

# Compassionate Connection Therapy

## Welcome to Your Reflection Space

This worksheet was created with care—for anyone moving through something tender, uncertain, or important. Whether you're processing pain, seeking clarity, rebuilding trust, or simply needing space to breathe, you're welcome here.

These worksheets offer gentle tools for reflection—resources that meet you where you are, without pressure or expectation. They're designed to support emotional exploration at your own pace, in your own way.

The mission is simple: To make emotional support more available in a time when many are struggling. To offer free, compassionate resources with no hidden agenda. To help you reconnect with your own voice, in ways that feel safe and steady.

If this mission resonates, feel free to share it. Post it, print it, pass it along. Your share might be someone's first moment of feeling understood.

These worksheets are offered with care, for personal use only. They're here to support your healing—not to rush it. You don't need to finish every section. You don't need to have all the answers. Take what supports you. Leave what doesn't. Your pace, your process, your wellbeing—these come first.

You're not alone. Even if we've never met, this resource is offered with quiet solidarity—holding space, cheering you on, and believing in your capacity to heal.

## A Gentle Note on Safety

These worksheets are designed for personal reflection. They are not a substitute for therapy or professional treatment.

If you're in therapy, consider sharing this resource with your therapist before exploring. If you're not in therapy, please reflect in a space that feels emotionally and physically safe.

You might choose to explore alongside someone you trust—a friend, partner, or support person. If that isn't available right now, this worksheet can still be a quiet companion. Go gently. In your own time. In your own way.

## Where to Find the Worksheets

If this resource feels meaningful, please share it. Healing is communal—and your share might be someone's first step toward feeling less alone.

These worksheets are shared freely across platforms:

Website: <https://CompassionateConnectionTherapy.co.uk>

Facebook: Compassionate Connection Therapy

TikTok: @rosa.tomassi.bella

Instagram: @connectiontherapyrhy1

Let's make emotional support tools free, gentle, and accessible—together.

# Compassionate Connection Therapy

## A Note on Contact

These worksheets are shared freely, but individual support cannot be offered through messages or comments. If you need support, please speak with a therapist or someone you trust. These tools are here to guide gentle exploration—not to replace professional care. Thank you for understanding, and for sharing with kindness.

## If You're in Crisis

These worksheets are not for emergencies. If you feel overwhelmed or unsafe, please reach out:

- Samaritans — 116 123 (free, 24/7)
- NHS 111 — urgent mental health advice
- 999 — if you or someone else is at immediate risk

You deserve support, safety, and care.

## Copyright and Usage

*This worksheet and its contents are the intellectual property of Rosa Tomassi-Bella, Compassionate Connection Therapy.*

*It is shared freely for personal use only under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives*

*4.0 International License: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>*

*You are welcome to share this resource with others for support, as long as:*

- *You credit Rosa Tomassi-Bella and Compassionate Connection Therapy*
- *You do not alter the content in any way*
- *You do not use it for commercial purposes or financial gain*

*Protected under UK copyright law—no formal registration required.*

### 💡 Resilience Reflection and Growth Worksheet

#### 🌟 Introduction

Resilience is not about being unshakable or pretending everything is fine. It is about finding ways to keep showing up, even when life feels heavy, confusing, or uncertain. Resilience is the quiet strength that helps you take a breath when things feel overwhelming, rest when you are tired, or try again after setbacks.

This guide is here to gently support you in noticing the resilience you already carry, and to explore practices that may help you feel steadier, kinder toward yourself, and more supported. It is not about forcing change or expecting perfection. Instead, it offers invitations — gentle reflections, small steps, and compassionate reminders — that you can take at your own pace.

You may discover that resilience looks different for you at different times. Sometimes it is about asking for help, sometimes it is about saying no, and sometimes it is simply about continuing, even when it feels difficult. Whatever resilience looks like for you, this guide honours it.

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

### ✿ How to Use

This guide is designed to be flexible and gentle. You do not need to complete everything at once, and there is no “right” way to use it. Think of it as a companion you can return to whenever you want to reflect, pause, or reconnect with yourself.

- **Move gently** — Even one reflection is enough. You do not need to answer every question or do every practice. Choose what feels manageable.
- **Follow what feels right** — Each section offers *open questions* and *sentence starters*.
  - *Open questions* invite deeper reflection. They give you space to explore your thoughts and feelings more fully.
  - *Sentence starters* are there for when open questions feel overwhelming or too broad. They give you a gentler way in, helping you begin without pressure.
- **Try small practices** — Each section includes a *tiny practice*. These are simple, compassionate invitations — not requirements. Even the smallest step, like writing down one word or taking one breath, is enough.
- **Notice the science** — Each section includes a *sciency bit*. These are gentle reminders that resilience is natural and human, supported by how your brain and body work. They are here to reassure you that what you feel is valid and that small steps make a difference.
- **Make it yours** — You can engage with this guide in whatever way feels supportive. You might write, draw, speak aloud, or simply reflect quietly in your mind. There is no single way to do this.
- **Return as needed** — This guide is not something to “finish.” It is something to revisit whenever you want. Each time you return, you may notice new insights or find comfort in familiar reminders.

# Compassionate Connection Therapy

## Section 1: Honouring Your Strengths

### Guide

Resilience often looks quiet. It is not always about big achievements or dramatic moments — sometimes it is simply about continuing, even when things feel heavy. It is the strength that carried you through times that tested your heart, confidence, or energy.

Honouring your strengths means pausing to notice the ways you have already shown courage, patience, or endurance. These may be moments others never saw, or things that felt small at the time. Yet they mattered. They shaped you. They stretched you. And you are still here.

This reflection is not about comparing yourself to others or proving anything. It is about gently recognising that you have already survived challenges, and that survival itself is a form of strength.

### Open Questions

These questions invite gentle exploration. You don't need to answer all of them — choose the ones that feel most supportive.

- What challenges have I lived through, whether large or small?
- What helped me get through them — people, thoughts, actions, faith, distractions, or rest?
- What strengths did I use — courage, patience, creativity, endurance, honesty, or something else?

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- What did I learn about myself, even if it was painful?
- How do I want to honour the resilience I've already shown?
- Are there quiet, everyday strengths I sometimes overlook?
- How do I remind myself that surviving difficult days is itself a form of resilience?

### Sentence Starters

If open questions feel too broad, these gentle prompts can help you begin:

- I got through...
- What helped me was...

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- A strength I used was...
- I learned that I...
- I honour my resilience by...
- One quiet strength I notice in myself is...
- I remind myself that surviving means...

### **Tiny Practice**

Write down one moment you survived that felt difficult. It could be something recent or something from years ago. Name one strength you used to get through it — even if it was simply “I kept breathing” or “I asked for help.”

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

If writing feels too much, you might instead:

- Speak it aloud to yourself.
- Draw a symbol or image that represents your strength.
- Place a hand on your chest and gently acknowledge: *“I have carried myself through.”*

### Sciency Bit

Remembering past resilience activates the **hippocampus**, the part of the brain that processes memory. This strengthens pathways that remind you of your ability to cope. When you recall moments of survival, your brain reinforces the message: *“I have done this before, and I can keep going.”*

### Extra Guidance

- Strength does not have to look like confidence or bravery. It can look like resting, asking for help, crying, or simply continuing.
- You may notice that some strengths feel invisible — like patience, endurance, or quiet persistence. These are just as valid as visible achievements.
- Honouring your strengths is not about denying pain. It is about recognising that you carried yourself through it, even when it felt impossible.
- If reflection feels overwhelming, choose one small example. Even the tiniest act of resilience — like getting out of bed on a hard day — matters.
- You are allowed to celebrate yourself gently, without needing anyone else’s approval.

### Section 2: Finding Your Steady Ground

### Guide

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

Resilience doesn't mean being unshakable or unaffected. It means having ways to steady yourself when life feels shaky, uncertain, or overwhelming. Finding your steady ground is about noticing the people, places, practices, and reminders that help you feel more like yourself.

Steadiness can look different for everyone. For some, it might be a quiet moment alone; for others, it might be connection with a trusted friend. It could be a routine that brings structure, a practice that calms the body, or a space that feels safe. There is no “right” way to ground yourself — only what feels supportive to you.

This reflection is not about fixing or forcing calm. It is about gently noticing what helps you return to steadiness, even if only for a moment.

### Open Questions

These questions invite gentle exploration. Choose the ones that feel most helpful right now.

- Who helps me feel safe, understood, or accepted?
- What routines or places help me feel grounded?
- What practices help me feel calm or connected?
- What helps me feel more like myself, even in small ways?

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- How do I return to steadiness when I feel overwhelmed?
- Are there everyday activities — like walking, listening to music, or cooking — that bring me comfort?
- What reminders help me know I am safe in this moment?

### Sentence Starters

If open questions feel too broad, these gentle prompts can help you begin:

- I feel steadier when...
- A practice that helps me is...
- I return to myself by...

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- One thing that grounds me is...
- I feel supported when...
- A place that helps me feel calm is...
- I notice steadiness when...

### Tiny Practice

List three things that help you feel steadier. They could be people, places, practices, or reminders. Keep this list as a personal toolkit to return to when life feels overwhelming.

If writing feels too much, you might instead:

- Draw symbols or images that represent steadiness.
- Speak your list aloud to yourself.
- Place a hand on your chest or stomach and gently say: "*I can return to steadiness.*"

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

### Sciency Bit

Grounding practices activate the **parasympathetic nervous system**, which helps the body shift out of “fight or flight” mode. This calms the heart rate, lowers stress hormones like cortisol, and supports feelings of safety. Even small grounding actions — like deep breathing, noticing your surroundings, or connecting with someone you trust — can help your nervous system settle.

### Extra Guidance

- Steadiness does not mean feeling calm all the time. It means having ways to return to yourself when things feel shaky.
- What steadies you may change depending on your energy, circumstances, or stage of life. That is natural.
- Small practices matter. Even pausing for one deep breath or stepping outside for a moment can help.
- You are allowed to choose what steadiness looks like for you. It might be quiet, playful, creative, or connected.
- If steadiness feels far away, begin with the smallest step you can — noticing your breath, naming one thing you see, or reaching out to someone you trust.

### Section 3: Naming the Barriers

### Guide

It is okay to name what gets in the way. Barriers are not signs of weakness or failure — they are simply the challenges, thoughts, or circumstances that make resilience feel harder. Noticing them is an act of awareness, and awareness itself is a powerful step toward care.

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

Barriers can take many forms. Sometimes they are internal, like self-doubt or perfectionism. Sometimes they are external, like overwhelming responsibilities, difficult relationships, or lack of rest. They may shift over time, appearing stronger in some seasons and softer in others.

Naming barriers is not about fixing them immediately. It is about gently acknowledging what feels heavy, so you can begin to explore how to support yourself alongside them.

### Open Questions

These questions invite gentle reflection. You don't need to answer them all — choose the ones that feel most supportive.

- What thoughts or beliefs make resilience harder for me?
- What situations or environments drain my energy?
- What fears or doubts feel strongest right now?
- How do I usually respond when I feel overwhelmed?

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- What gentle support might help me with these barriers?
- Are there patterns I notice in the barriers that show up for me?
- How do I want to remind myself that noticing barriers is not failure, but awareness?

### Sentence Starters

If open questions feel too broad, these gentle prompts can help you begin:

- Resilience feels harder when...
- A thought that drains me is...
- I feel overwhelmed when...

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- One barrier I notice is...
- I can support myself by...
- A situation that challenges me is...
- I remind myself that noticing this barrier means...

### Tiny Practice

Write down one barrier to resilience you notice right now. Then write one gentle way you might support yourself alongside it.

Examples:

- *Barrier:* “I feel like I have to be perfect.” *Support:* “I will remind myself that mistakes are part of learning.”
- *Barrier:* “I feel drained when I take on too much.” *Support:* “I will pause before saying yes and allow myself rest.”
- *Barrier:* “I get stuck in self-criticism.” *Support:* “I will practice speaking one kind phrase to myself.”

If writing feels too much, you might instead:

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- Speak the barrier aloud and then name one supportive action.
- Draw a symbol that represents the barrier, and another symbol that represents support.
- Place a hand on your chest and gently say: *“I notice this barrier, and I can offer myself care.”*

### Sciency Bit

Naming barriers reduces activity in the **amygdala**, the brain's fear centre, which often triggers stress responses. At the same time, it increases regulation in the **prefrontal cortex**, the part of the brain that supports clarity, problem-solving, and calm decision-making. This means that simply noticing and naming what feels difficult can help your nervous system settle, making space for gentler choices.

### Extra Guidance

- Barriers are not permanent. They may shift, soften, or change over time.
- You are allowed to feel tired, overwhelmed, or uncertain. Naming these feelings is a way of honouring your experience.
- Even small supports matter. A single breath, a pause, or reaching out to someone you trust can help.
- You do not need to face barriers alone. Support can come from within (self-compassion, grounding) or from outside (friends, routines, professional care).
- Remember: noticing barriers is not about blame. It is about awareness, and awareness is the first step toward resilience.

### Section 4: Choosing Gentle Steps

### Guide

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

Resilience does not have to be dramatic or loud. It often grows through small, quiet choices — the gentle steps that remind you progress can be soft, steady, and personal. These steps might look like pausing for rest, speaking kindly to yourself, or trying again after a setback.

Gentle steps are not about achieving perfection or proving strength. They are about creating moments of care that help you feel grounded and remind you that you are still moving forward, even if the progress feels invisible to others.

Sometimes the smallest actions — taking a breath, writing down one thought, or reaching out to someone you trust — can be powerful reminders that resilience is present.

### Open Questions

These questions invite reflection on the small, supportive actions that feel possible for you.

- What is one small thing I could try this week to care for myself?
- How might I respond differently to a thought or feeling?
- What would feel like progress, even if no one else noticed?
- How do I want to remind myself that small steps matter?

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- What helps me keep trying, even when it feels hard?
- Are there gentle actions I've taken before that I could return to now?
- How do I want to celebrate small progress without pressure?



### Sentence Starters

If open questions feel too broad, these gentle prompts can help you begin:

- A gentle step I can take is...

- Progress feels like...

- I remind myself that...

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- One way I can care for myself is...

- Trying again looks like...

- A small act that supports me is...

- I notice progress when...

### Tiny Practice

Choose one small step for this week. It could be:

- Resting for a few minutes without guilt.
- Journaling one thought or feeling.
- Reaching out to someone you trust, even just to say hello.
- Taking a short walk or noticing your surroundings.
- Speaking one kind phrase to yourself each day.

Keep this step simple and doable. Remind yourself: “*Small steps matter. They are enough.*”

If writing feels too much, you might instead:

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- Draw a symbol that represents your gentle step.
- Speak it aloud to yourself.
- Place a hand on your chest and softly say: *“I am taking a step, and that is enough.”*

### Sciency Bit

Small steps strengthen **neuroplasticity**, the brain’s ability to form new pathways. Each gentle action — no matter how small — helps your brain learn new patterns of care and resilience. Over time, these repeated steps make it easier to return to steadiness, reminding your nervous system that progress can be soft, gradual, and sustainable.

### Extra Guidance

- Gentle steps are valid, even if they feel small. Resting, pausing, or asking for help are all forms of progress.
- Progress does not need to be visible to others. It is enough that it feels supportive to you.
- If a step feels too big, break it down into something smaller. Even the tiniest action counts.
- You are allowed to change your mind. A step that feels supportive today may look different tomorrow.
- Remind yourself: resilience is not about speed or size. It is about presence, care, and the willingness to keep trying.

### Section 5: Practicing Self-Compassion

### Guide

Resilience grows when paired with self-compassion. Meeting yourself with kindness makes it easier to keep going, especially when life feels heavy or uncertain. Self-compassion is not

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

about ignoring challenges or pretending everything is fine — it is about offering yourself the same care and understanding you might give to someone you love.

Self-compassion can look like softening your inner voice, allowing yourself rest, or reminding yourself that your needs are valid. It can be as simple as saying, *“I am doing my best,”* or *“It’s okay to feel this way.”* These small acts of gentleness help reduce the weight of self-criticism and create space for healing.

### Open Questions

These questions invite reflection on how kindness toward yourself shows up in your life.

- How do I speak to myself when I’m struggling?
- What words of kindness feel supportive to me?
- How do I remind myself that my needs are valid?
- What helps me soften self-criticism when it feels strong?
- How might I practice gentleness toward myself today?

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- What does self-compassion look like in my daily life?
- How do I want to honour my humanity when things feel difficult?



### Sentence Starters

If open questions feel too broad, these gentle prompts can help you begin:

- I offer myself kindness by...
- A gentle reminder I need is...
- I feel supported when I tell myself...
- Self-compassion helps me...

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- I honour my needs by...
- One way I soften self-criticism is...
- I remind myself that...

### Tiny Practice

Write down one kind phrase you can say to yourself when things feel hard. Keep it somewhere visible — on a note by your bed, in your journal, or on your phone.

Examples:

- *“I am allowed to rest.”*
- *“I am doing the best I can.”*
- *“My feelings are valid.”*
- *“I am worthy of care.”*
- *“It’s okay to move slowly.”*

If writing feels too much, you might instead:

- Speak the phrase aloud to yourself.
- Whisper it gently while placing a hand on your chest.
- Repeat it silently as you breathe.

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

### Sciency Bit

Self-compassion reduces activity in the **default mode network**; the part of the brain linked to rumination and self-criticism. At the same time, it increases activation in areas of the brain associated with **emotional regulation** and soothing, such as the anterior cingulate cortex. This helps calm repetitive negative thoughts and supports a more balanced emotional state.

### Extra Guidance

- Self-compassion is not indulgence or weakness. It is a form of strength that helps you keep going.
- Kindness toward yourself may feel unfamiliar at first. That is okay — it is something you can practice gently, one phrase or one breath at a time.
- You are allowed to treat yourself with the same care you offer others.
- Self-compassion can be practical: resting, asking for help, or setting boundaries are all acts of kindness.
- Remember: you do not need to earn compassion. You are worthy of it simply because you are human.

### Section 6: Building Your Support Toolkit

### Guide

Resilience is supported by both inner and outer resources. These supports are the anchors that help you steady yourself when life feels heavy. Some supports live within you — like self-kindness, grounding practices, or personal routines. Others come from outside — like trusted people, safe spaces, or professional guidance.

Naming your supports helps you remember where to turn when you feel overwhelmed. It is not about having everything figured out or needing to be strong all the time. It is about gently

## **Compassionate Connection Therapy**

noticing what helps you feel cared for, and reminding yourself that you are allowed to lean on those supports.

Your toolkit can be flexible. It may change depending on your circumstances, energy, or stage of life. What matters most is that it feels supportive to you.

### **Open Questions**

These questions invite reflection on the supports that help you feel safe, steady, and cared for.

- What supports feel most important to me right now?
- How do I usually meet my needs internally (through my own actions or practices)?
- How do I usually meet my needs externally (through connection, care, or resources)?
- What happens when my needs feel unmet?
- How might I communicate my needs with gentleness?

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- Are there supports I sometimes overlook that I want to honour more?
- How do I want to remind myself that asking for support is valid and human?



### Sentence Starters

If open questions feel too broad, these gentle prompts can help you begin:

- A support I rely on is...
- I meet this need internally by...
- I meet this need externally by...
- When my needs are met, I...

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

- Communicating my needs helps me...
- One overlooked support I want to honour is...
- I remind myself that support is...

### Tiny Practice

Write down one need and two ways it can be met — one internal, one external.

Examples:

- *Need:* Comfort

*Internal:* Speaking kindly to myself

*External:* Asking a friend for reassurance

- *Need:* Rest

*Internal:* Allowing myself to pause without guilt

*External:* Delegating a task or asking for help

- *Need:* Connection

*Internal:* Journaling or reflecting on my feelings

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

*External:* Spending time with someone I trust

If writing feels too much, you might instead:

- Draw symbols that represent your supports.
- Speak them aloud to yourself.
- Place a hand on your chest and gently say: *“I am allowed to be supported.”*

### Sciency Bit

Meeting needs activates the **parasympathetic nervous system**, the body’s “rest and restore” system. This helps calm the heart rate, lower stress hormones, and create feelings of safety. When you meet your needs — whether internally or externally — your nervous system learns that care is possible, making resilience easier to access.

### Extra Guidance

- Supports can be simple. A glass of water, a deep breath, or a kind word all count.
- Internal supports remind you of your own strength. External supports remind you that you don’t have to carry everything alone. Both are equally valid.
- Asking for support is not weakness. It is a way of honouring your humanity.
- Your toolkit can grow and change. What supports you today may look different tomorrow, and that is natural.
- You are allowed to lean on your supports as often as you need.

### Closing

This worksheet is not about doing everything perfectly or all at once. It is about noticing what feels supportive, trying small practices, and meeting yourself with kindness along the way.

## Compassionate Connection Therapy

You may find that some reflections feel natural, while others take time or don't fit right now. That is okay. You are invited to keep what feels helpful, gently set aside what doesn't, and return to these practices whenever you need.

Resilience is not measured by speed or size. It is found in the quiet moments — the pause you take to breathe, the kindness you offer yourself, the choice to keep going even when it feels hard.

Every reflection, every pause, every act of gentleness toward yourself is progress. 

### Extra Guidance

- You are allowed to move slowly. Progress can be soft, steady, and personal.
- Returning to these practices is not starting over — it is continuing your journey with care.
- Even noticing one supportive thought or action is enough.
- Resilience is not about being unshakable. It is about finding ways to steady yourself when life feels shaky.
- You are worthy of compassion, care, and support — always.