

The Best Friend Test ^[1]

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Test out your self-criticism by adopting a different, more productive point of view, when you engage in self-talk.

When you make a mistake, have a setback, or feel like you have failed at something important, you may find yourself criticizing and putting yourself down. When this happens, recognize what is happening and take a step back.

What Would You Say?

Imagine your best friend was in a similar situation and had made the same mistake. What would you say to them? Would you be harsh or critical? Perhaps you would choose to be supportive and encouraging instead, going so far as to tell them this is not the end of the world.

You will likely treat your friend with encouragement, love and compassion, rather than criticize them.

You may tell them not to worry, that it's human nature to make mistakes and this wasn't such a big one. You may reassure them that they are a good person at heart and no one is going to judge them by this single incident.

Be Compassionate with Yourself

Can you see where you are going wrong now? Can you talk to yourself in the same way? Use this test to be more kind and compassionate to yourself.

Over time, this will become an instant activity, almost and instinct, and you will be able to look at the bigger picture, rather than focus on isolated incidents and indulge in self-judgment.

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