On Your Own Side

Who this is for

Adults who blame themselves harshly after a mistake, criticism or a difficult moment. Use one everyday event that feels manageable.

What this helps with

Describe the event, sort out your share of responsibility, and choose one useful action without punishing yourself.

Why this can help

Calling yourself useless can make it harder to fix a problem. You can take a mistake seriously while still meeting your basic needs.

How to use it

Read the example. Prepare one event on page 2. Try a suitable action, then review briefly on page 3. Type into a compatible PDF reader, or print and write.

Dan's example (fictional)

Dan missed a noon deadline for his club newsletter. He thought: I am useless. He decided to skip lunch until the draft was perfect. This delayed his update and left him tired.

A fairer next step

Dan owned the missed deadline. He sent: I missed noon. I can send the draft by three. Does that still work? He ate lunch, sent the needed draft and later set a reminder.

What he learned

His club could still use the draft. This outcome is not guaranteed. The useful change was taking action without judging his whole character or withholding food.

Choose the right support

This sheet addresses harsh self-talk, not self-harm. If you might hurt yourself, have harmed yourself or cannot stay safe, seek urgent professional help. In immediate danger use emergency services or A&E. Do not use this task to explain away someone else's harm.

Prepare a fairer next step

Being fair does not mean saying everything is fine. It means describing what happened and choosing a response that fits.

1. Name the event and harsh words

What happened? What did I say to myself? What did I do next?

2. Sort out responsibility

What is mine to own? What belongs to others or to the situation? Is anything unsafe?

3. Choose fair words and one action

A specific, believable sentence. Then: repair, ask, set a limit, rest or seek support?

4. Keep basic needs and plan a review

Food, rest and support stay. When will I review briefly? What would make me stop?

Try, then look back briefly

Save a copy and reopen it to check typed answers. Keep notes private. You do not need to feel positive before taking a fair step.

What happened?

What did I do? What was the actual result? Or why was this task unsuitable?

What did I learn?

Did I act on the real issue? Did this help, or lead to more blame and checking?

What next?

Keep, change or stop the task? Is repair, a boundary or professional support needed?

Reflection: Did I own my part without taking all the blame? Did I meet basic needs? Optional next step: try one small change only if it seems useful.

Support: stop or shorten the review if it leads to more distress or repeated checking. Ask an appropriate professional for help. This is educational support, not assessment or treatment.

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