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Being Compassionate with Yourself

Be kind to yourself. When you have a problem, be sympathetic instead of critical. If you eat compulsively, tell yourself, “It’s okay,” and speak to yourself with compassionate words. People who have eating issues are often much better at feeling compassion for others, than for themselves. Think about how forgiving you are of other people. Use this as a guide to what you can say to yourself when you have eaten compulsively.

Remember that compassion helps you to think deeply about what caused the problem. Beating yourself up with criticism only makes you feel worse about yourself, and inhibits your ability to think the issue through. Remember that the yelling at yourself after a binge is part of the symptom as well...it continues to keep you away from the underlying feelings. Self-criticism will only prompt another cycle of compulsive eating. When you start to get down on yourself, counter the self-criticism with thoughts and statements such as these:

- It’s okay. Next time it will be easier.
- I really do try hard, but I had a really tough day.
- It’s not my fault. Let’s try again.
- I understand. I know this is hard.
- Everyone makes mistakes.
- I am in pain about this, but it will pass.
- Being mindful about my food is a process; it takes time.
- I want what’s best for me.
- I love myself—no matter what happens, or what I do.

Think about a recent time when you berated yourself, and what some compassionate responses might have been. This will help prepare you for the next time your critical voice appears.