

HANDOUT 12.8: GRATITUDE LETTER TO THE SELF

Let's start by closing our eyes or looking down and feel how we sit in our chair right now. Settle into your compassion posture ...Now slow your breathing, and with each slower and deeper breath mentally repeat with a friendly tone of voice the words thank you [your name].....thank you ...thank you [your name] let your mind space out in all directions and be curious about what emerges when you mentally repeat this word... perhaps you get images of situations in which you have committed yourself to doing something that has had a positive effect in your life, or a time when you have had the courage to undertake something new (like this compassionate mind training).

Close your eyes, settle again into your compassion posture connect to the version of you that in spite of the flaws, the difficulties, the mistakes, had the courage to stand up to adversity....made choices that led you to improve some aspects of your life. Speak to that part of you that, in spite of everything, brought you here.

Now, write a letter to yourself:

- Write as if you were speaking directly to yourself (Dear....)
- Don't worry about grammar and vocabulary
- Write why you are writing this letter, what your intention is
- Accurately describe what you have done, why you are grateful to yourself and how your behavior, your choices, have influenced your life in a positive way. Try to be as concrete as possible.
- Describe what you are doing right now in your life that is a result of your efforts and how you are sorry that you've never stopped before to recognize these efforts
- If you want, finish with a wish



Optional practice

If you wish, you can read the letter to yourself using a mirror – remaining curious and open to any resistances that might arise (see module 9 for mirror practices).

Or, you can use a chair to represent the part of you that you wish to send these words of gratitude to and read the letter to the empty chair.