

# Self-Compassion Through MI & Distance Strategy

## Personal & Group Activity Workbook

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### Module 1: Stepping Back (The Distance Strategy)

#### Activity 1.1: The Fly on the Wall

*Individual Reflection — 10 Minutes*

**Objective:** To transition from an "immersed" emotional state to a "distanced," compassionate perspective using Ethan Kross's self-distancing concept.

1. **The Setback:** Think of a recent professional or personal setback where you found yourself defaulting to severe self-criticism. Write a brief description of it below, writing from the first-person perspective (using "I", "me", "my"). *Example: I completely messed up the timing on my workshop presentation and had to rush through the most important slides. I feel like an amateur.*

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2. **The Fly on the Wall:** Now, imagine zooming out to a ceiling-level view. You are a neutral, objective observer watching this scenario unfold from the outside. Rewrite the situation using your **own name** or **third-person pronouns** (he/she/they). *Example: [Name] had a lot of material to cover and ran out of time at the end of the presentation. They felt flustered, but the audience still received the core takeaways.*

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## Activity 1.2: The Scientist Mindset

*Group/Partner Discussion — 15 Minutes*

**Objective:** To move away from the "Preacher" (defending your flaws) or "Prosecutor" (attacking yourself) mindsets, and instead adopt a "Scientist Mindset" (treating thoughts as hypotheses).

- **Step 1 (Pair Up):** Partner A shares a recurring self-doubt or piece of negative self-talk they experience (e.g., *"I'm not qualified to handle this complex case"*).
- **Step 2 (The Hypothesis):** Partner B acts as a fellow researcher. Together, treat that self-doubt not as absolute truth, but as a **hypothesis to be tested**.
- **Step 3 (Brainstorm):** Fill out the scientific testing chart below together.

| The Self-Doubt (Hypothesis)                           | Evidence Against the Hypothesis (Your Resources/History)                                   | The New Objective Conclusion                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Example: "I am completely failing my clients."</i> | <i>Clients keep returning; I received positive feedback last week; I show up prepared.</i> | <i>I am experiencing a challenging case, which is a normal part of clinical growth.</i> |
|                                                       |                                                                                            |                                                                                         |

## Module 2: Turning MI Inward (The Spirit & OARS)

### Activity 2.1: Practicing internal PACE

*Individual Reflection — 10 Minutes*

**Objective:** Translate the four pillars of Motivational Interviewing (PACE) into internal self-talk.

Reflecting on the setback you identified in Module 1, answer the following prompts to build your internal partnership:

- **C - Compassion:** What is a statement of pure self-gentleness you can offer yourself right now regarding this struggle?

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- **A - Acceptance:** How can you acknowledge your current situation without demanding immediate perfection?

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- **Self-Empowerment:** What is one internal resource or strength you already possess that can help you navigate this?

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- **Partnership:** Write a message from your "internal coach" to your "experiencing self." (Avoid "shoulds"—speak as a teammate).

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## Activity 2.2: Flipping the OARS

*Group Activity — 20 Minutes*

**Objective:** Practice converting critical, closed internal dialogue into supportive, open MI skills.

**Instructions:** In groups of 3–4, review the "Critical Internal Dialogue" statements below. Work together to rewrite them into self-directed **Open Questions, Affirmations, Reflections, or Summaries**.

1. **Critical Thought:** *"Why am I always late with my documentation? I'm so disorganized."*

- **Flipped to an Open Question:**

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- *Sample Idea: "What is a small, kind step I can take to make the documentation process easier on myself today?"*

2. **Critical Thought:** *"I should have known how to handle that client's anger. I completely blew it."*

- **Flipped to a Reflection:**

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- *Sample Idea: "You feel deeply disappointed because you care about your clients, and it's incredibly hard to sit with that intense pressure."*

3. **Critical Thought:** *"Everyone else here seems to have it all together except me."*

- **Flipped to an Affirmation:**

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- *Sample Idea: "You are showing up and doing the hard work even when you feel uncertain, which demonstrates real dedication."*

# Module 3: Tactical Tools for Everyday Resilience

## Activity 3.1: Your 3-Step Distance Pep Talk

*Individual Drill — 5 Minutes*

**Objective:** Draft a quick-deploy tactical script to quiet the amygdala during high-stress moments.

1. **The Mentor:** Identify a mentor, historical figure, or person you deeply respect:
  - *My Mentor:* \_\_\_\_\_.
2. **The Name:** Write down your own name (to activate the social brain):
  - *My Name:* \_\_\_\_\_.
3. **The OARS Tool:** Combine your mentor's perspective and your name to draft a short, distanced pep talk.

**Formula:** [Your Name], [Affirmation / Reminder of Strength], [Next Small Step].

- **My Custom Pep Talk:**

"

{ \_\_\_\_\_ }

, you have

{ \_\_\_\_\_ }

{ \_\_\_\_\_ }."

# Daily Action Plan: The Self-Efficacy Protocol

## *Tear-Out Pocket Guide*

When you encounter a setback or feel your internal "Prosecutor" taking over, pause and run this 4-step loop:

| THE SELF-EFFICACY PROTOCOL                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. OBSERVE: Zoom out. Look at the situation from a fly-on-the-wall perspective.                       |
| 2. NAME: Address yourself by name. Ask: "[Name], what are you feeling right now?"                     |
| 3. AFFIRM: Verbally target a specific strength you have. "[Name], you are resilient and you have... " |
| 4. GUIDE: Identify the next small, kind step. "The kindest thing I can do next is... "                |

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