

# 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](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  
forward

BPDSurvivor

**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  
opportunities

BPDSurvivor

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.

BPDSurvivor I'll be  
catching up  
on reading  
tonight.  
Looking  
forward to it!  
I had my  
chocolate quota  
for the day (or  
maybe week!)  
@Otter  
BPDSurvivor (Moderator)

**Girasole (PSW)** I think some ice  
cream, and trying  
to get an earlier  
nights sleep would  
be good for me :)

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](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](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

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