

Self-Compassion Support for Clients

A GENTLE GUIDED WORKSHEET FOR EMOTIONALLY TIRED CLIENTS NAVIGATING SCAPEGOATING, RELATIONSHIP STRAIN, AND RELIGIOUS TRAUMA BY WISDOM CENTER LLC

INSTRUCTIONS: THIS WORKSHEET IS NOT ABOUT FIXING YOURSELF, SAVING A RELATIONSHIP, OR DECIDING WHAT YOU SHOULD DO. IT IS ABOUT REDUCING HARM TO YOURSELF WHILE YOU MAKE SENSE OF PAINFUL PATTERNS. IF YOU FEEL TIRED, NUMB, CONFLICTED, OR UNSURE WHETHER YOU EVEN WANT TO BE IN THIS RELATIONSHIP RIGHT NOW—THAT IS OKAY. YOU ARE ALLOWED TO MOVE SLOWLY.

YOU MAY PAUSE AT ANY POINT. ANSWER ONLY WHAT FEELS TOLERABLE.

GROUNDING FIRST (BECAUSE YOU'RE TIRED)

BEFORE REFLECTING, CHECK IN WITH YOUR BODY.

- RIGHT NOW, MY ENERGY LEVEL FEELS LIKE:
☐ VERY LOW ☐ LOW ☐ MODERATE ☐ HIGH
- ONE WORD FOR HOW MY BODY FEELS: _____
- ONE SMALL THING THAT MIGHT HELP ME FEEL 5% MORE SETTLED (NOT BETTER, JUST STEADIER):

(IF NOTHING COMES TO MIND, THAT'S INFORMATION—NOT "I JUST FAILED AT THIS".)

NAMING THE INNER NARRATIVE

YOU MAY HAVE LEARNED—EXPLICITLY OR SUBTLY—THAT SELF-CRITICISM EQUALS RESPONSIBILITY, HUMILITY, OR LOVE. THIS SECTION IS ABOUT NOTICING, NOT CORRECTING. WITH LOOKING AT THESE STATEMENTS, I'D LIKE YOU TO PRACTICE MINDFULNESS, WITHOUT ATTACKING YOURSELF. MINDFULNESS IS ALLOWING YOURSELF TO THINK AND BE PRESENT, WITHOUT JUDGING YOURSELF.

- IN CONFLICT, I USUALLY TELL MYSELF THIS STORY ABOUT WHO I AM:
- THE WORDS I USE TOWARD MYSELF AFTERWARD SOUND LIKE:
- UNDERNEATH THE SHAME OR BLAME, I AM ACTUALLY FEELING:
☐ SAD ☐ ANGRY ☐ AFRAID ☐ HOPELESS ☐ CONFUSED ☐ OTHER: _____
- WHAT FEELS MOST PAINFUL ABOUT BEING SEEN AS "THE BAD GUY" IS:

RESPONSIBILITY VS. OVER-RESPONSIBILITY

MANY PEOPLE WHO WERE SHAPED BY RELIGIOUS TRAUMA OR FAMILY SYSTEMS LEARNED TO CARRY MORE THAN THEIR SHARE TO KEEP PEACE OR STAY SAFE.

- IN THIS RELATIONSHIP OR FAMILY SYSTEM, I FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR:
- THINGS I MAY BE CARRYING THAT DO NOT FULLY BELONG TO ME:
- IF RESPONSIBILITY WERE SHARED FAIRLY, MY PORTION MIGHT ACTUALLY BE:
- WHAT COMES UP EMOTIONALLY WHEN I IMAGINE NOT BEING THE ONE WHO ABSORBS THE BLAME:

THE ROLE OF FAITH, DUTY, AND OBLIGATION

GROWING UP, I MAY HAVE BEEN TAUGHT THAT (GIVE YOURSELF SOME ROOM TO WRITE AND REFLECT ABOUT THIS)
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO USE THE PROMPTS BE:

- SUFFERING EQUALS FAITHFULNESS
- STAYING EQUALS RIGHTEOUSNESS
- LEAVING EQUALS FAILURE, SIN, OR HARM

YOU ARE ALLOWED TO EXAMINE THESE MESSAGES GENTLY.

- MESSAGES I LEARNED ABOUT MARRIAGE, SACRIFICE, OR BEING “THE PROBLEM”:
- WHICH OF THESE MESSAGES STILL LIVE IN MY BODY, EVEN IF MY BELIEFS HAVE CHANGED:
- WHAT THESE TEACHINGS COST ME EMOTIONALLY:
- WHAT I WISH COMPASSION, RATHER THAN OBLIGATION, HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO SAY:

COMMON HUMANITY (YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY ONE)

SHAME THRIVES ON THE BELIEF THAT YOU ARE UNIQUELY FLAWED.

- IF SOMEONE ELSE WERE IN MY POSITION, I MIGHT UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE:
- WHAT THIS STRUGGLE SAYS ABOUT BEING HUMAN—NOT DEFECTIVE:
- OTHERS WHO MIGHT FEEL SIMILARLY BLAMED, TRAPPED, OR EXHAUSTED:

WORKING WITH THE “BAD GUY” IDENTITY

THIS ROLE LIKELY SERVED A PURPOSE ONCE. YOU DON’T NEED TO HATE IT TO LOOSEN IT.

- WHEN DID I FIRST LEARN TO SEE MYSELF AS THE ONE WHO CAUSES PROBLEMS?
- BEING THE “BAD GUY” MAY HAVE HELPED ME BY:
- BEING STUCK IN THIS ROLE COSTS ME:
- PARTS OF ME THAT GET OVERLOOKED WHEN I ACCEPT THIS ROLE:

NOTE: REFLECT ON THESE AND SHARE THESE WITH ME THE NEXT TIME WE TALK.

SELF-KINDNESS

SELF-COMPASSION DOES NOT MEAN PRETENDING EVERYTHING IS OKAY OR THAT YOU WANT TO STAY. TRY NOT TO FORCE POSITIVITY, BUT THINK “I COULD BE MORE HEALTHY IF...”-SAM

- IF SOMEONE I LOVED FELT THIS WORN DOWN AND BLAMED, I WOULD SAY:
- THE TONE I USUALLY USE WITH MYSELF IS:
 - ☐ HARSH ☐ DEMANDING ☐ DISAPPOINTED ☐ COLD ☐ OTHER: _____
- A TONE THAT MIGHT REDUCE HARM (NOT FIX EVERYTHING) WOULD SOUND LIKE:
- RIGHT NOW, WHAT I NEED MOST IS:
 - ☐ REST ☐ PERMISSION TO NOT DECIDE ☐ UNDERSTANDING ☐ SPACE ☐ SUPPORT ☐ HONESTY

A GENTLE SELF-COMPASSION PAUSE

READ SLOWLY. YOU MAY PLACE A HAND WHERE IT FEELS GROUNDING.

1. MINDFULNESS:
“THIS IS A MOMENT OF SUFFERING.”
 2. COMMON HUMANITY:
“I AM NOT ALONE. OTHERS FEEL BLAMED, CONFLICTED, AND EXHAUSTED TOO.”
 3. SELF-KINDNESS:
“MAY I BE KIND TO MYSELF IN THIS MOMENT. MAY I STOP ADDING TO MY PAIN.”
- WHAT, IF ANYTHING, SHIFTS AFTER THIS PAUSE:

WHEN YOU’RE UNSURE YOU WANT TO STAY

YOU ARE ALLOWED TO HOLD COMPASSION WITHOUT CLARITY.

- WHAT FEELS HARDEST ABOUT STAYING RIGHT NOW:
- WHAT FEELS HARDEST ABOUT IMAGINING LEAVING:
- IF I DID NOT HAVE TO JUSTIFY MYSELF, I MIGHT ADMIT:
- ONE TRUTH I CAN HOLD TODAY WITHOUT MAKING A DECISION:

CLOSING REFLECTION

SELF-COMPASSION IS NOT ABOUT PROVING YOU ARE GOOD. IT IS ABOUT REFUSING TO PUNISH YOURSELF FOR BEING HUMAN.

- ONE SENTENCE I WANT TO CARRY WITH ME FROM THIS WORKSHEET:

YOU ARE NOT BROKEN FOR FEELING TIRED. YOU ARE NOT FAILING FOR QUESTIONING. YOU ARE ALLOWED TO CARE FOR YOURSELF, EVEN HERE.