, grounded, and able to deal with the challenges of the day. You're creating a new, emotionally healthy, habit.

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To decide which kind words you're most in need of hearing, think about the self-critical thoughts you have and write down the opposite.

So, if you think "you stupid idiot" when you forget to do something, your kind words could be "I am intelligent and capable".

If you spend a lot of energy worrying about getting ill or injured, you might say "I am safe and healthy".

If you feel like you're a bad person say "I am lovable and loved".

Think you're useless? Try "I have good friends who value me".

Once you've found 3 or 4 kind things to say, you can get creative about how you remind yourself to do this.

You might have them as the welcome message on your phone or put a note next to your mirror.

If you're artistic or enjoy crafts, there's no limit to how creative you can get with your kind messages. Place them where you'll see them.

Practice saying your kind statements to yourself while looking in the mirror. This helps you to take on board these facts about yourself.

You can also repeat them to yourself as you drive to a difficult meeting.

You're creating a mantra to use any time and creating a positive, loving relationship with yourself – it'll be so much harder to be as angry with yourself.

4. Create your Perfect Nurturer

Are there times when you become so distraught that you wish there was someone to go to who would listen to you and offer good, kind, loving advice? If you know someone who fits this description that's great, but you may need to invent someone – this is where you get creative.

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Your perfect nurturer can be an imaginary person, a tree, a place you feel safe, an animal. It doesn't matter what it/he/she is – just so long as you can get an image in your mind's eye. This idea may take a while so be patient with yourself – you're creating a lifelong soothing technique that is as unique as you are.

- You can create someone or something from scratch or base it on a real or fictional character.
- Once you have the image in your mind you'll be able to tell them/it how you're feeling, what's pushed your button, what you fear.
- If your nurturer can speak you can listen to what they/ it says to you.

I realise that this might sound strange. The idea of an invented being talking to you and giving you good advice can sound a bit 'out there'.

Here is my example: When I learnt about this technique, I'd recently read a book with a character I was drawn to, who was kind to a lost child.

So, my starting point was this character, but I made some changes. The character was a revered member of her society but I wanted my nurturer to be someone respected but not ever so special (this was important for me as I wanted her to be a role model for me and I didn't want to set myself up to be trying to achieve greatness - I had enough low self-esteem).

I changed the period in history so my nurturer had a comfortable dwelling where I could go and see her at any time and be welcomed, be warm and cosy and private – so I could talk openly.

The responses from her were usually just a few words – but went right to the heart of the matter – as opposed to my lengthy analytical style. This was my own wisdom being fed back to me by my imagination.

Once you've created your Perfect Nurturer you'll be able to benefit from the feeling of safety and having someone or something that's always there for you.

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5. Identify the critical voice

Write down or record the harsh words you throw at yourself when you're angry.

After forgiving yourself for whatever you got angry about (tip 2), read or listen to your harsh self-critical talk and see if you can remember anyone saying similar things to you or to themselves – maybe a parent, brother, sister, teacher or partner.

Have you spent a lot of time around people who:

- blamed you?
- blamed others when something went wrong?
- got angry when things didn't go the way they wanted?
- were visibly angry with themselves?

If so, you've learnt that when something goes wrong, even a small thing, the way to deal with it is by getting angry and blaming.

Once you've identified where you learnt the harsh treatment, you can start to say kind, compassionate things to yourself. (If you've practiced tip 3, you've already started doing this.) Once you've noticed whose voice or behaviour you're copying, you can choose to stop mimicking them.

It's important to recognise that whoever you've learnt this behaviour from, didn't have good self-care or emotional skills or were so stressed they'd forgotten how to use them. You don't have to follow their lead. You can develop those skills and start being more patient with yourself. If you've created your perfect nurturer (tip 4), you have a new role model or safe space, where no one shouts accusingly at you or anyone else.

When you criticise yourself harshly, it's like finding the emotional beating stick and beating yourself with it. Please don't...be kind and encouraging instead.

If you feel you would like one to one help or support to implement these tips then please follow [this link](#) to my website to book a free introductory 1-2-1 session.

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5 Tips in brief...

1. Take five deep breaths

Inhale for 4 seconds, exhale for 6 seconds – do this 6 times.

2. Forgive yourself

Look yourself in the eye and say, “I forgive you”.

3. Say kind things to yourself every day

“I’m capable, I’m a good friend...”

4. Create your Perfect Nurturer

Your Perfect Nurturer is *always* there for you, *always*.

5. Identify the critical voice

Remember, you don’t have to follow their lead.