

Cultivating Work-Life Balance through Self-Compassion in College

Marginalized students often face stress from unrealistic standards that disregard their circumstances, making it hard to balance responsibilities in restrictive environments.

Why is work-life balance important?

Intentionally practicing self-compassion fosters **balance**, **resilience**, and **adaptability**—strengthening well-being and enabling more fulfilling, sustainable career growth.

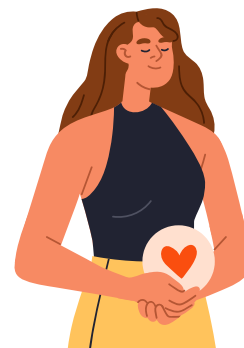
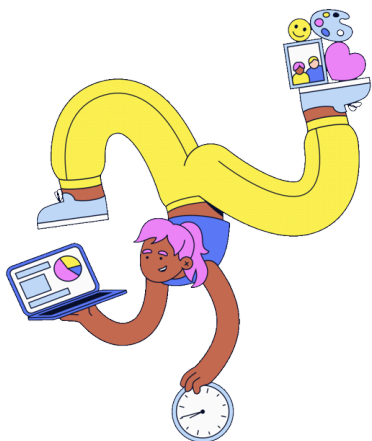
How will this resource help?

It's goal is to help you embrace kindness, recognize shared struggles, and acknowledge thoughts without judgment. Through reflective, **values-driven practice**, you can reclaim balance, **affirm your worth**, and reconnect with your inner strength.



Defining Work-Life Balance & Self-Compassion

Work-life balance means managing responsibilities in a way that aligns with your values. Self-compassion involves treating yourself with kindness, mindfulness, and recognizing shared humanity during challenges.



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Activity: Self-reflection

What signs help you recognize when you're in or out of balance?

What challenges do you face on campus that impact your ability to stay balanced?



How does your sense of balance shift throughout the school year, and what challenges contribute to those changes?

How might self-compassion reshape your experience of balance?

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Activity: Noticing & Interrupting Patterns

Check in with yourself.

Rate each area from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

If you score 3 or below, give that area extra care.



*** TIP:** Add this check-in to your calendar every other week. Small, consistent actions restore balance.

A. Physical Well-being

- I get sufficient sleep most nights
- I make time for regular physical activity
- I eat regular, nutritious meals

D. Emotional Well-being

- I can identify and express my feelings
- I practice self-compassion when facing challenges
- I have strategies to manage stress

B. Social Connection

- I maintain meaningful connections with friends/family
- I participate in activities I enjoy
- I feel part of a supportive community

E. Self-compassion

- I soothe and comfort myself with kindness when things feel overwhelming, instead of criticizing myself.
- I remind myself that everyone struggles sometimes instead of thinking I'm alone in my pain.
- I allow myself to fully feel and notice what's happening in the moment instead of avoiding my emotions.

C. Academic/Work Performance

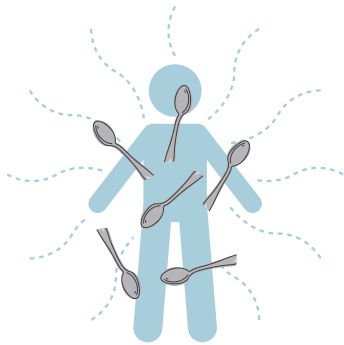
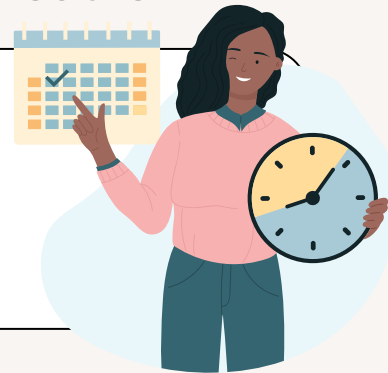
- I meet most deadlines without last-minute rushing
- I can focus when needed on tasks
- I feel satisfied with the quality of my work



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Integrating Self-compassion into Your Schedule

Prioritizing self-compassion helps restore balance and deepen fulfillment in work and life.



Count Your Spoons

Each day, assess your energy (“spoons”) and adjust your tasks and self-care accordingly. Rest more when drained, do more when energized.



Advocate for Flexibility

If health or well-being make deadlines unrealistic, ask for flexibility – it's an act of self-compassion.



Offer Yourself Self-Compassion

When facing difficult emotions, write a kind message to yourself – just as you would to a friend.

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References

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