

LESSON PLANS!
TAKING
CARE OF
YOURSELF
A KEY TO
GREATER
SERENITY AND
RESILIENCE

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

To help young people get to know themselves better and improve their self-esteem and self-compassion.

Why should you do this workshop with your students?

Young people, like many adults, can sometimes judge themselves harshly, which can prevent them from bouncing back from problems. With this exercise, you can enable them to develop empathy toward themselves, put strategies in place to take care of themselves, accept their experiences in a positive way and observe what happens to them without judgment.

 **COMPETENCIES** Self-care
Mindfulness

 **RECOMMENDED LEVEL** All secondary levels

 **DURATION** 30 to 40 minutes in class
+ 30 minutes at home

BROAD AREA OF LEARNING

- Health and well-being

SUBJECT AREAS AND COMPETENCIES

English, language arts

- Writes a variety of texts

Physical Education and Health

- Adopts a healthy, active lifestyle

CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

Personal and social competencies:

- Achieves their potential

Communication-related competencies:

- Communicates appropriately

MATERIALS



- “Your Assignments to Do at Home” student worksheet for all students
- Student worksheet completed by the teacher beforehand as an example
- “Steps for Self-Compassion” info sheet (optional)
- IWB or blackboard with chalk

CONTENTS

INFO

To better understand self-compassion and its benefits

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PREPARATION STAGE: 15–20 MINUTES

- **STEP 1:** Discussion on what self-care means
- **STEP 2:** Reflection on the boundaries between self-care and selfishness

04

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE: 10–20 MINUTES

- **STEP 1:** Make a list of activities that your students like to do to take care of themselves
- **STEP 2 (OPTIONAL):** Mini quiz to better understand self-compassion

05

EXIT TICKET TASK: 5 MINUTES (+ 30 MINUTES AT HOME)

Do self-care activities at home and observe our own feelings

08

INFO

SELF-COMPASSION: AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES

When you're going through a difficult time, are you kind to yourself?



Just like you, young people are often hard on themselves when they face a problem. Unfortunately, “a good kick in the rear” doesn't last long and makes us less resilient toward problems by leading us into a spiral of self-denigration.



By teaching **self-compassion** to your students—in other words, taking care of yourself with the same kindness you would show to a friend—you will help them to courageously face their suffering instead of trying to ignore or escape it.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SELF-COMPASSION?

There are many benefits of **self-compassion**. People who cultivate the ability to be kind to themselves often have:

- LESS ANXIETY,
- LESS DEPRESSION,
- + MORE PERSEVERANCE,
- + AN INCREASED ABILITY TO BOUNCE BACK FROM A DIFFICULT TIME.



Being self-compassionate does not mean being passive, resigned or selfish. Quite the opposite—it's an active attitude of taking care of yourself and helping yourself ride out an emotional storm.

With this lesson plan, you will encourage your students to perform a **mindfulness** activity: when we are self-compassionate, we must first observe our thoughts, emotions and inner voice in the present moment without judgment, just like how we practise mindfulness.



PREPARATION STAGE:
(15–20 minutes)

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE:
(10–20 minutes)

EXIT TICKET TASK: 5 minutes
+ 30 minutes of homework

OBJECTIVE: To understand what it means to take care of yourself

PREPARATION STAGE: (15–20 minutes)



STEP 1: Encourage a discussion on what it means to take care of yourself

WHAT TO SAY “Whether as a teen or adult, we sometimes tend to judge ourselves harshly, which can prevent us from reacting in a positive way when faced with problems.

With the exercise we’re going to do today, we will learn to develop empathy toward ourselves, put strategies in place to take care of ourselves, accept our experiences in a positive way and observe what happens to us without judgment.

In your opinion, why is it important to take care of ourselves?

When do you feel the need to take care of yourselves?”

You can round off the discussion by mentioning that:

- Having self-compassion means being kind and understanding with yourself when you’re facing personal failures.
- Having self-compassion and practising self-care allows us to be more open and better accept our experiences and emotions. These behaviours lead to the realization (and acceptance) that we’re not perfect and that we all make mistakes.
- When we practise self-compassion, we observe ourselves in the present moment without judgment. This enables us to reduce our anxiety and stress, especially when we also practise meditation.

STEP 2: Continue with a discussion on the boundaries between self-care and selfishness

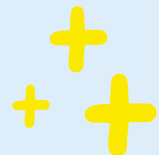
WHAT TO SAY “In your opinion, is self-care selfish?”

When can it become selfish to take care of yourself? Give examples.”

Complete their answers with a metaphor that is often used in mindfulness:

“The heart has to pump blood for itself first before it can pump blood to other parts of the body.

So it’s important to take care of yourself so that you’re able to take care of others.”



PREPARATION STAGE:
(15–20 minutes)

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE:
(10–20 minutes)

EXIT TICKET TASK: 5 minutes
+ 30 minutes of homework

OBJECTIVE: Identify what we like to do to take care of ourselves

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE: (10–20 minutes)



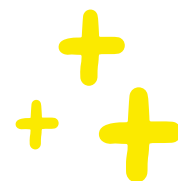
STEP 1: Encourage your students to make a list of things that they like to do to take care of themselves.

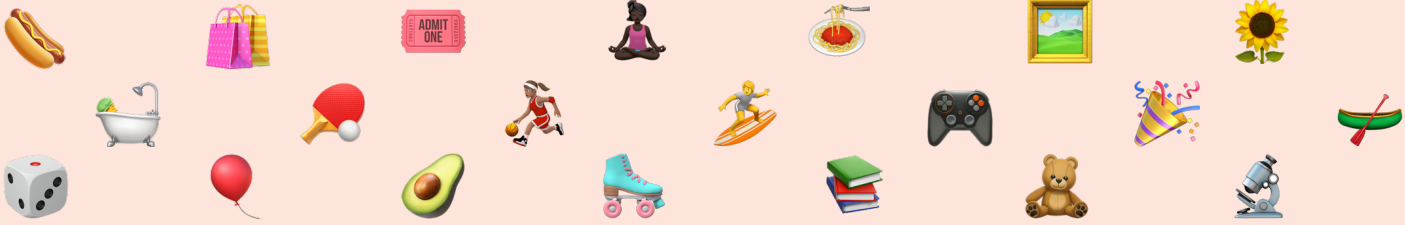
WHAT TO DO Distribute the **“Your Assignments to Do at Home”** student worksheet to all students.

WHAT TO SAY “Now, I’m going to ask you to reflect on **things you like to do to take care of yourselves in your day-to-day lives**. You can note two to four of them on your sheet, thinking of simple activities you could try at home in less than 15 minutes. I’ll give you some examples.”


WHAT TO DO **By way of example**, you can share with them what you do to take care of yourself (listening to music, reading, playing sports, doing nothing, cooking, going for a walk, etc.) by projecting your answers to the student worksheet on the IWB or writing them on the chalkboard.

WHAT TO SAY “For now, all you have to do is write the names of the things you like to do to take care of yourself on the sheet. You’ll complete the description of your feelings later.”





YOUR ASSIGNMENTS TO DO AT HOME

 **Here, list a few things** you would like to do every day to take care of yourself.

 **Do a few of these things** at home.

 **Write down your physical sensations and emotions** after each activity.

ACTIVITY 1

Name: _____

Description of your feelings: _____

ACTIVITY 4

Name: _____

Description of your feelings: _____

ACTIVITY 2

Name: _____

Description of your feelings: _____

ACTIVITY 3

Name: _____

Description of your feelings: _____

PREPARATION STAGE:
(15–20 minutes)

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE:
(10–20 minutes)

EXIT TICKET TASK: 5 minutes
+ 30 minutes of homework

OBJECTIVE: Identify what we like to do to take care of ourselves

STEP 2 (OPTIONAL): Mini quiz to better understand and refute misconceptions about self-compassion

WHAT TO SAY “In order to better understand self-compassion and refute misconceptions about it, let’s do a true-or-false mini quiz.”



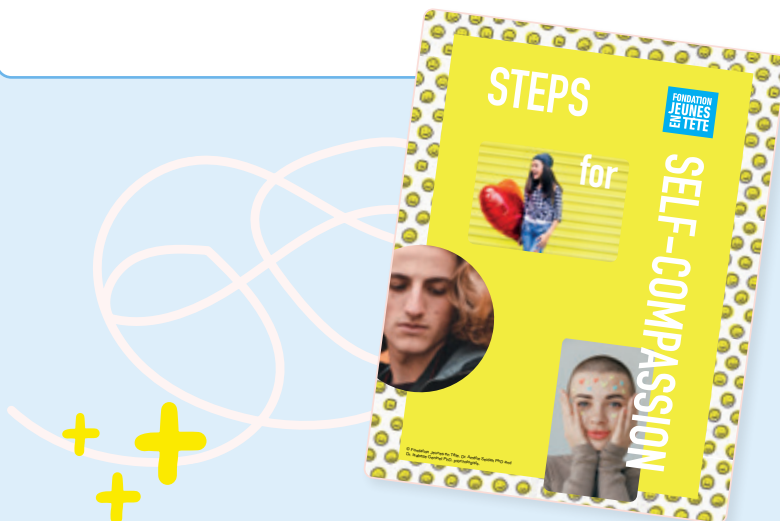
WHAT TO DO On the IWB, go to this page on the Fondation Jeunes en Tête website to project the self-compassion quiz for the class.

Read each question out loud, and then ask your students if they think the statement is true or false. Click on the majority answer, then read the answer that comes up out loud.

OPTIONAL:

WHAT TO DO Next, distribute the “Steps for Self-Compassion” info sheet to each student.

WHAT TO SAY “Developing the reflex to be gentler with yourself in difficult times doesn’t happen overnight. Here’s a practical recap to help you develop a kind inner voice for when you’re going through a difficult time.”



PREPARATION STAGE:
(15–20 minutes)

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE:
(10–20 minutes)

EXIT TICKET TASK: 5 minutes
+ 30 minutes of homework

OBJECTIVE: To get your students to track their progress

EXIT TICKET TASK:

5 minutes

+ 30 minutes of homework

(approximately three activities, 10 minutes each)



To do self-care activities at home and observe their feelings.

WHAT TO SAY

“For your ‘homework,’ I want you to give yourselves some time to take care of yourselves during the week and do **two or three of the activities** you noted on your worksheet.

Try to pay attention to the physical sensations, thoughts and emotions you experience during the activity. Take the time to write these feelings on the worksheet after each activity. Note them down quickly after you do the activity, while you remember them.”

WHAT TO DO

Give an example of feelings associated with an activity you provided as an example.

E.g. “When I listen to music, I feel like moving, dancing and singing; I feel happy.”

WHAT TO SAY

“This activity will help you to be mindful of what you makes you feel good and to pay attention to how you feel so you know how to take care of yourself.”

WHAT TO DO

You can come back to this activity next week by asking your students how they found the exercise and whether they want to share their experiences with the class.



LEARN MORE

1 QUESTION, 1 EXPERT ANSWER

video segment with Amélie Seidah, psychologist, to discover self-compassion [in French only].



DOWNLOAD OUR COMPLETE MINI-GUIDE

to help you practise mindfulness with your students.



WATCH THIS ONLINE CONFERENCE

with Catherine Malboeuf-Hurtubise, PhD, psychologist and professor [in French only].




DISCOVER TWO TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES



with mindfulness meditation in the classroom, along with a five-step tutorial to lead your first meditation session with your students.



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