

WORDS OF SELF-COMPASSION AFFIRMATIONS

- I am worthy of compassion.
- Asking for help reflects strength and courage.
- Everyone struggles and makes mistakes.
- I will continue to change and grow from a place of self-acceptance.
- I can relieve the discomfort by taking time for myself and engaging in self-care.
- It is healthy to relax and have fun.
- I deserve the love and kindness that I so easily give to others.
- I am always improving, but I have the knowledge I need today.
- My actions are intentional and they bring me closer to my goals.

We think it is brave that you get up in the morning, whether your heart aches, your life is messy, or you do not feel like being out in the world.

We think it is brave that you continue to love and show courage by expressing and opening your soul, despite the way you may have been treated in both the past and the present.

We think it is brave that you keep going. That you keep believing in something more, something bigger, even when you may not know exactly what you are hoping for.

We think it is brave that you fight. Fight for injustice, fight for freedoms and fight for civility among men and women.

We think it is brave that you choose every single day to move forward, put on the uniform, and face danger, because that is what makes you strong.

You don't fight alone.

Scan this QR code
for more on
Self-Compassion
and guidance



Employee Assistance Unit

The Employee Assistance Unit (EAU) is designed to assist Members of the Service who are experiencing personal and/or professional problems. The early identification and resolution of these problems can minimize the impact on a member's career or home life.

Referrals are accepted from fellow Members of the Service, unions and fraternal organizations, family, and friends.

Our unit is **NOT** a disciplinary arm of the department. Communications between EAU personnel and Members of the Service remain **CONFIDENTIAL**, EXCEPT in cases of criminality or suicidality.

EAU IS AVAILABLE 24/7 by phone or in person. Peer counselors will meet you, and care for you, where and how you are most comfortable.

If it's important to you,
it's important to us.

Employee Assistance Unit

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Employee Assistance Unit

Practicing Self-Compassion



HOW DO WE PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION?

Practicing self-compassion and seeking help takes courage. The word courage is derived from the Latin word corage, which means heart. In its earliest form, the word courage had a different definition than it does today. Courage originally meant, "To speak one's mind by telling one's heart." Over time, this definition changed, and today the word courage is synonymous with being heroic. Heroics are an important part of who we are as officers, and we certainly need more heroes from time to time. We have lost touch with the idea of speaking honestly and openly about who we are, what we're feeling, and our experiences (good and bad). That is the true definition of courage. Heroism is often about putting our lives on the line. Ordinary courage is about putting our vulnerability on the line.

DO YOU CATASTROPHIZE?

We, as officers, tend to catastrophize which may lead to strong feelings of hopelessness and, at times, despair; also known as seeing no way out.

Catastrophizing is imagining the worst possible outcome of an event. By learning to recognize these thoughts, you can better combat them. Cultivating optimism in uncertain times takes practice. We must find our own path to hopefulness amidst adversity in order to believe in positive outcomes. We must first identify what is true and what is false from the narrative in our minds.

HOW DO WE BEGIN TO MAKE POSITIVE CHANGES?

Challenge yourself to identify the following factors when catastrophizing. When you are scared, worried, overwhelmed, anxious, or stressed about what is happening and trying to find perspective... Ask yourself, will this issue be a big deal in five minutes? Five hours? Five days? Five months? Five years?

We mentioned hopelessness. Hope is a belief when faced with struggle. We develop hope not during the easy or comfortable times, but through adversity and discomfort. While hope is not an emotion, hopelessness, and despair, are emotions. Hopelessness arises out of a combination of

negative life events and negative thought patterns, particularly self-blame and the perceived inability to change our circumstances.

WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL EXERCISES TO BE SELF-COMPASSIONATE STARTING RIGHT NOW?

Use CBT to change critical self-talk into positive self-talk

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and keeping a journal. CBT is rooted from the idea that our thoughts impact our feelings and our feelings impact our behavior. Therefore, if we reframe our negative thoughts, we can change our negative feelings, and subsequently, our negative behavior. Notice when you are being self-critical. What words do you use to describe yourself, and your actions? Are there key phrases that come up repeatedly? Get to know your inner critic. Now make an effort to soften the self-critical voice. Use thoughtful phrases to change the negative into positive self-talk.

Use Meditation

Guided meditation (someone talking you through the meditation with instructions, usually found through various apps, such as Calm, Insight Timer, Headspace, or various YouTube videos) Vs. unguided meditation (no one speaks you through it, but there is usually calming music, typically used by those who have some experience); Transcendental meditation (using one word repeated consistently to enter into a calm state, usually a trained practice); Calming or Insight Meditation; Focused Attention; Body Scan; Visualization; etc.

Use Writing

Write a letter to yourself from the perspective of an unconditionally loving, accepting, kind, and compassionate friend. Imagine the friend can see all your strengths and weaknesses, including the aspect of yourself you will be writing about. Focus on the perceived inadequacy you tend to judge yourself for. What would this friend say to you about your "flaw" from the perspective of unlimited compassion? After writing the letter, set it aside for the day. Come back to it later and read it again. Allow the compassionate words to sink in. Allow the love, connection, and acceptance to soothe you.

PUTTING SELF-COMPASSION TO USE

Using self-compassion when we experience shame, guilt, humiliation, embarrassment or a combination of all four is something worth tackling. Your life is important and your issue is temporary. What are some ways we experience shame, guilt and/or humiliation as officers?

- Shame is living in secrecy, silence, and judgment.
- My struggle with alcohol causes shame and humiliation.
- Living in a physically and/or mentally abusive relationship causes shame and humiliation.
- My compulsive spending and large debt causes shame and humiliation.
- My unhappiness and my struggle in being a new mom causes shame and humiliation.
- I took a vacation despite my large debt, and now I feel guilty.
- I only spent one hour with my terminally ill mother today, so I could peacefully watch a movie in solitude, and now I feel guilty.

These examples are not exhaustive. They are a small list of issues we frequently help with at the Employee Assistance Unit. You are not alone. Though circumstances may be different, we can empathize with your struggle and find ways to cope together.

No one is immune to pain or suffering. Having compassion is not the practice of being "better than" or believing that "I can fix you." It is a practice based on the beauty and pain of shared humanity; it is being empathetic to a person's struggle. It is the recognition that we are all human and that we can and do have negative thoughts sometimes. We may need an extra hand or a listening ear to get through a difficult time. Being self-compassionate allows you to accept the help you need.

**SUPPORT IS
AVAILABLE 24/7
CALL ANY TIME
646-610-6730**