

Quieting Your Inner Critic

A 5-Day Self-Compassion Challenge

Small daily steps to recognize, soften, and reframe your inner critic.

Introduction

Many of us carry an inner voice that is quick to criticize, doubt, or shame us — often without even realizing it. We repeat its words in our heads. We shrink ourselves. We hesitate, second-guess, or overcompensate; not because we want to but because, at some point, listening to that voice felt like protection.

This 5-day self-compassion guide was created for those quiet moments when you find yourself wondering:

“Why am I so hard on myself?”

It's an invitation to observe this voice with curiosity, soften its impact, and slowly create a kinder inner relationship.

How to Use This Guide

This is not a test or something to “do perfectly.” You don’t need to complete everything at once. Each day offers a small reflection or practice. You may follow the 5-day rhythm or move at your own pace.

If strong emotions arise, pause, breathe, and ground yourself before continuing. There is no need to silence your inner critic — awareness and compassion are already a form of change.

Day 1: Spotting the Inner Critic

Task

Notice and write down **three negative or critical thoughts** you had about yourself today. These might sound subtle or familiar.

Reflective questions

- Whose voice does this sound like?
- Is this truly my belief, or something I learned to believe?

Write here:

Critical thought 1:

Critical thought 2:

Critical thought 3:

Day 2: Challenging the Voice

Task

Choose **one critical thought** from yesterday.

Write down **two alternative responses**; not forced positivity, but kinder, more realistic perspectives.

Reflective questions

- What evidence do I have that this thought is 100% true?
- What would I say to a friend who felt this way?

Write here:

Critical thought:

Kinder response 1:

Kinder response 2:

Day 3: The Self-Compassion Pause

Task

When harsh thoughts arise today, pause. Place one hand over your heart and silently say:

“It’s okay to feel this way. I’m human.”

You don’t need to make the feeling disappear, just allow it to be seen.

Reflective questions

- What feeling might be hiding underneath the critical thought?
(Fear, shame, sadness, disappointment?)

- What do I need to hear right now to feel safer or understood?

Reflect here:

Day 4: Celebrating Small Wins

Task

Write down **three small things** you did well today. Let yourself notice them, even if they feel “not enough.”

Reflective questions

- Why is it difficult for me to acknowledge my progress?
- Who taught me that I must always do more to be “enough”?

Write here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Day 5: Reframing Mistakes as Learning

Task

Think of a mistake or situation you keep revisiting. Write what it taught you, or how it contributed to your growth, even in subtle ways.

Reflective questions

- Am I punishing myself to avoid future pain, or to meet someone else’s expectations?
- What might change in my life if I saw mistakes as teachers rather than failures?

Write here:

Closing Reflection

*“Your inner critic is not your enemy.
It is an outdated survival voice, and you are allowed to outgrow it.”*

Support & Next Steps

I Am Here for You!

Thank you for taking this step toward emotional clarity and self-worth.

If this guide brought insight, tenderness, or new questions, you don't have to hold them alone. **You're welcome to share your reflections with me at:**

👉 andressamartinspsychotherapy@gmail.com

If this reflection opened something deeper, you may wish to explore **working with me through a one-on-one session or ongoing support**. Learn more or book a session here:

👉 [Services - Andressa Martins Psychotherapy](#)

If you'd like to continue this journey, I invite you to **visit my blog**, where I share deeper reflections, psychological insights, and practical perspectives on self-worth, emotional healing, and personal growth:

👉 [Blog - Andressa Martins Psychotherapy](#)

With warmth,
Andressa