brainSHIFT
COMPASSION ACTION PLAN

com·pas·sion /kəmˈpaSHən/

Compassion literally means "to suffer together." Among emotion researchers, it is defined as the feeling that arises when you are confronted with another's suffering and feel motivated to relieve that suffering. Compassion is not the same as empathy or altruism, though the concepts are related.

what is self-compassion?

Self-compassion, self-care, and self-love are often interchangeable terms used to describe the action of radical self care. In mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, fostering self-compassion is the practice of monitoring your thoughts, words, and actions towards yourself and using compassion inwards.

practicing the art of self-compassion

Does self-compassion sound a little too woo-woo? In #RomieRealTalk terms, it means learning to monitor for the negative thoughts and actions we have towards ourselves and replace them with gentle, friendlier, and positive thinking.
For instance if you are telling yourself, *"you are such a freak eating popcorn for dinner, you'll get even more fat and ugly."* Pause and replace the thought with self-compassion, *"I will allow myself the luxury of taking a break from cooking and eat comfort food tonight. I eat popcorn with joy."* Speak to yourself as you would your best friend, pet, or child.

Give Yourself Permission to Feel Anxious

Election week represents mixed emotions on your calendar

People in your circle may have opposing viewpoints

You can't stop checking the news or watching television

You feel nervous to start a conversation with a colleague or family member.

Stress-eating to feel calm, but then you feel guilty or full of shame.

Trying to meditate or do yoga is difficult with your racing thoughts

You are not sure how to answer your children regarding the news and election

You feel guilty celebrating good news in your personal life

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TAKE COMPASSION ACTION

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness means to bring yourself to present-centered awareness. Mindfulness is a path to train your brain to shift from a stress-success cycle to one of calm consciousness.

HOW CAN MINDFULNESS TRANSFORM MY ANXIETY?

A regular 20-minute mindfulness practice rewires the brain within 4-6 weeks to stop ruminating thoughts. Can you start by listening to a guided meditation or sound healing music for 20 minutes prior to bedtime?

IS ANXIETY MAKING YOU FEEL FIDGETY?

Trying to feel "calm" or "just breathe" when you are feeling anxious can be really challenging. Instead of trying to overpower your anxiety, allow your senses to be scrambled in your brain. Change what you see, hear, taste, smell, or touch. Take 3-5 minutes to try an activity that refocuses all of your senses.

Allow Your Mind Feel Back In Control

Forward fold and 3 deep breaths

11 jumping jacks or do the geek girl dance

Rake the leaves, mow the lawn, pull out the weeds

Organize spice cabinet, makeup drawer, or pantry

Turn up the oldies and sing, rap or scream

Call a friend who makes you laugh

Recite the alphabet backwards

Fold and organize your laundry

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TAKE COMPASSION ACTION

1 | PROCESS YOUR ANXIETY

When you're experiencing intense or anxious feelings, it can be hard to feel in control and work through the emotions. So, ask yourself:

- What can I learn from this?
- What is this situation telling me about myself?

Those two simple questions make the biggest difference when it comes to your mental health and resilience.

2 | DISTRACT YOURSELF WITH CALMING ACTIVITIES:

Temporary distractions can be a good thing. Distractions (especially that fill you with joy) can give you the space you need to let your emotions calm down, which is especially necessary when you feel overwhelmed with fear and anxiety. It takes about 60 to 90 seconds for intense emotions to die down.

- Create a "joy list" which is activities that bring happiness and calm to your mind and body.

- Take regular breaks to distract yourself with activities from your joy list.

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