

COMPASSIONATE LETTER TO MYSELF

- Everybody has something about themselves they don't like; something that causes them to feel shame, insecure, or not "good enough." Please think of an issue you have that tends to make you feel bad about yourself (a mistake you made, your appearance, relationship issues, etc.)
- Now think about an imaginary friend who is unconditionally wise, loving and compassionate. Imagine that this friend can see all your strengths and weaknesses, including what you don't like about yourself. This friend recognizes the limits of human nature, and is kind, accepting, and forgiving.
- Write a letter to yourself from the perspective of this imaginary friend, focusing on the perceived inadequacy you tend to judge yourself for. What would this friend say to you from the perspective of unlimited compassion? And if you think this friend would suggest possible changes you should make, how might these suggestions embody feelings of care, encouragement, and support?
- After writing the letter, put it down for a little while. Then come back to it and read it again, really letting the words sink in. Feel the compassion as it pours into you, soothing and comforting you. Love, connection and acceptance are your birthright. To claim them you need only look within yourself.

If you prefer, you can also:

- Write a letter *as if you were talking to a dearly loved friend* who was struggling with the same concern that you are. What words of compassion and support would you offer? Then go back and read the letter, applying the words to yourself.
- Write to yourself *from the perspective of a friend* who cares deeply about you, savor the feeling, put the letter down, and then read it to yourself later on.