

SANE AUSTRALIA

SANE Australia Online Peer Group

Date: 16/12/2021

Topic: Being Kind to Yourself

Description: It can be really hard to practice self-kindness for a number of reasons, but it's also super important and something that we are all deserving and worthy of. Let's come together to share ideas on ways we might be able to practice self-kindness in our lives.

Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about being kind to yourself. This is a new peer support service we are trialling. Because of this, we really value your thoughts on how it goes, so we will send a link to a short survey at the end of this event for you to complete. While this survey is optional, it is a chance to provide feedback for us to improve our services. In case you might need to leave part way through the event, you can find the survey here now: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW. Tonight, peer support workers @LittleSteps and @Girasole will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of being kind to yourself. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, everyone deserves kindness towards themselves. We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about mental health struggles. @Otter who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety. If you're having any technical issues, please contact us at <https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support>

LittleSteps
(PSW)

or message @Otter. We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn together and expand our ideas of self-kindness.

We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join :)

LittleSteps (PSW)

Feel free to introduce

LittleSteps (PSW)

yourselves. I'm

@LittleSteps :)

Hi @Aniela!

Girasole (PSW)

Welcome :)

Otter (Moderator)

Hello there

@Aniela!

LittleSteps (PSW)

Ok, let's get started. **Do you find that it can be difficult to be kind to yourself from time to time?**

Girasole (PSW)

Absolutely- I can be harsh on myself; I can expect too much of myself; I can have

negative self-talk that is
very automatic.

**LittleSteps
(PSW)**

I find that as
well! It can be
very hard to be
kind to
ourselves
sometimes.

**Otter
(Moderator)**

I can find it hard to remember
to be kind to myself sometimes
if I feel I've made a mistake or
messed up in some way - the
shame can be really
overpowering!

**Girasole
(PSW)**

Hey @Shaz51
welcome

Shaz51

Hello @LittleSteps (PSW) ,
@Girasole (Peer Worker) , @Otter
(Moderator) xoxo

**Otter
(Moderator)**

Hey there
@Shaz51 welcome!

Girasole (PSW)

Hi @frog ,
welcome! :)

Shaz51 Yes @LittleSteps
(PSW) I do
sometimes find
it hard to be kind
to myself

frog I do too. When things
are going badly, and I
need kindness the
most, I can sometimes
fall into self blame.

**LittleSteps
(PSW)** **Have you ever thought much
about why you might find it
difficult to be kind to yourself, or
how it might be easy/automatic
to have negative thoughts about
yourself?**

Girasole (PSW) @frog that's amazing you've
noticed that it can be the times
where you might need the
kindness the most, that you can
particularly struggle with
it. That's true for me too
@LittleSteps
(PSW) ,
Shaz51

I think being so
busy with
everything That
you forget
yourself

**Otter
(Moderator)**

Sometimes we haven't been exposed to a lot of unconditional love in our lives, but learn to focus on the positive relationships that can help build positive thoughts about ourselves in ourselves! Also, there can be a protection in thinking this way, because growth implies change and change can be scary at times

I think the culture of comparison is very strong. It's hard not to internalize that, and instead allow for all the unseen things that can weigh heavily on us.

frog

Girasole (PSW)

It definitely relates to some early formative experiences like bullying that negatively affected my core self-beliefs. Perfectionism is also there- somehow expecting myself to always be great at everything, and to never struggle

**LittleSteps
(PSW)**

**What might be
some benefits to
being kind to
yourself? What**

**could that look like
in your life?**

It can be a
circuit
breaker for
me and stop
downward
spirals.

frog
**Girasole
(PSW)**

That's a great one
@frog

The benefit would be the ability to help
regulate my emotions and deal with
shame. To be kinder to myself, it would
mean talking to my "inner child" nicely
and to soothe my 5 senses.

Aniela

If I could have more compassion to myself I'd be better able to actually follow through
with my passions- continuing learning languages, playing instruments instead of being
hard on myself when I struggle... and when I think about mental health struggles, if I was
gentler with myself, I feel like I'd have better outcomes- less distress, greater
persistence, and therefore being more likely to overcome any challenges quicker

Girasole (PSW)

I love that @Anelia -
regulating emotions
and dealing with
shame - that
resonates for me too.

Frog

frog I've enjoyed dropping in but I'm going to get a early night. Just want to say that all the hugs flying around have been balm to me. Thanks everyone.

Shaz51 Yes to help me to cope a as a carer and a wife and daughter to be kind to myself is soo important @LittleSteps (PSW) , @frog

Girasole (PSW) Thank you so much for joining in @frog , it's been great to have you here :) Enjoy your rest!

LittleSteps (PSW) **What difficulties might we anticipate in being kind to yourselves? What could possibly help to address these concerns?**

Girasole (PSW) It's just so learned and ingrained for me to think a certain way. These are some deep core beliefs to be addressing! Things that I imagine could be helpful: asking for help and support from others. I'd be more likely to be accountable in moments where I struggle, if someone else can notice that I'm being hard on myself. I've also heard advice from someone else to pause and really take the time to process when someone else says kinds things about you - it might be an automatic reaction to say "oh, stop", to deflect, or to

move on quickly. The advice was to pause and take a good amount of time to really feel and process the kind things being said about you

**Otter
(Moderator)**

Sometimes the anxious feelings/negative voices can feel very overwhelming - it might take practice/continuing to get to know yourself and your body and thoughts to work with and/or through or against these

**LittleSteps
(PSW)**

I feel the same way @Otter (Moderator) and Girasole. I feel that sometimes my habits are so ingrained that it can be hard to overcome. But I appreciate what you said about taking time to process positives and kind things said to you! I think I will try to do that in the future! :)

**LittleSteps
(PSW)**

What are the things that you do (e.g. self-care) to be kind to yourself?

Shaz51

I agree @Girasole (Peer Worker) , @LittleSteps (PSW) , @Otter (Moderator)

Shaz51

To remember I am doing the best I can at the moment, @Girasole (Peer

Worker) , @LittleSteps (PSW) ,
@Otter (Moderator) , @frog

Girasole
(PSW) So true
@Shaz51 ,
that's a
good one
I do things
BPDSurvivor I enjoy
Hug
Otter
(Moderator) my
cat

BPDSurvivor Rather
than do
things for
others

Girasole
(PSW) Hey @BPDSurvivor and @the
magician ! Welcome, great to
have you here :)

BPDSurvivor Thanks!
Glad for
the
reminder!

Shaz51 Wish I had
my
furbabies

back
@Girasole
(Peer
Worker)

Some of the kindest things I do for myself are paying attention to my body's needs and addressing them. If I feel like I'm missing a sense of nature? Going to a national park. If I haven't seen anyone in a number of days? Organising to see a friend. If I feel overwhelmed with things I have to do? Rescheduling things that aren't urgent. If someone isn't good for my mental health? Distancing myself from them. One thing that I want to get a bit better at is time management to schedule in periods of conscious rest each day and each week- time to genuinely relax and do nothing at all (not just lying down, scrolling through social media)

**Girasole
(PSW)**

I personally like to take some time out to create little art works :) But seeing a friend also helps me and is a way that I am kind to myself.

**LittleSteps
(PSW)**

If you experience negative self-talk, what are some ways we could rephrase those thoughts into something more kind and compassionate?

**LittleSteps
(PSW)**
Shaz51

@LittleSteps
(PSW) , @Girasole
(Peer
Worker) , @Otter
(Moderator) looking
forward 3having 12
day holiday over
Christmas
Consider
the
language I
use eg
instead of 'I
shoulda' I
can say 'I
BPDSurvivor could'

Girasole Yeah that's a good one
(PSW) @BPDSurvivor , so true

BPDSurvivor Also, if I
practise
gratitude,
there's no
room for
negativity

the magician buying myself a nice iced mocha, taking a
bath, chocolate fondue, taking pictures in
the park, writing in a cafe, being in

artwork hypnotics, a beer wit netflix, ,
riding my bike. going away with people in
camp group.

I had a good experience trying this recently. I'd had a few days of poor sleep and was seriously struggling with
executive function. My first thought to myself was "I'm really bad at being a person today." I managed to stop myself
there, pause, and reflect on how I could rephrase that. I settled on something like "I'm sleep deprived and I'm really
struggling trying to function at the level that would otherwise be 'normal' for me." Instantly, I felt so much better
about myself. It felt warmer, more compassionate, and it was also more accurate! I really want to try and do this

Girasole (PSW) kind of thing more.

Shaz51 Ohh yes @the
magician xx

the journal entries daily and a
magician visual meditation. always
having music

BPDSurvivor Sounds
great!

the turning the lights out
magician and only having
candles or fancy
lamps

BPDSurvivor That sounds
so relaxing
@magician

Otter
(Moderator)

If I feel guilty about doing something reasonable I want to do or want to tell someone not to do something that affects me and there is resistance, I try to tell myself "This is my life. I deserve to be happy" and go ahead with it

the magician finding people you relate to easily even if are in different parts of your social network. being who you want to be with them.

the magician feeling satisfied with your life. despite any shortc

BPDSurvivor Makes sense... otherwise find better company?

*challenges

the
magician

Challenges
are good for
us... help us
move

BPDSurvivor

forward

Sometimes the people we surround ourselves with can impact how we talk to ourselves- whether they be unkind or critical, or supportive and caring. Do you have these more supporting and caring people in your life? If so, who are they and how do they help? If not, where could you seek them out (either personally or via services)?

**LittleSteps
(PSW)**

I like to see '
challenges' as
learning

BPDSurvivor

opportunities

So true! Reminds
me of a quote I
heard earlier today -
something about
how smooth seas
don't make skilled
sailors

**Girasole
(PSW)**

the
magician

a downhill
battle in a

the
magician

good way
that ends
with a real
confidence
overcoming
an obstacle
that leaves
you feeling
I can do
that too

Shaz51

Sometimes
challenges for our
loved ones does not
help us to move
forward @Girasole
(Peer Worker) ,
@LittleSteps (PSW)

**Otter
(Moderator)**

Am blessed and grateful to know some really
loving people in my life, they are most certainly
out there :relaxed: I do think therapy (group or
solo) can be one of the first places people find
that little bit of encouragement or care or
connection they may need to thrive if they
haven't had much of it in their life

**Girasole
(PSW)**

Thankfully, I definitely have more of the supportive types of people around me now. I really have no
hesitation to distance myself from people who aren't good for me, my mental health, or my
recovery. I think others in my life would be on board to help me with this, and likewise I already do it

in return haha - I very easily pick up when a loved one says something bad, unkind, or untrue about themselves, and correct them on it. I find that so much easier and more obvious to do, though, than doing it for myself. Which is why it might be helpful to involve others who care, because they might notice negative self-talk much more easily than you

the
magician

stepping
stones and
ticking
boxes. no
negative
energy.
saying I bought a
bike and the
difference that has
to NDIS provided me
with exercise
equipment and
notice the response.

BPDSurvivor

I'm surrounded by many complainers... I've learnt to rise above it and I've found that if I share even one positive sentence, people start agreeing and the conversation changes.

**LittleSteps
(PSW)**

**Have you learned
anything helpful from
others' experiences here**

**tonight that you might
be able to apply in your
own life? If yes, what
did you learn?**

BPDSurvivor I've been
reminded
that
language
matters.
that i can always tap in here to
express myself. in way that's
understood. reinforcement
the magician there's worthwhile company to
make.

Otter
(Moderator) That even just stopping and
reminding myself to be kind
to myself is a powerful tool
that can get me through a
lot

the think of how far
magician I've come

BPDSurvivor Yes @the
magician !
That really
does help

BPDSurvivor Reflecting on progress is so important. Strive for progress and not perfection

Girasole (PSW) I took away a bunch of interesting things I'd like to reflect on some more afterwards :) - That busyness can really get in the way of being kind to ourselves, so that's something to pay attention to and try and prevent -That when we might struggle to be kind to ourselves can be the times where we need it the most -To remember that we're doing the best we can at the moment -To remind ourselves that we deserve good things and to be happy

LittleSteps (PSW) I also learnt a lot of interesting things from tonight :) I learnt some tips and tricks to being kinder to myself, including maybe changing up the way I speak to myself to be more compassionate!

LittleSteps (PSW) **Tonight's topic may have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about difficult life experiences and how we might struggle to be kind to ourselves. Very on-topic- would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do?**

Otter (Moderator) Eat some chocolate

polish off
my book.

the
magician

music
therapy.

I'll be
catching up
on reading
tonight.

BPDSurvivor

Looking
forward to it!
I had my
chocolate quota
for the day (or
maybe week!)

BPDSurvivor

@Otter
(Moderator)

I think some ice
cream, and trying
to get an earlier
night's sleep would
be good for me :)

Girasole (PSW)

BPDSurvivor

I love the
idea of
comfort
foods lol!
chippies

the
magician

Yess

**Girasole
(PSW)**

@BPDSurvivor what are
yours? :D If you'd like to
share

BPDSurvivor

I love my sweets too @Girasole (Peer
Worker) ! But I've eaten enough for
what seems like a lifetime! I'm
surrounded by treats all day!

BPDSurvivor

I'd go for
anything
chocolate!

**Girasole
(PSW)**

Yum!!!!

Otter (Moderator)

What is
everyone's
favourite
chocolate? I
need some
inspo for
tonight

**LittleSteps
(PSW)**

Kit-Kat :)

Olga

Same here Kit Kat
for me too

the
magician milk chocolate
melted dipped in
strawberries/banana

Otter
(Moderator) You ARE a magician

Girasole
(PSW) I have generally less
options 'cause I'm vegan
but Vego bars are
absolutely delicious! The
hazelnut flavour is so
good

the
magician tonight has been good
thankyou

LittleSteps
(PSW) We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. As we're trialling this service, we'd love to hear any feedback you may have. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this link: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW
Here are some further resources that we recommend having a look at: Self-care iceberg (image): <https://images.app.goo.gl/fEveL8vH3MNq8kJy8>. Self-compassion break (guided audio): <https://self-compassion.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/self-compassion.break.mp3> "Dare to Rewire Your Brain for Self-Compassion" (TED Talk) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiEMVA8AIJw>

LittleSteps
(PSW)
the
magician

merry Christmas
and happy new
year

The
Hams hi all - bit late this
evening

**Girasole
(PSW))** Oops that first link didn't work - try this one
:) <https://images.app.goo.gl/fEveL8vH3MNq8kJy8>

**Girasole
(PSW)** Hey @The Hams ! Great to see you :) We're just wrapping up here The
transcripts will be up on the website before too long, though, if you'd
like to go through the conversation again :)

Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion 😊 If you'd like to be informed when
our next Peer Group Chat will be taking place, you can sign up to our mailing list

**LittleSteps
(PSW)** here <https://www.sane.org/peer-support/online-mental-health-meet-up> . You can also ask
questions for us to discuss in future peer chats! Our next topic will be on recovery :)

no worries - thanks
The
Hams all and catch you next
time lol

Thank you @the
magician ! All the
best to you too - I
hope you have a
**Girasole
(PSW))** lovely holiday
period :)

**Girasole
(PSW)** It was good to
briefly see you!
@The Hams :)

the
magician

Thanks
everyone!

Otter
(Moderator) :) Really
enjoyed that

Girasole
(PSW) Me too :) Thanks for
coming and sharing your
thoughts, everyone. Take
care and see you next
time!

LittleSteps
(PSW) Thanks everyone! :)
Thank you

Shaz51 everyone 🥰❤️👍👍

Girasole
(PSW) Bye @Shaz51 ! :)