

Compassion with Strength for Small Groups and Organizations:

Practical Workshops to Increase Individual and Collective Capacity and Wellbeing

How Does Compassion Fit into Organizational Life?

Compassion is our response to suffering. All of us have a natural *capacity* for compassion. However, things get in the way of us expressing it, often when it is most needed. Our everyday stress, busyness, sense of overwhelm, and judgments, opinions, and strong emotions can make it difficult for us to fully express our compassion.

When we can't access our compassion, our emotional health and relationships suffer, and we often feel we are not living in alignment with our deepest values. That can make us feel unhappy, less engaged, productive, and creative, and even cause us to shut down.

When this happens over an extended period of time, we may become overly negative, overwhelmed, burned out, or depressed. This happens to social activists, medical workers, therapists, teachers, first responders, and many more professionals. This is particularly true for individuals working in organizations who serve highly stressed, under-served clients who are suffering.

Compassion with Strength means that we are training ourselves to have an open heart and a strong spine. We learn to deliver difficult messages with kindness, set limits when needed, say no, and stand up against harmful or unacceptable behaviors.

Why Cultivate Compassion?

Broadening, deepening, and increasing our capacity to express *compassion* increases the frequency and the degree to which we uplift others. It helps us express kindness, be more honest and truthful, work through conflict more productively, and become more skillful with our own emotions and other people's emotions. Our relationships improve as our ability to care, connect, and express kindness and compassion grow.

Broadening, deepening, and increasing our capacity for *self-compassion* increases our ability to identify and care for our own suffering (including burn-out) and move toward genuine happiness and wellbeing. Cultivating compassion for ourselves is equally important as cultivating compassion for others. We must have both compassion and self-compassion to balance each other out, and it can be helpful to think of them as two wings on a bird. You need both to fly.

In summary, cultivating compassion helps us identify, be with, and respond to suffering in a healthy and regenerative way. Instead of becoming overwhelmed, depleted, and burned-out in response to suffering, we can train ourselves to respond to suffering in a helpful and healing way. When we deliberately cultivate our own natural compassion, we find we can bring a compassionate response more consistently, even when we feel stressed, overwhelmed, or angry. We can also offer compassion for those outside our small in-group, extending our compassion to those who don't look like us or those who may have different religions or beliefs than we do.

What Will the Eight-Hour Workshop Participants Learn and Be Trained to Do?

Participants will learn how to:

- Develop an increased ability to focus and sustain attention
- Increase kindness and compassion for themselves and others
- Build closer connections with others in order to collaborate in constructive ways
- Develop skills that build personal resilience in response to stress
- Decrease personal distress in response to suffering and avoid burn-out

- Build closer connections with others in order to collaborate in constructive ways
- Do something to help even when you feel like you can't do anything
- Differentiate between *empathy* and *compassion*, and why that is critical
- Identify common misconceptions, fears, and barriers to compassion
- Understand the critical relationship between compassion for others and compassion for self
- See how cultivating compassion and self-compassion help us work with strong emotions

Participants will experience:

1. A guided practice to increase focus and sustained attention
2. A guided kindness practice
3. A guided compassion practice
4. A guided self-compassion practice
5. Other experiential exercises to help the participants get a felt sense of the concepts covered

Participants will leave with:

1. Downloadable audio files of guided compassion and kindness practices
2. Cheat sheets for the guided practices so the participants can do the practices themselves
3. A list of additional resources to support and expand upon this training

What Are the Differences Between the Four- and Eight-Hour Workshops?

The four-hour workshop includes the teaching, practices, and resources for cultivating compassion. It does not include the practical application section.

What Is the Cost?

Please contact me to discuss the cost. I have both non-profit and corporate rates.

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