WORKSHEET · PERSON-CENTRED PSYCHOTHERAPY

Meeting yourself with kindness

Exploring the conditions you place on your own worth, and practising acceptance

Muireann Banks · Accredited Integrative & Somatic Psychotherapist · muireannbankstherapy.ie

The psychologist Carl Rogers, who founded person-centred therapy, believed that people grow when they experience empathy, genuineness and "unconditional positive regard": being accepted as they are, without conditions (Rogers, 1961).

Growing up, many of us absorb what Rogers called "conditions of worth": the sense that we are only lovable or acceptable if we are a certain way. Perhaps if we are helpful, successful, calm, or never a bother. These conditions can stay with us long after we have forgotten where they came from, and we can become our own harshest critics.

> The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.
>
> Carl Rogers, On Becoming a Person (1961)

The conditions I learned

Complete these sentences in whatever way feels true. "I am only okay if I…"

Where do you think you learned these? Whose voice do they sound like?

What happens inside you when you don't meet one of these conditions? What do you feel, and where in your body?

How have these conditions protected you, or helped you to belong?

Offering acceptance

Kristin Neff (2011) describes self-compassion as treating ourselves with the same kindness we would offer a good friend. Imagine someone who accepts you completely, just as you are: a friend, a grandparent, a pet, or a wiser, kinder version of yourself.

If they read what you have written so far, what might they say to you?

A letter of acceptance

Write a short letter to yourself from that accepting person. Let them speak to the parts of you that you find hardest to accept.

One small way I could be kind to myself this week:

Go gently. Looking at old beliefs about ourselves can stir up painful feelings. Take breaks, and come back to it another day if you need to. This worksheet is for self-reflection and is not a substitute for therapy.

If you are struggling right now: Samaritans 116 123 (free, any time) · Pieta 1800 247 247 or text HELP to 51444 · text HELLO to 50808 · emergency 112 or 999.

Neff, K. (2011). *Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself.* William Morrow.

Rogers, C. R. (1961). *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy.* Houghton Mifflin.

© 2026 Muireann Banks · muireannbankstherapy.ie · Free to print and use for your own reflection.