



LIFE UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR
COMPASSION
INTEGRITY &
SECULAR ETHICS

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING
PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

By:

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Compassionate Integrity Training was first developed by Drs. Michael Karlin and Brendan Ozawa-de Silva under the auspices of the Center for Compassion, Integrity and Secular Ethics (CCISE) at Life University.

The program was expanded and refined with the help of a working group of scholars and practitioners from Life University and other organizations brought together by CCISE, and has also benefited from consultation with the participants and fellows of the Octagon conference at Life University.

The authors would like to thank especially Dr. Guy Riekeman, Dr. Gerry Clum, Dr. Corey Keyes, Dr. Tom Pruzinsky, Dr. Tom Flores and Dr. Lobsang Tenzin Negi. The writing of this manuscript was greatly aided by the work of Avital Abraham, Program and Research Coordinator at CCISE.

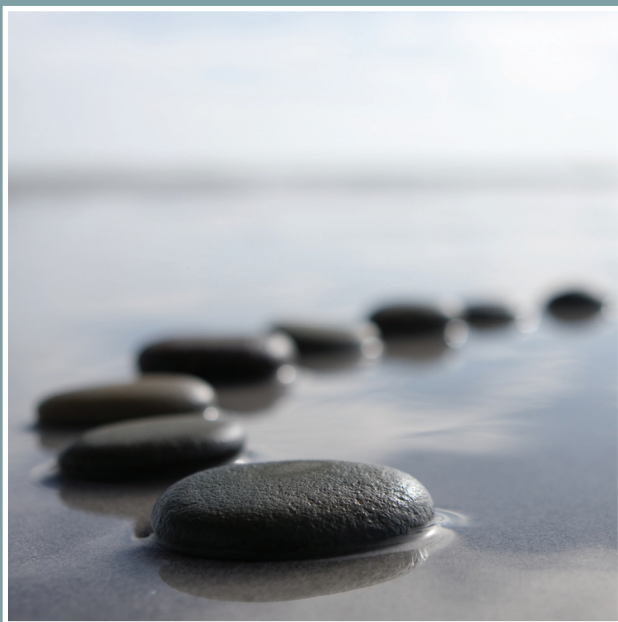


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction and Guidelines for Practice	1
Introduction.....	3
Three-In-Three Educational Model	5
Guidelines for Learning and Practicing CIT	7
Guidelines for Writing Exercises and Mindful Dialogues	9
 Foundational Concepts.....	13
The First Fundamental Shift: Our Basic Orientation Toward Kindness	14
The Second Fundamental Shift: Neuroplasticity and Neurogenesis	20
The Value of Every Life	22
Secular Ethics	23
Chapter Overview and Reflection Exercises	26
 Series I: Self-Cultivation	31
Skill 1: Calming Body and Mind	32
Skill 2: Ethical Mindfulness.....	37
Skill 3: Emotional Awareness	43
Skill 4: Self-Compassion	48
Chapter Overview and Reflection Exercises	54
 Series II: Relating to Others	77
Skill 5: Impartiality and Common Humanity	78
Skill 6: Forgiveness and Gratitude	84
Skill 7: Empathic Concern.....	92
Skill 8: Compassion	97
Chapter Overview and Reflection Exercises	102
 Series III: Engaging in Systems	129
Skill 9: Appreciating Interdependence	130
Skill 10: Engaging with Discernment	134
Chapter Overview and Reflection Exercises	142
 Further Reading	154

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



INTRODUCTION AND GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICE

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING
A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

INTRODUCTION

Compassionate Integrity Training (CIT) is a multi-part training program that cultivates basic human values as skills for the purpose of increasing individual, social and environmental flourishing. By covering a range of skills from self-regulation and self-compassion to compassion for others and engagement with complex systems, CIT focuses on and builds toward *compassionate integrity*: the ability to live one's life in accordance with one's values with a recognition of common humanity, our basic orientation to kindness, and reciprocity. Unlike some definitions of integrity that focus on mere consistency with one's values, without examining what those values are, *compassionate integrity* insists that consistency with one's values is not enough if those values promote harm to oneself, others or the world. Instead, maintaining and increasing consistency with one's values is most beneficial when they are values that promote one's own well-being as well as that of others. As to what those values are and how we understand them, this is arrived at by investigating and examining things for oneself, using common sense, common experience and science. Compassionate integrity is, therefore, not something

achieved merely as a result of wishful thinking or force of will, but rather as the result of building up knowledge, understanding and a set of concrete skills. Because compassionate integrity is what guards against actions that compromise the well-being of oneself and others, cultivating it in one's life and in one's community directly impacts individual and collective flourishing.

Although CIT deals with values and concepts like compassion and integrity, it is based on a secular approach to universal ethics based on common sense, common experience and science, rather than a particular culture or religion.¹ Secular ethics can be useful to people of any or no religious background, while not being in any way in conflict with any particular religious values. The word "secular" in no way implies a stance that is against religion; on the contrary, it implies inclusivity and a respect for all. This approach to ethics has been advocated by organizations such as the Sustainable Development Solutions Network of the United Nations through its World Happiness Report, and individuals such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights of 1948 was also based on a

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

secularized philosophy of universal values which took all human beings, all nations, all cultures and all religions and nonbelievers into account.

CIT is based on cutting-edge developments in the fields of neuroscience, psychology, trauma-informed care, peace and conflict studies, and contemplative science, and builds off of work done by Daniel Goleman (author of the book *Emotional Intelligence*) and Peter Senge, initiatives in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), and other areas.² Its development has been aided by the collaborative work of a team of experts with both academic and applied backgrounds in these areas. The development of CIT would also not have been possible if not for a range of other programs and protocols that have been trailblazers in exploring the cultivation of resilience, mindfulness, gratitude, compassion and a recognition of interdependence. These programs include Cognitively-Based Compassion Training at Emory University, Compassion Cultivation Training at Stanford University, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, the Trauma Resiliency Model and Community Resiliency Models of the Trauma Resource Institute, the Ayeka model and the Japanese practice of *Naikan*. While CIT is a complete training in itself, those who explore these other available methods and protocols will no doubt expand and deepen their understanding of the concepts and practices explored in CIT.

CIT begins with the foundational concepts that set the stage for the entire program, and then moves through a series of 10 modules, each focusing on a particular skill. These modules are organized into three series, each corresponding to a domain.

THE CIT CURRICULUM

Foundational Concepts

Series I: Self-Cultivation

1. Calming Body and Mind
2. Ethical Mindfulness
3. Emotional Awareness
4. Self-Compassion

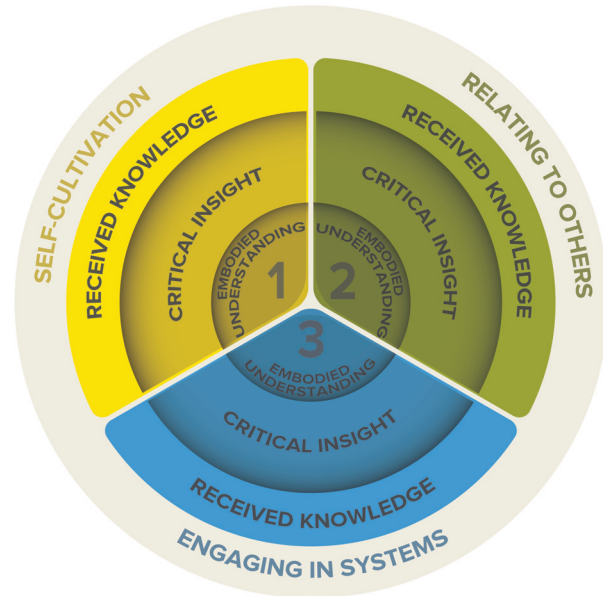
Series II: Relating to Others

5. Impartiality and Common Humanity
6. Forgiveness and Gratitude
7. Empathy
8. Compassion

Series III: Engaging in Systems

9. Appreciating Interdependence
10. Engaging with Discernment

THREE-IN-THREE EDUCATIONAL MODEL



Compassionate Integrity Training (CIT) utilizes a “three-in-three” educational model that integrates three domains of knowledge and three levels of understanding.³ The three domains begin with a focus on the self (Self-cultivation), then move to others (Relating to Others), and finally to a systems perspective, meaning the larger networks we exist in.

1. **Self-Cultivation** covers how one relates to oneself and the knowledge and skills related to the inner life of the individual. This begins with the ability to self-regulate one’s body and emotions, and then moves on to include self-compassion and inner qualities like courage, fortitude, forbearance and the identification of one’s values.
2. **Relating to Others** covers how one relates to others constructively and in a way that promotes one’s own and others’ well-being. Built on the foundation of self-regulation and restraint from harming others, this involves strengthening the prosocial skills of forgiveness, gratitude, impartiality, empathy and compassion.

3. **Engaging in Systems** covers how one engages compassionately and with integrity as a participant in complex systems. This involves recognizing our interdependence and the interdependence of systems, which can be as small as our family or local community, or as vast as the world, and developing the skills and discernment to act effectively for constructive change within those systems. Engaging with compassionate integrity and critical thinking gives us the best chance for achieving positive results that enhance the well-being and flourishing of ourselves and others.

Additionally, each module in CIT is intended to allow participants to progress through three levels of understanding. In CIT, it is important that knowledge not remain at an intellectual level; to be effective, it must lead to realizations and lasting changes in behavior. Knowledge becomes transformative when it moves from head to heart to hand. The three levels of understanding are:

1. **Received Knowledge:** This refers to learning new information and developing a clear understanding of

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

a particular topic. It is the first step in developing understanding. Received knowledge can be quite extensive, but at this level it has not yet become personal.

2. **Critical Insight:** This is when the participant, through exercises and practices, uses his or her own life experiences and reason to come to a flash of personal insight, an “aha moment”, when he or she realizes how the knowledge relates to his or her own life. At this point knowledge has started to become transformative.
3. **Embodied Understanding:** Moments of critical insight are often not powerful enough to dislodge habits. Therefore, embodied understanding refers to the deepening and further internalizing of knowledge so that it becomes second-nature and spontaneous: not just something one knows, but part of who one is. This happens through repeated practice and continued reflection on one’s critical insights. Recent discoveries in neuroplasticity and neurogenesis show that sustained practice changes brain structure and neural functioning, suggesting that long-term changes in body, brain and behavior are possible. This is where knowledge (including the knowledge and skills of self-compassion, compassion, integrity and so on) becomes transformative at its deepest level.

These three levels of knowledge apply to learning many skills, such as speaking a foreign language or playing a musical instrument. At first the student needs to learn the different parts of the instrument, how to read sheet music and so on. Ongoing study and repeated practice eventually leads to moments where things just “click” and the student gains insights that lead to sudden increases in their understanding and ability to play. For these gains to be consolidated, however, the student needs to continue to practice in the correct way over a long period of time. Eventually, over a longer period of practice and study time, this leads to a degree of fluency where the student’s ability to play a piece (or speak the language) is spontaneous and embodied.

Each CIT module includes content for received knowledge (including a written explanation, audio podcasts, and PowerPoint presentations), activities for achieving critical insight and guided reflective practices for deepening insights into embodied understanding. This manual includes the content for each of the modules, as well as the Learning Outcomes for each. The manual is designed to be used as part of a CIT course taught by a certified CIT Facilitator. However, if a facilitator is not available, it can also be used on its own, accompanied by the audio podcasts, audio guided practices and other online resources.

GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING AND PRACTICING CIT

Engaging in the work of exploring one's own values, attitudes and emotions can often be challenging. Here are a few guiding principles to make the journey easier and more productive.

1. Help Create a Safe Space – One that is Open and Trusting

If you are learning and practicing CIT with others in a group setting, strive to create a safe space where people can feel relaxed and willing to explore together. These principles may help you to achieve this:

Confidentiality Throughout the training, others might feel inclined to share insights, stories or memories with you or the entire group. It is important to remember that anything that is said or discussed in the sessions should remain confidential, unless someone specifies otherwise. Retaining this confidentiality will foster a safe and trusting space for all participants to delve deeply into the content and practice.

Trust and Openness Allow everyone to speak his or her mind and to disagree. The content in CIT is not black and white. People will challenge each other. This diversity is an important part of the self discovery that

is critical to the process. Remember to remain open and allow differences to be heard and valued.

Speak from "I" We often speak in a way that states our opinions or perspectives as facts. There is a difference between saying "Eggs are disgusting" and "I think eggs are disgusting." The latter states one's opinion but respects and allows room for other views. Speaking from "I" actually gives more value to your statements. It helps cultivate a sense of confidence and empowerment.

Don't Give Advice Even though it might seem tempting, refrain from giving advice during CIT sessions. You can suggest ways that you or someone else might approach the situation, but allow others to come up with their own ideas and solutions for their issues. Oftentimes, people simply want someone to listen. Rather than giving advice, try to actively listen by not interrupting or redirecting the conversation.

2. Progress, Not Perfection

In CIT we are aiming for gradual progress, not instant results or perfection. Changing the course of a sailboat by only a few degrees would not seem to make much

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

of a difference at first, but over time results in reaching a completely different destination at the end of one's journey. Likewise, if we make small, seemingly insignificant changes in our life, we will find that over time our life is moving in a different, more productive direction. Many of the practices in CIT can appear challenging, but there is no need to feel discouraged if one does not achieve quick results. Remind yourself that CIT is meant to be practiced consistently over time, and that lasting change often comes slowly. Measure your progress over months and years, not days and weeks, and you will feel more encouraged.

3. Take What You Like; Leave What You Don't

CIT teaches many different skills and includes a lot of information. You may find particular skills of benefit, but you may find others that you do not enjoy or that you feel are ill-suited for you. That is perfectly fine. CIT is structured so you can take whatever you find most valuable and leave whatever you don't want or like. That being said, we encourage you to think critically about the topics, try everything with an open mind and then decide for yourself.

4. Attendance and Keeping an Open Mind

Each module builds upon the previous module. Therefore, it is critical for you to attend as many sessions as possible if you are to gain the most from the program. If you are unable to attend all the sessions, you should try not to miss more than one or two. If you do have to miss sessions, you should try to listen to the associated podcasts.

Also, while you engage in the modules, you may find information that does not correspond with your beliefs or experience. That is fine, as the point of CIT is exploration, not adhering to or accepting someone else's truth. In some cases, however, your disagreements may dissolve when the issue is examined more carefully and through dialogue. This is because CIT is built upon things that we share in common as human beings. If you approach the topics with an open mind, you will have the best chance of coming to understand the intention behind them. At the end of the program, and after some time to discuss and reflect on the issues, if you still disagree, then that is perfectly fine, as what will ultimately count for you is your own understanding.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN EFFECTIVE CIT EXPERIENCE



GUIDELINES FOR REFLECTIVE WRITING, MINDFUL DIALOGUES AND CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Compassionate Integrity Training includes many practices to enable participants to embody the concepts and insights they gain in the program. Some of these practices, such as Reflective Writing and Mindful Dialogues, are designed to be used during a CIT session with others to foster participants' insight and magnify understanding of each topic. Others, such as the Contemplative Journal Questions and Contemplative Practice recordings (available online at the CIT website), are meant to be practiced between sessions to cultivate each skill.



Reflective Writing Exercises⁴

For the Reflective Writing Exercises, it is important to understand that whatever you write is for your benefit and your eyes only. It is best to simply write whatever comes to mind after reading the question and continue writing, without thinking too much or worrying about grammar, syntax, spelling, etc. Simply write. You will often surprise yourself with what you write.



Mindful Dialogues

In today's hectic world, filled with increasing distractions, we rarely take the time to engage in meaningful, uninterrupted conversations. The best conversations allow us to connect deeply with others around subjects that matter, helping us explore our thoughts, feelings and emotions in a safe space while being present for another to do the same. Because these opportunities are so rare, yet so important, Mindful Dialogues can be a very important component of Compassionate Integrity Training. In order to facilitate generative conversations and create safe space, there are some basic rules for the dialogues.

When it is your turn to listen:

1. Be totally present for the other person. We rarely have someone's undivided attention during a conversation. It is a gift. This presence can manifest through maintaining eye contact and verbal and nonverbal gestures that let your partner know that you are following what he or she is saying. Please turn off any electronic devices to prevent unexpected distractions and interruptions.
2. Try not to ask questions. Although we are not always conscious of it, questions have a tendency to drive a conversation in the direction the questioner wants it to go, rather than where the responder wants to take it. If you feel you must ask a question, make it something like, "Is there anything more you would like to add?"
3. Try not to give advice. The purpose of these conversations is to allow your partner to vocalize important experiences or insights, and to have someone honor them by listening

4 RULES FOR EFFECTIVE LISTENING



attentively and without judgment. Often, instead of truly listening, we spend time thinking about what we would give. While this urge can be motivated by compassion, it can also interfere with our ability to actually be fully present to what the person is saying.

4. Keep everything your partner says in total confidence. Nothing creates safe space more effectively than trust. Knowing that each of you will keep everything you hear confidential will build that trust.

When it is your turn to speak:

1. Remember that the questions are phrased so that there are no right or wrong answers.
2. Remember that what you share will be kept confidential.
3. If you do not want to answer the question that is asked of you, then just feel free to answer the question that you wish the other person had asked.

While designed to be used during a CIT group session, if you are practicing CIT on your own, feel free to try these exercises out with a partner. The Reflective Writing and Mindful Dialogues exercises are based on the Ayeka Method of spiritual education developed by Aryeh Ben David.



Contemplative Journal Questions

An effective way to continue to practice the skills you are learning in CIT is to keep a daily journal. First and foremost, this journal should be an ongoing

reflection of your experiences with the content you are learning and the practices you are engaged in each week. Consider keeping track of any insights you experience or challenges you face as you do the practices or test out what you are learning in your day to day life. Additionally, as a form of ongoing practice, you may choose to use the Contemplative Journal Questions provided along with each skill as a form of analytical practice to challenge your way of thinking and embody the insights you gain from the course. These journal questions can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space here in this book is limited, you may wish to copy these questions into your personal journal, so you may answer them multiple times during the course. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time.

INTRODUCTION AND GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICE

CITATIONS

¹ See Ozawa-de Silva, B. (2016). Contemplative Science and Secular Ethics. *Religions*, 7(8), 98. See also Ozawa-de Silva, B. (2014). Secular ethics, embodied cognitive logics, and education. *The Journal of Contemplative Inquiry*, 1(1).

² Goleman, D., & Senge, P. M. (2015). *The triple focus: A new approach to education*. More Than Sound.

³ This model is common to Life University's Positive Human Development and Social Change degree program and to Emory University's Social, Emotional and Ethical (SEE) Learning program, both of which were also developed on the basis of a secular ethics approach.

⁴ The Reflective Writing and Mindful Dialogues in this manual are based Ayeka Method of spiritual education developed by Aryeh Ben David (Ben David, Aryeh. *Becoming a Soulful Educator: How to Bring Jewish Learning from Our Minds, to Our Hearts, to Our Souls – and Into Our Lives*. Jewish Lights. 2016.)

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS

This section covers the foundational concepts that underlie all of Compassionate Integrity Training. It draws from recent developments in various scientific disciplines and provides some of the theories and the research upon which CIT is built.

FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will explore how we all want happiness and to avoid distress, harm and difficulties.
- Participants will explore how humans are social beings that require cooperative groups to survive.
- Participants will explore how our wish for happiness and need for others means that we all are oriented toward kindness and compassion over selfishness and meanness. Having compassion and kindness at the core is a shift away from darker views of human nature as unrelentingly selfish and fierce.
- Participants will learn about neuroplasticity and the fact that people change over time through practice.
- Participants will explore how all human beings have inherent value.

Practice

- Participants will gain a greater understanding of their values and how those values are grounded in their basic orientation toward kindness, care and compassion.
- Participants will gain a deeper appreciation for their inherent value and innate potential as a human being.

This section covers the foundational concepts that underlie all of Compassionate Integrity Training. It draws from recent developments in various scientific disciplines and provides some of the theories and the research upon which CIT is built.

THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT: OUR BASIC ORIENTATION TOWARD KINDNESS

For thousands of years, people have wrestled with the questions, *“What is at the heart of the human being? What is it that truly drives human beings?”* Philosophers, theologians and other academics have asked these questions for most of human history. They have wondered if humans are driven by purely selfish motives and whether human beings are inherently evil. The 17th century English philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, believed that without government to control the population, the “state of nature” would drive humanity into a “war of all against all.”⁵ Hobbes’s ideas exemplify what primatologist Frans DeWaal calls the “veneer theory,” namely that morality is only a thin veneer hiding our inherently selfish nature. For many biologists stretching back to Thomas Henry Huxley, an early proponent of Darwinism, to George C. Williams today, morality is not believed to be inherent to human nature and is a very late development in the history of humankind.⁶ Without religious systems, laws and other restrictions put in place to hold back our selfish and unethical tendencies, they argue, we would live in chaos.

In recent years, there has been a significant shift from this view of human beings as basically selfish and completely driven by that self-interest to a view of humans as mainly

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



driven by the need to receive and express compassion, care and kindness.⁷ Maternal care is one universal that demonstrates an evolutionary advantage to explain how humans have come to be hardwired for compassion. Every mammal and bird species requires maternal care for the survival of their offspring. Without maternal care, these species would die off in a single generation. As mammals, our human anatomy has similar biological and physiological systems that make offspring naturally seek care and adults naturally provide it. Humans are driven by connection and care. In fact, any species of mammal or bird that does not receive care in the form of touch or contact from another individual from the species, will not fully develop.⁸ In particular, unnurtured individuals have physically and anatomically underdeveloped brains, depleted immune function, and suffer from intense anxiety and depression.⁹ It has become

abundantly clear that more than water, food and shelter is needed for our survival and development: we need warmth, affection and compassion.¹⁰

Going beyond maternal care, humans require relationships with others for survival as well. Although human beings sit at the top of the so-called food chain, this is not the result of our ability to be physically more powerful than other species, but rather our ability to work together, cooperate and protect one another. From an evolutionary perspective, as our species evolved, we could never have survived on our own. Social isolation meant physical death, because alone, one would be vulnerable to predators. In comparison, human beings in a group protecting and caring for each other survive and even thrive. From this understanding, the need to connect and care for others is built into our survival instinct.



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A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

Frans DeWaal, a primatologist at Emory University, conducts research with different animal species to see how deeply the sense of social connection extends. DeWaal and colleagues examine which emotions, specifically moral emotions, are shared with other animals. Moral emotions include: gratitude, compassion, forgiveness, empathy, and a sense of fairness and justice. DeWaal and his colleagues are increasingly finding evidence to demonstrate that other mammals do experience social and moral emotions, at least in protoform.

It has been found, for example, that Capuchin monkeys reject unequal pay for equal work.¹¹ In studies, monkeys were rewarded with a small slice of cucumber when they completed a simple task. However, when one monkey started to get rewarded with a grape, a better reward, the other monkey stopped participating if it was only offered a cucumber. The monkeys who were offered unequal rewards become agitated, banging on the cage and making loud vocalizations, and refused to participate until they were given the same reward.

The presence of what we might consider social and moral emotions among animals, at least in a protoform, is not limited to unequal pay, but extends to cooperative behavior, reciprocal helping and remembering help.¹² For instance, if one monkey or chimp helps another, it has been found that the recipient is more likely to return that kindness the next day or on subsequent days, suggesting a form of protogratitudes even among nonhuman animals. Consolation behavior is also commonly witnessed when two chimpanzees get into a fight, and the chimp who lost the fight is consoled by another member of the group who puts his or her arm around the loser.¹³

Since such examples are common among mammalian and bird species, primatologists and comparative

psychologists such as DeWaal conclude that maternal care is likely the common factor at the root of these tendencies. At some point, dating back to at least the last common ancestor between birds and mammals, there was a shift that occurred toward the ability to care for offspring. From this, the social and moral tendencies developed in a more concrete way out of a need to extend and receive care. All this helps to explain why sociality and the ability to care and respond to care is a very deep and internalized mechanism within the human brain and body.

Moving from birds and mammals to humans, research has been conducted with infants and young children showing similar outcomes to the research with monkeys. Presumably before these infants and young children are imprinted with the teachings and learning that come with later life, children still distinguish helping behavior automatically.¹⁴ For instance, 5-month-old babies have been found to show preferences for animations of characters or puppets that are providing help as opposed to those impeding others.¹⁵ Even extremely young infants reach out toward those characters providing help and care and move away from those impeding help and not giving care.¹⁶

If it is believed that humans are intrinsically selfish, then all human institutions (including business, criminal justice, law, medicine, etc.) will inevitably reflect this perspective. If we see ourselves as having compassion at the core, then we can look for different ways to do business, establish justice, conduct law and practice medicine. It is important to acknowledge that selfishness is not the same as self-interest, which is a basic attitude of preferring and seeking well-being. CIT's approach does not eliminate self-interest; rather, the question is whether we can be wise about our self-interest and

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



STUDIES SHOW
ANIMALS ARE AWARE
OF A KIND OF
PROTO-MORALITY:
A SENSE OF JUSTICE
AND FAIRNESS.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

recognize that we flourish best when we are in constructive relations with others.

As human beings in today's world, we live in complex, interconnected societies. Our everyday activities and personal goals require contributions from countless others. Therefore, other-interest and self-interest go hand-in-hand. Our relationships with each other are as vital as our relationship to the environment. If we were to destroy the environment out of short-term selfishness, this would hardly be an effective act of self-interest. Similarly, to seek personal gain in ways that alienate or deprive everyone around oneself is not effective self-interest either. Science is showing that far from harming self-interest, the cultivation of prosocial emotions like compassion, gratitude and forgiveness actually benefits the self, just as much, if not more, than it benefits others.¹⁷ If genuine altruism seems too lofty a goal, therefore, we can still aim for an enlightened self-interest that benefits the self by benefiting others.

The Dark Side of Our Need to Connect

There is a dark side in the human need to connect to others. When this need is not met, we feel it intensely. For instance, people often claim that their number one fear is the fear of public speaking.¹⁸ In surveys, people will often list this fear even above the fear of death. Why is this? From an evolutionary perspective, our physical survival depended on our ability to live in groups. Therefore, for the individual, social isolation could mean physical death. Our physiology is still wired to sound the alarm of social isolation as though our lives depended on it, so we fear social rejection very intensely. Although no physical harm will likely befall us when giving a public speech, when on stage our bodies can respond as if it might. Our bodies, in

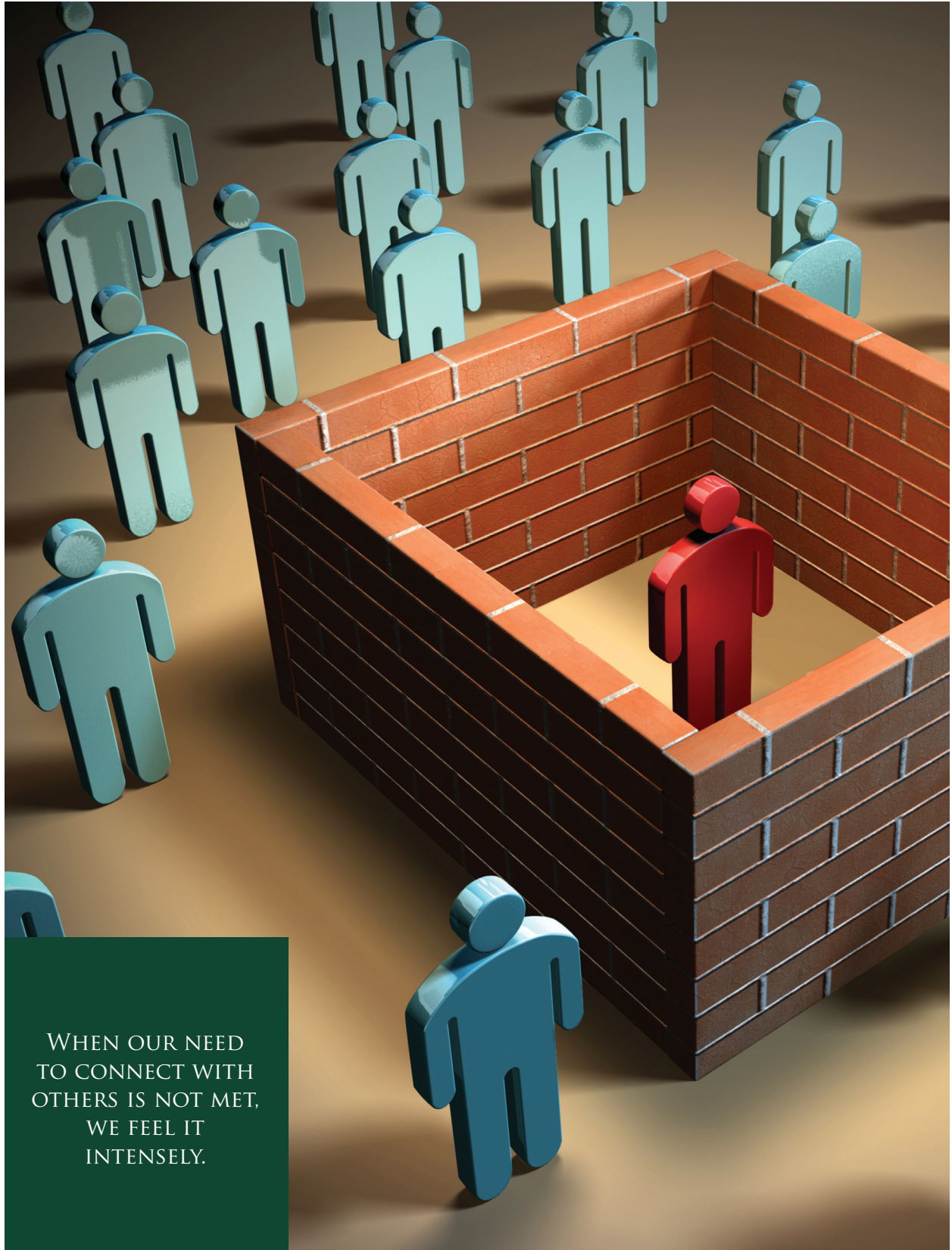
order to keep us alive, have come to link social rejection very closely with physical danger.¹⁹

Our need for social acceptance is so deeply rooted in our psychology and physiology that when we lack it, we face dire consequences for our mental and physical health. When we lack social support, care and protection from others, we experience loneliness, depression and a variety of negative health outcomes, including even changes in gene expression.²⁰ Social embarrassment is so painful and scary to us, that sometimes we even attempt or commit suicide out of fear of social rejection. This can be seen from statistics: groups of people who are at risk for social isolation and rejection consistently show much higher attempted suicide rates. Those who self-identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual, and whose sexual orientation is not accepted by their family, have attempted suicide rates of 7 to 8 times that of the average, while those who self-identify as transgender face attempted suicide rates of 100 times or more compared to those who do not.²¹ Parental rejection, in particular, is an exacerbating factor. Recently, the principal of a private school in Atlanta, Georgia committed suicide because a secret about him was coming to light. Similarly, a college student committed suicide after being outed for being gay before he came out publicly himself.²² Such stories have become all too common.

Although the reasons for suicide are very complex and highly individual, this data suggests the tragic consequences of social rejection and social isolation. When we encounter others and treat them with hostility, threats and rejection, rather than with compassion, we are deeply impacting others' physiology. Social threats create a stress-response, which leads to inflammation and other physiological changes, making people less healthy.²³ In turn, inflammation can even change gene expression, making individuals more susceptible to chronic illnesses,

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



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COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

depression and cancer.²⁴ Furthermore, such actions undermine the basic social bonds that we have evolved to need to flourish as a community and society.

We have seen that as humans we have a capacity for empathy, compassion and love that is deeply rooted in our brains and bodies, and without which, we would cease to survive as a species. One might ask: if compassion lies at our core and is so deeply rooted in us, why do we still see violence, cruelty and apathy in the world? The reason is that despite being fundamental to our well-being, our prosocial tendencies tend to be limited to those near and dear to us. Since they likely evolved for survival purposes, they are governed by what is called “in-group bias.” One thing we also share with non-human mammals is the ability to form ingroups – those we consider to be similar to us and, therefore, more worthy of our love, empathy and compassion – and out-groups, everyone else, who we can ignore or even demonize.

Our biological capacity for compassion can be limited, and it can also be irrational. This is partially explained as the effect of what is known as “compassion fade,” although it might be more accurate to say that it is a fading of empathy. For example, when we see a single person suffering or in need, we may feel a tremendous amount of feeling for them. However, if we increase the number of those suffering from one to two, instead of increasing, our sense of concern tends to go down. If we increase it to thousands, we tend to feel helpless and have a very muted empathy.²⁵ This phenomenon is why most charities using a commercial or video choose to focus on one child who is starving or suffering rather than hundreds or thousands.²⁶ But it makes no sense to be more strongly compelled by knowing that one person is suffering than if we were to witness thousands of people suffering. This underscores the fact

that we have kindness and compassion at our core, but it is limited in scope and can manifest in irrational ways.²⁷

THE SECOND FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT: NEUROPLASTICITY AND NEUROGENESIS

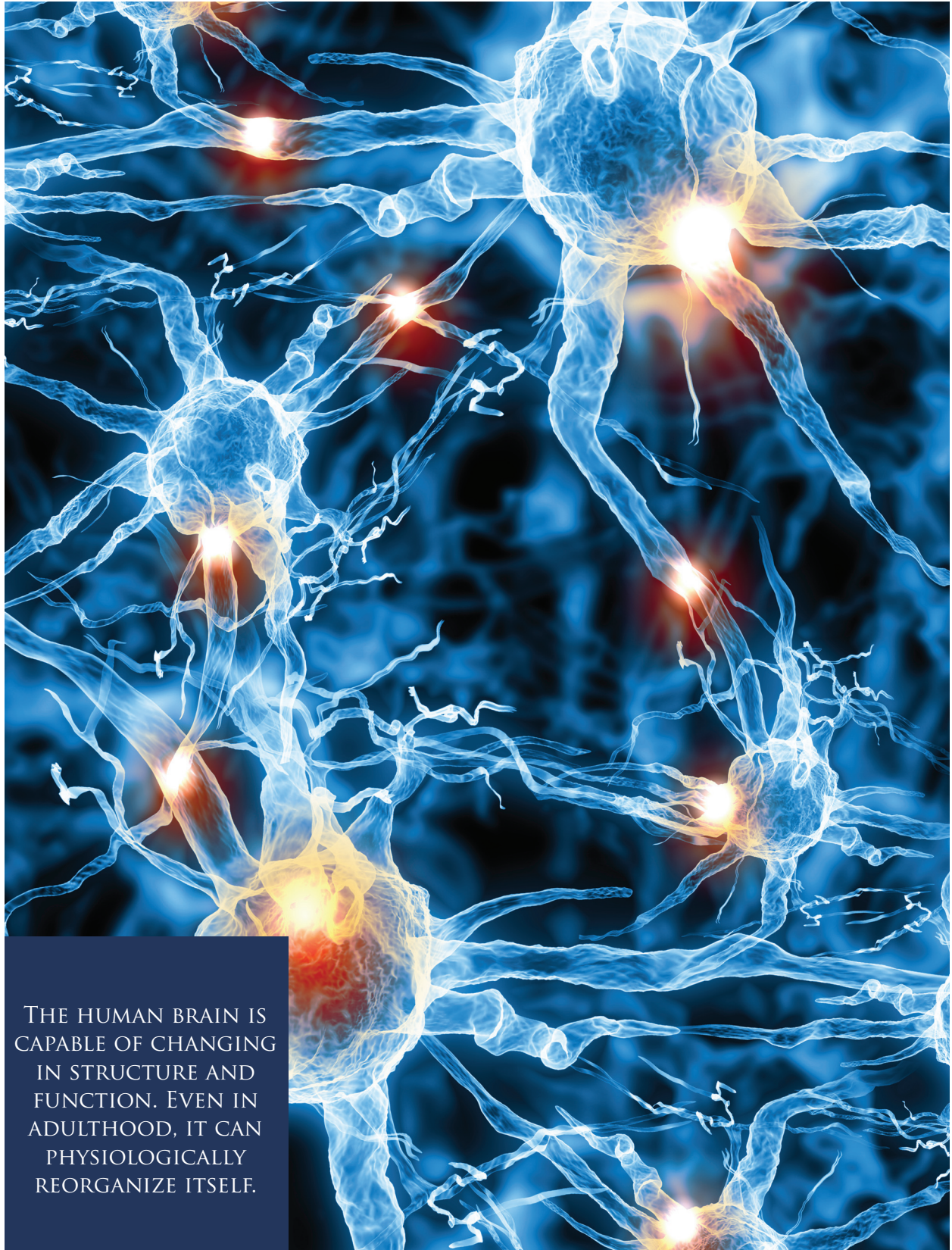
There is a second shift that has been offered through research in the last twenty years. If the first shift is that we have kindness at the core, then the second shift is our capacity to increase our kindness and compassion. Research suggests that eliciting anger and other antisocial emotions negatively affects human immune function, illustrating that these emotions can have a direct effect on our psychological and physiological health.²⁸ However, the cultivation of compassion and a greater sense of connection with others appears to have the opposite effect. Studies suggest that such cultivation improves immune function and reduces psychosocial stress.²⁹ All of this suggests that our need for compassion and care is built into our bodies, and that if we know this, we can use this knowledge to our benefit.

This second shift occurred in the mid 1990s, beginning with the recognition of neuroplasticity and neurogenesis.³⁰ It was only at this point that neuroscientists agreed that even the adult brain, earlier thought to be fully developed and non-malleable after around age twenty-five, could still change in structure and function, and continued to grow new brain cells up until death.³¹ Up until this point, scientists who believed in neuroplasticity and neurogenesis were so ridiculed for this theory that some of them even lost their jobs or grants.³²

We now know that the brain grows in measurable ways and can form new pathways and increase cortical thickness

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



THE HUMAN BRAIN IS
CAPABLE OF CHANGING
IN STRUCTURE AND
FUNCTION. EVEN IN
ADULTHOOD, IT CAN
PHYSIOLOGICALLY
REORGANIZE ITSELF.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

through sustained practice and study.³³ This opens the door to exploring our human potential. If we are able to change our brain on this most basic level, the question then becomes, “In what direction should we train our brain?” It is an extremely important shift to know that we can change the structure and function of our brain by practice.³⁴ It means that we can cultivate and practice ethical skills and basic human values, and overcome much of the limited and irrational nature of our biologically-based compassion, expanding on our biology to expand our ability to be fair, compassionate and just.³⁵

THE VALUE OF EVERY LIFE

Fundamental for both self-care and compassion for others is the recognition that our life has immense value, and so too do the lives of others. The more we see our life as precious, the more we will appreciate it and engage in the activities that lead to protecting our genuine well-being and not sacrificing our long-term well-being for temporary satisfactions. The more we see others’ lives as precious, the more we will show concern and consideration for them, engaging in actions that promote their well-being and that protect them from harm. Not everyone is able to recognize the preciousness and value of their own life, much less the lives of strangers, but CIT includes practices that explore the question of whether our life and the lives of others have value, meaning and worth.

Our society tends to evaluate worth on the basis of performance and utility. It holds up things like fame, wealth, level of education, physical beauty and material success, as if these were true indicators of a person’s value. An overly material focus leads to seeing people in a transactional way

– a person’s value may be only what that person can do for me or my interests. But if we look deeper, we can see that this is a somewhat shallow way of thinking about the value of people. We know this intuitively when we look upon a newborn baby to whom we feel affection. The love that parents or caregivers experience when seeing a newborn is not based on what that child can do at that moment or will do in the future; it is based solely on his or her existence as something precious and wonderful. This is why when a child is born with a serious genetic disorder or disease that may cause the child to die prematurely, those who care for it rarely call for the baby to be euthanized. That child has value in the eyes of those who view it with affection, despite its apparent lack of utilitarian value to society.

We were also all once that baby. Even if we feel that we never received affection, or enough of it, the fact that we survived our time in the womb and our birth, and indeed survived up to this very point, is proof that we had at least some value in the eyes of others. Without such value, we would not have survived, because as unborn children or infants, we simply cannot survive on our own. If we look closely, we will see that our daily existence even now is supported by the kind acts of countless others who prepare our food, ensure our safety and maintain the conditions that we need to survive and live our lives the way we do. Recognizing the value that we have, which we can see through the investments that others make in us and have made in us, provides a secure base for us to grow and develop our inner qualities.

The inherent value of human life is illustrated by a legal debate found in the Jewish Talmud. In it, Rabbah, a third century rabbi, asks the following question: If a man throws a vase from a tall building and, right before it hits the ground, another man hits it with a stick, causing the

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



vase to shatter, who is liable?³⁶ Rabbah concludes that the thrower is liable for the damage and not the one who hit it with the stick, because the second man broke a broken vessel. Once thrown, Rabbah says, it is considered a “doomed vase,” because it no longer has any use and therefore no value. Then Rabbah asks: If instead of a vase, a man throws a baby from the building, and a second man “catches it on the end of his sword” before it hits the ground, who is most liable for her death? Rabbah concludes that while both the thrower and the stabber are considered liable for murder, the stabber is more culpable and subject to punishment. The difference is this: the vase’s value lies only in its form and function, but human life has nothing to do with how useful one is or what function one performs. As a result, every split second of a human life is valuable. Because human life is not merely of utilitarian value, a baby does not lose its value when it becomes a “doomed baby,” and even ending its life a split second sooner than it would have otherwise is tragic.

The point is that, in the eyes of a person who cares deeply for us, even a moment of our life is precious, and we can

come to see others’ lives in this way too. As we move toward this, we feel more connected, more grounded and more confident; our own flourishing and our collective flourishing with others increases. This is a point that CIT will return to again and again in various forms.

SECULAR ETHICS

The fundamental shifts outlined in the previous sections provide the basis for a secular approach to a system of universal human values, or a secular ethics. For the first time, scientific disciplines are exploring basic human values like compassion, gratitude and forgiveness, and the impact they have on our physical, psychological and social health. Moreover, science is also exploring how we can cultivate these values for the benefit of ourselves and others. This has given rise to entirely new fields like positive psychology and social and affective neuroscience, and to regular academic and scientific conferences like Stanford University’s “Science of Compassion” conference that is held every two years.



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

Over the past two decades, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has been articulating a vision for secular ethics in his books and talks.³⁷ Although not the sole proponent of this idea, his vision is presented most clearly and has proved very influential in these fields, so we will outline his understanding here, as it forms an important context for CIT.

The Dalai Lama's call for secular ethics is based on his recognition that the world has become far more interconnected and interdependent over the past century, and our communities far more diverse. No longer can societies rely on individual cultural or religious systems to provide ethical frameworks that will satisfy all of their citizens, let alone the global problems that cut across vast numbers of societies. In order to confront the issues facing the planet, we must find ways to agree upon and teach a set of values that transcend any one cultural or religious system.

The Dalai Lama articulates his vision through the metaphor of tea and water, where the tea is religion and ethics is water. There are many different religions, just as there are many types of tea, and each adds its own qualities to a person's life, just as teas add more flavor and nutrition to water. "But however the tea is prepared, the primary ingredient is always water," the Dalai Lama says. "While we can live without tea, we can't live without water. Likewise, we are born free of religion, but we are not born free of the need for compassion."³⁸ Here he uses compassion as the core of secular ethics, the water that is the common value that sustains and connects all people, religious or not. He goes on to state, "In today's secular world, religion alone is no longer adequate as a basis for ethics ... any religion-based answer to the problem of our neglect of inner values can never be universal, and so will be inadequate. What we need today is an approach to ethics which makes no recourse to religion and can be equally acceptable to those with

faith and those without: a secular ethics."³⁹ Here the Dalai Lama is not critiquing religion; after all, he is a religious person himself. Instead, he is pointing out that a religious answer to the world's problems can never be universal, because there is no one religion that all the people of the world can agree upon. Therefore, if we are to have a truly universal approach, it must be open to all people.

CIT focuses on relationship between our internal well-being and the external problems in the world. War, intolerance and division, economic inequality, discrimination, violence in our communities and in our schools, and threats to our environment are all pressing problems that have their origins in the decisions we make based on our values. "The fundamental problem," the Dalai Lama writes, "is that at every level we are giving too much attention to the external, material aspects of life while neglecting moral ethics and inner values ... Our inner lives are something we ignore at our own peril, and many of the greatest problems we face in today's world are the result of such neglect."⁴⁰

According to the Dalai Lama, in order to face the challenges confronting our communities and the world, we must first face our own misguided obsessions with wealth, physical pleasure, status and praise and focus more on inner values like compassion, loving kindness and sympathetic joy. This other-orientation is a shift from what he calls "foolish selfish" to "wise selfish," because the result is greater individual and communal flourishing.⁴¹ If we and future generations are to find sustainable solutions to the problems that face us, it will require a firm grounding in moral principles that stress our common humanity, our fundamental equality and our interdependence with each other for survival and communal flourishing.



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



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Some of the basic human values that the Dalai Lama includes are compassion, kindness, generosity, patience, honesty, forgiveness, self-discipline and contentment.⁴² He appeals to common sense and common experience to see that these values are shared by individuals regardless of religion or lack thereof; however, it is also noteworthy that the scientific study of individual and social flourishing and well-being in fields like positive psychology is beginning to validate these common-sense views.⁴³

The Dalai Lama bases the universality of this approach on what he calls the “two pillars” of secular ethics. The first is common humanity, the fact that we all wish for happiness and well-being, and wish to avoid harm, suffering and dissatisfaction. In this, every human being is the same — indeed, this desire is so basic that

it is even shared by animals. The second is interdependence — we depend on each other for our well-being. As human beings we are social beings. No one individual can survive, much less flourish, without the help of many others. From the moment we come into the world, we depend on others for our survival. Interdependence is, therefore, a basic aspect of our human experience, and has important implications for how we treat one another. Of these two, he writes, “Together, I believe, they constitute an adequate basis for establishing ethical awareness and the cultivation of inner values. It is through such values that we gain a sense of connection with others, and it is by moving beyond narrow self-interest that we find meaning, purpose and satisfaction in life.”⁴⁴



NOTES

FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS

SHIFT FROM A WORLD-VIEW OF
NARROW SELF-INTEREST TO COMPASSION



GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS

1. Help Create a Safe Space
2. "Progress, Not Perfection"
3. "Take What You Want; Leave What You Don't"
4. Attendance and Keeping an Open Mind
5. Other Guidelines?

SERIES I: SELF-CULTIVATION

1. Calming Body and Mind
2. Ethical Mindfulness
3. Emotional Awareness
4. Self-Compassion

SERIES II: RELATING TO OTHERS

5. Impartiality and Common Humanity
6. Forgiveness and Gratitude
7. Empathic Concern
8. Compassion

SERIES III: ENGAGING IN SYSTEMS

9. Appreciating Interdependence
10. Engaging with Discernment

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

NOTES

FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS

THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT: OUR BASIC ORIENTATION TOWARD KINDNESS

- Shift from a worldview of narrow self-interest to compassion
- Our biological basis for kindness and compassion
- Humans require relationships with others to survive
- Humans are wired for fairness
- Selfish vs. Self-interest
- The Dark Side of Our Need to Connect
- Our empathy can be limited and at times irrational



THE SECOND FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT: NEUROPLASTICITY AND NEUROGENESIS

- Neuroplasticity
- Neurogenesis
- We can cultivate compassion and other pro-social values with measurable changes to our brains, health and behavior

LINKING THE TWO SHIFTS TOGETHER: SECULAR ETHICS

- Tea and water metaphor
- “Two Pillars” - Common Humanity and Interdependence
- Common Sense, Common Experience and Science

THE VALUE OF EVERY LIFE

- Utilitarian value versus inherent value
- The fact that we are alive shows we have all been valued by others



REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS

Instructions: Answer the following questions as freely and openly as possible. Your answers are for you only and are not meant to be shared. As such, do not worry about the quality of your prose or grammar. There's no need to think much before you write; you can just write.

1. What values are most important to you?

2. How are those values related to our basic human kindness?

3. Think about a time when you were living in sync with your values. What was it like? What do you think was helping you to live in sync with your values? If there is no such time that you can think of, what do you imagine it would be like to live truly in sync with your values?

4. Think about times in your life when you lived or acted out of sync with your values. Why do you think you acted in that way? If you cannot think of a time, imagine what it might be like to act out of sync with one's values, or use an example from someone else's life that you have observed.

5. How would life be different if we acted more in sync with our values, individually and collectively?



MINDFUL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS

Instructions: Each participant will select a partner with whom to have a mindful conversation. Take turns answering the following questions. The partner whose turn it is to listen should follow these rules:

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 1: What values are most important to you?

Question 2: What benefit do you get from living your life in a way that reflects these values?

Question 3: Can you think of one thing you could do that would help you live out your values more fully?



FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS

CITATIONS

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COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING
A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



SERIES I: SELF-CULTIVATION

The first step toward improving relationships with others and making a positive impact in communities is developing an increased level of personal well-being. A greater degree of inner calm, self-control, emotional intelligence and self-compassion benefits oneself, while also providing a firm foundation upon which to build pro-social skills. In CIT, we call this process of self-consciously working to increase these types of personal skills and well-being “Self-Cultivation.”

SERIES I: SELF-CULTIVATION

SKILL 1: CALMING BODY AND MIND

Before beginning to delve into personal cultivation, we must have the ability to recognize how our body and mind respond to stimuli that either activate us into an anxious state or dampen us down into a more depressive state. We act with greatest clarity when we are in the resilient zone, neither overly activated nor overly deflated. The content and skills taught in this section are designed to enable us to recognize bodily cues that indicate when we are moving out of our resilient zone and how to return to it. Practices such as grounding, tracking and resourcing are utilized to regulate the body and mind to achieve a calm yet alert state that is suitable for developing attention and other skills.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will learn about the autonomic nervous system (ANS) and the difference between its fight or flight response (sympathetic activation) and its rest and digest response (parasympathetic activation).
- Participants will learn about the three zones their body can be in (high, low and resilient) as a useful heuristic for understanding the ANS.

Practice

- Participants will learn how to both return to the resilient zone when they move outside of it and to expand their resilient zone through practice.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

The first step in self-cultivation is developing the ability to calm the body and mind through an understanding of our nervous system. Our bodies and minds are deeply connected, and what we experience in one will have an immediate and automatic effect on the other. We start CIT with learning how to pay attention to our bodies, because our nervous systems react to external and internal stimuli very quickly. As such, our difficult emotions and thoughts often begin as bodily sensations. These bodily sensations can be the leading indicators of stress, anxiety, fear and depression. As we will see, our bodies can also alert us to our states of joy, calm and clarity.

The Nervous System

Ideally our nervous systems, and therefore our bodies and minds, operate in what can be called the “resilient zone.”⁴⁵ This is a state of being where we are able to feel a sense of clarity and calm, despite what might be going on in the external world. We are capable of making decisions in a rational way and not getting thrown off balance. We do not feel hyper-aroused, whereby our bodies are in a state of anxiety or panic, nor do we feel hypo-aroused, whereby our bodies are lethargic, depressed or dull. By learning to track our sensations, we can tell whether our body is in or out of its resilient zone. If we notice it is out of this zone, we can use practices to bring it back.

The autonomic nervous system (ANS) is the part of our nervous system that controls our organs and automatic functions like breathing, heart rate, digestion, etc. As a product of evolution, its purpose is to keep us alive by responding differently to situations of safety as opposed to situations of threat. It therefore has two pathways: the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) and the



parasympathetic nervous system (PNS).⁴⁶ Any time the body senses danger or a threat to its survival, it activates the sympathetic nervous system, more commonly known as the “fight or flight” system. The body releases hormones, adrenalin, cortisol and proinflammatory cytokines as it prepares for the possibility of the need to fight, run or repair itself. At the same time, it deactivates functions not needed in such situations: reducing digestion, sex-drive, growth, etc. It is easy to see why all mammals share similarities in the activation of their nervous system in this way: those who did not react with an appropriate stress response would have been less likely to survive when confronted with danger.

The other autonomic pathway, the parasympathetic nervous system, is activated when one senses safety. Here the body is ready to “rest and digest.” In this state, heart rate decreases, muscles relax, digestion increases and an overall sense of relaxation is experienced. When this system is activated, we

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

feel more calm and balanced. In a healthy individual, the body naturally cycles back and forth between sympathetic and parasympathetic activation throughout the day, with brief periods of sympathetic activation (such as waking from sleep), followed by periods of relaxation. The problem comes when the body becomes dysregulated because one system is activated for too long or too much (i.e., too intensely). For example, while the “fight or flight” response is evolutionarily adaptive when a sabertoothed tiger is about to attack, it can be quite debilitating when it remains activated for extended periods of time due to workday stress, relationship issues or financial crisis. As social beings, our bodies seem not to distinguish between physical threat and psychological or social threats. Therefore, fear of embarrassment, failure or social rejection can be just as threatening to us as physical danger.

A useful heuristic is to think of the autonomic nervous system as being in one of three zones. We have mentioned the resilient zone, where we feel safe, confident and in control, and where we can make good decisions. The other two are the high zone, where we feel hyper-aroused, such as anxious, stressed, angry, nervous or agitated; and the low zone, where we feel hypo-aroused, lacking energy, lacking interest in activities and possibly depressed. If we are a human being with a body, then it is most likely that we are familiar with times when we felt stuck in the high zone or stuck in the low zone.

Tracking

What tells us whether we are in our resilient zone or not? Interestingly, because the autonomic nervous system evolved long before the higher regions of our brain, such as the cortex, we are not always conscious of whether it is exhibiting sympathetic or parasympathetic

activation. If we just think about what we’re feeling or what emotional state we may be in, our introspection can often be wrong. However, if we examine what sensations are taking place in our body, this provides far better clues. This is because, as Elaine Miller-Karas of the Trauma Resource Institute says, the body speaks the language of sensations.

The practice of noticing sensations in the body is called “tracking.” Normally, we tend to use feeling and emotion words to describe what state we are in. For instance when someone asks us, “How are you today?” we might say, “I’m feeling good,” or “I’m feeling sad.” Rarely do we spend time acknowledging the physical sensations that are associated with “feeling good” or “feeling sad.” We can learn to do so, however, and developing this skill is enormously helpful in allowing us to know what state our body is in. Being able to recognize a warm sensation in the chest radiating out, or butterflies in one’s stomach, or the tightening or loosening of muscles gives us information about the body. As we learn about our bodies, we develop “body literacy.” We notice that our bodies are experiencing a whole host of sensations at every moment. Each sensation is giving us information about the state of our body. Interestingly, if we attend to unpleasant sensations and keep our attention on them, they have the potential to send us into the high or low zone. It is as if the body is sensing danger, and we are focusing on the threat. However, if we attend to neutral or pleasant sensations and remain with them, they have the potential to regulate our bodies and move us back into the resilient zone. When we do this, it is as if we are letting our bodies know that things are safe and okay.

Tracking, therefore, is the act of noticing the physical sensations that are occurring within the body in the



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



present moment. It also involves recognizing if they are pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. As mentioned, if the sensation is pleasant or neutral, we can simply notice the sensation and then remain with it for a few moments. This period of remaining with the sensation helps our body recognize well-being. If the sensation is unpleasant, then we can redirect our attention, finding a place in the body that is pleasant, neutral or just somewhere that is less unpleasant than the original sensation. If we have chronic pain or discomfort across the body, there may no place in the body that is pleasant or neutral, but there might be places in the body that are less unpleasant than other places, and we can place our attention there.

Resourcing

One effective way to move into or stay within the resilient zone is to come up with an external, internal or imagined resource that brings about a state of greater well-being, safety or security. External resources can be a memory, place or person that makes you feel better, or an activity

such as jogging, biking or swimming, that gives you a sense of greater well-being while you are engaging in it. Internal resources can be a part of oneself, like a characteristic one has (such as a sense of humor) or a part of one's body that is strong or healthy. Resources can be unique to each of us, and we can have multiple resources.

To practice resourcing, one brings the resource to mind as vividly as possible. The more detail that can be attributed to the resource, the stronger its effect. Recalling smells, sounds, tastes, physical sensations and colors will allow the resource to grow and strengthen. Once the resource is vivid, keep it in mind and engage in tracking — that is, notice what is happening inside the body in the present moment. Oftentimes, people mistakenly think resourcing involves thinking about how you felt when the event in your memory actually took place. But actually this practice involves noticing what is happening in one's body in the very moment that one is thinking of the resource.

Resources should be things that make us feel a bit better or safer when we think of them. But it's also possible that when we think of a resource, we experience unpleasant

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

sensations. If this occurs, we can shift to a place in the body that feels more pleasant or neutral. Then, we can either go back to our resource or choose another resource to think about. Like all CIT skills, tracking and resourcing must be practiced and learned over time. Therefore, persistence is key.

It is also very helpful to learn tracking and resourcing with a partner. One of you will serve as the guide, and the other will engage in the resourcing and tracking. The guide can ask the practitioner to think of a resource, describe it and then notice the sensations that arise in the body. When facilitating with groups, one can ask each participant to draw their resource and then notice the sensations that arise for them when they share their resource drawing with others.

Grounding

Another skill to help regulate the nervous system is grounding. Grounding is the practice of noticing the direct contact of one's body with an object (including another part of the body) in order to bring oneself back to the present moment. When the nervous system is dysregulated, it can be helpful to notice a part of the body that feels grounding or that feels supported. For example, if you are sitting in a chair and your feet feel firm and supported on the ground, you can notice this sensation and sit with this for a few moments. As you sense into this part of the body that feels grounded, you may notice yourself relaxing and feeling more stable. This is another way of returning to or staying in the resilient zone.

Grounding is extremely helpful when someone feels anxious, "out of body," or when the person is having a difficult time sensing into the body. It is helpful to practice resourcing before grounding, because if the

body gets dysregulated while grounding, then we can use our resource as a tool to return to the resilient zone.

It's helpful to recognize that we engage in grounding practices naturally. For example, we may have a necklace, bracelet or other object that we instinctively touch or hold and that makes us feel more secure when we do so. We may cross our arms, or sit in a particular way. There may be objects that we like to keep with us because they make us feel more secure. When we consciously engage in grounding and combine it with tracking, we are strengthening our ability to regulate our nervous system consciously. Like any skill, it then develops through practice, and we become better and better at it. The advantage is that as our expertise grows, we can regulate our nervous system more quickly before we move into the high zone or low zone; or if we do find ourselves in one of these zones, we can move back into the resilient zone more quickly. This results in a healthier body and in better decision making.

The skills involved in Calming Body and Mind are useful in and of themselves in helping us to increase our overall well-being. They are also very useful as a preparation for the further practices in CIT. This is because dysregulation of our nervous system has the potential to bypass or short-circuit all other considerations. If we are stuck in the high zone, and therefore extremely agitated, we will be very limited in our ability to use discernment, understand our own and others' emotional states and make good decisions, and it will be hard for us to act with compassionate integrity for the benefit of ourselves and others. If we do learn to regulate our bodies, however, and then build on this to develop the other skills of CIT, then we are using the natural resilience of our bodies to practice self-care in a profound and meaningful way.



SERIES I: SELF-CULTIVATION

SKILL 2: ETHICAL MINDFULNESS

The ability to place one's attention where one wants when one wants is a basic form of freedom, which can lead to greater happiness and avoidance of suffering. Furthermore, unethical behavior, which leads to one's own suffering and the suffering of others, often begins with the inability to control one's mind. When we develop a greater capacity for monitoring our thoughts, speech and actions, we can catch ourselves earlier before speaking or acting in a way that causes harm. Just as it is much easier to put out a small spark before it becomes a forest fire, it is much easier to stop ourselves from speaking or acting unethically if we can catch it early. The three components of ethical mindfulness are heedfulness, a recognition that one has the capacity to harm others and the cautiousness that follow; mindfulness, the recollection of one's core values and one's core identity; and awareness, the present moment observation of one's speech and actions. As a skill, ethical mindfulness focuses on cultivating the ability to sustain attention for longer periods of time to become aware of one's thoughts, feelings and emotions. This skill serves as a foundation for the analytical practices that are introduced later in CIT.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will learn the importance of attentional stability.
- Participants will learn to become heedful of their capacity to do harm to self (first, and then others) through their speech and actions.
- Participants will learn to be mindful of the reasons why harmful speech and action cause harm to themselves and others.

Practice

- Participants will gain a deeper appreciation for their inherent value and innate potential as a human being.
- Participants will increase awareness of the present moment in order to become more cognizant of their speech and actions in order to reduce their propensity to do harm to self and other.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

Ethical mindfulness combines the skills of heedfulness, mindfulness and awareness to help one avoid actions that are harmful to oneself and others. A growing body of evidence suggests mindfulness practices can reduce stress and anxiety, lower inflammation in the body, reduce blood pressure, improve immune function and response to psychosocial stress and create a greater overall sense of well-being.⁴⁷

Heedfulness

Within ethical mindfulness, heedfulness is the basic recognition of our capacity to engage in harmful actions, both intentionally and unintentionally, and the concomitant vigilance one needs in order to not do so. An ancient Indian metaphor used to teach this level of heedfulness is that of a person who was ordered to carry a bowl filled right to the brim with hot sesame oil, while a guard holding a drawn sword walked behind him. If the person spilled even a drop of sesame oil, the guard was instructed to chop his head off. Clearly, in such a situation, we would be extremely careful. This metaphor explains what heedfulness is: a sense of care and restraint with regard to things we recognize as dangerous. Often, however, we lack heedfulness. We are unaware that things we do cause harm to ourselves and others, and therefore we show no care or concern with regard to such actions. Often it is only in hindsight that we recognize that we were foolhardy and careless. Therefore, this first step in the process of ethical mindfulness requires that we think critically about what actions we do that endanger ourselves and others, recognize and identify these actions clearly, and then resolve to avoid them and treat them with a sense of caution.

Mindfulness

The next step in cultivating ethical mindfulness is the

faculty of mindfulness itself. As opposed to other popular definitions of mindfulness,⁴⁸ in CIT, mindfulness is defined as intentionally bringing something into working memory and maintaining one's attention on this object so that it becomes familiar and hard to forget. The value is that by cultivating mindfulness, we can develop the ability to remember our ethical values and not forget them in situations of stress, distraction or temptation. The more often we bring our values to mind, the more effortlessly they will come to mind and become second nature.

For example, through heedfulness, we may become cognizant of the fact that we often say things that are upsetting to, or critical of, others. Despite this heedfulness, if we are not mindful of our value to not harm others through speech, we may continue to do so. The more we bring this value to mind, the more automatic it will become.

Awareness

Along with heedfulness and mindfulness, we also need awareness. Here, awareness is present moment consciousness of our speech and actions. For example, if we recognize our ability to cause harm with our words (heedfulness), and bring to mind our desire to not cause harm through our words (mindfulness), we nonetheless may continue to cause harm with our words if we are not aware of what we say when we say it. The same is true of our actions. People with heedfulness and mindfulness can still cause harm to themselves and others by not being aware of their present state and activities. Without all three components of ethical mindfulness, we will continue to have a lack of self-restraint. Since actions that cause harm to others also tend to endanger ourselves, developing this kind of restraint is the beginning of the ethical journey and a major step in enhancing our personal well-being.



SIDEBAR: MEDITATION

CIT includes some optional reflective and contemplative practices that can be considered forms of meditation. As noted in the introduction, CIT is a program of secular ethics, meaning that it is designed for use by people of any or no religion. The practices included in CIT are therefore intentionally designed to not conflict with anyone's religious beliefs or practices. That being said, there may still be individuals who prefer not to engage in any kind of meditative practice whatsoever, even a secular one. That is perfectly fine, and such individuals can still engage fully in CIT by using the journaling and mindful dialogue exercises to deepen and internalize their understanding without practicing meditation. It is important, nevertheless, to clarify how meditation is understood in CIT for those who wish to engage in the optional meditation practices.

Meditation is a word that has become widespread in popular culture, but it can be misleading. Often people think meditation refers to a single practice, such as emptying the mind, but in reality there are a host of practices that can be considered meditations, each with their own methods and goals. The fact that the verb "meditate" does not require a direct object means that people can simply say "I meditate" without saying what they are meditating on. But in reality, without knowing what a person is meditating on, we do not know what practice they are actually engaged in.

By way of contrast, the Sanskrit and Tibetan terms that are translated as "meditation" are more precise. The Sanskrit term *bhavanā*, for example, means "cultivation." This prompts us to

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

ask, “cultivating what?” One can cultivate many things, including mindfulness, lovingkindness, compassion, gratitude, forgiveness, etc. Similarly the Tibetan word *goms* is translated as “to familiarize.” One can familiarize one’s mind with many things, again including forgiveness, gratitude and compassion. The Sanskrit and Tibetan terms therefore show that meditation involves cultivating something or familiarizing oneself with something so that it grows. This shows that we can engage in a wide variety of meditations, since there are many inner qualities we can cultivate. Meditation, therefore, is not just one thing.

As we will see, it is critical to understand the skill one is trying to cultivate in order to know what the object of that practice is. If we constantly familiarize our mind with something then that thing will get stronger and more deeply rooted into our everyday life. As we have seen, this idea is supported scientifically through the process of neuroplasticity, whereby the brain is constantly restructuring neural pathways based on environment and practice. If we cultivate distraction, anger or frustration, then our minds begin to more easily react to stimuli in those ways. If we practice their opposites, however, such as mindfulness, kindness, gratitude and compassion, then over time, these values and skills become stronger and more deeply rooted into our lives.

Some forms of meditation are nonanalytical, meaning that they do not require a critical engagement with an object of focus. Mindfulness meditation, for example, involves maintaining an observant and nonjudgmental stance to the

unfolding of experience in the present moment. Focused attention practices, also called “stabilizing” meditation, involve focusing the mind on a particular object, such as the breath, and maintaining concentration on that object in order to refine attention. While such practices have become quite popular in modern culture, and have many benefits, recently attention has also turned to “analytical” meditation. Different from simple present moment awareness, analytical meditation involves investigating an object or topic in order to gain insights into it. For example, it would be rather straight-forward for us to select someone who has been very helpful in our life and then meditate by stabilizing our mind on the gratitude we feel for this person. Such a practice would certainly be beneficial and would reinforce the gratitude we feel. However, such a practice would not help us feel gratitude toward someone who harmed us and who we considered an enemy. This is where analytical meditation comes in. Through analytical meditation, we can use our mind to investigate the person in question to try and find some way to feel gratitude toward this person, not necessarily for the harm they caused, but for other things they may have done that have benefited us. In this way, analytical meditation can lead us to new insights that can increase our gratitude, forgiveness and compassion. This allows us to overcome obstacles that stand in the way of our own happiness and that of others. The specific strategies for cultivating gratitude, forgiveness and compassion come later, but for now it is simply important to know the difference between non-analytical and analytical meditation, since both are useful. Most of the meditations in CIT are analytical meditations.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



Stabilizing Meditation

Analytical meditation involves holding an object in one's attention and then investigating it in order to gain a deeper insight. We've all had "aha" moments when we saw things in a different way, and we've all encountered people whose problems stem from their perspective. The purpose of analytical meditation is to gain these insights and shift our perspectives, allowing us to be free from things like resentment, jealousy or arrogance, which will inevitably cause problems for us. In order to gain the ability to practice analytical meditation, however, we first need to be able to concentrate on a topic or object of mind for a period of time. The practice of learning to do this is called stabilizing meditation, or focused attention training.

In ancient India, the metaphor of cultivating attention was compared to the project of taming a wild elephant. The wild elephant represents the mind, which has the power to go where it wants when it wants with seemingly little or no control by its master. If we sit for only a few seconds and attempt to focus our mind on one thing, we quickly realize that our mind goes where it wants and does not stay still. The fact that our mind tends not to obey our wishes creates problems for us – for instance, when we are trying to fall asleep

at night but can't stop thinking or worrying about something.

In the metaphor of taming the elephant, the elephant is tied with a rope to a stake in the ground and then watched by an attentive trainer who chides the elephant when it wanders away from the stake. The stake represents our *object of attention*, namely what we are focusing on. The rope is our capacity for mindfulness or attention. Just as the rope holds the elephant to the stake, so does our attention keep our mind on its object. When the elephant begins to roam, or move away from the stake, the elephant trainer, holding a goad in his hand, recognizes that the elephant is beginning to wander and lightly taps the elephant on its ear to remind it to go back to the stake. Similarly, when our mind begins to wander, we need *metacognition*, also called *introspective awareness*, which allows us to recognize when we have moved off or away from our object of focus.

When practicing focused attention or stabilizing meditation, the method is simple. Our purpose is simply to try to maintain our focus on our object (such as the breath) for longer and longer periods of time without distraction. Whenever we notice that our minds have wandered away from this object, for example to memories of the past or thoughts of the future or to distraction in the room, we gently bring our attention back to the breath. If we practice this for several minutes each day, we will naturally find that our mind gets trained, just like the wild elephant. Gradually we will be able to maintain our focus on the breath, or any other object, for long periods of time without distraction. This brings many benefits, including greater calmness to our body and mind, and it creates the foundation for analytical meditation.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



Stability and Clarity

The purpose of these practices is to cultivate certain capacities of the mind. With each practice that we engage in during CIT, we can ask ourselves, “What is it that we are trying to cultivate here?” In the focused attention practice, we are trying to cultivate stability and clarity. *Stability* is the ability for the mind to stay and remain where we focus it (i.e., our breath or any other object). The opposite of stability is distraction. In addition, we are cultivating clarity. If we are going to engage in a task, we want our mind to be clear with a sense of brightness, vividness and awareness. It is possible to cultivate stability, but lose clarity. This could happen if we are engaging in a practice and become very focused on your object. At the same time, we start to become lethargic and sleepy. Sometimes this will result in actually nodding off, slumping or drooling. These are signs that we are lacking clarity of mind. In that case, we need

to revivify our mind, open our eyes and bring greater clarity to our practice.

Each time we lose our object of focus or get distracted, and then bring our mind back to the object of focus, it is like we are strengthening the muscle of attention in our mind. This action is similar to going to the gym and doing pushups or pullups. We needn’t feel distressed that we got distracted, just as we don’t need to worry when we lower a weight; instead, we just need to lift that weight back up and build the muscle. So each moment of losing our attention is an opportunity to bring the mind back and strengthen our muscle of attention.

The focused attention practice becomes the very foundation of our ability to have ethical mindfulness by enabling us to stay more present, have more mindfulness (in terms of remembering values), and be more aware of our actions and speech.

SERIES I: SELF-CULTIVATION

SKILL 3: EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

In order to achieve greater well-being and to reduce behaviors that harm ourselves and others, we need to discern between potentially beneficial and harmful mental states. Beneficial mental states are the attitudes, emotions and perspectives that lead us toward happiness and away from suffering. For example, both scientific research and common sense suggest that having more gratitude, forgiveness and generosity in our lives leads to more happiness and better relations with others, whereas increasing ungratefulness, resentment and stinginess leads to less happiness and poorer relations. Harmful mental states are those that distort reality and lead to problems for ourselves and others, such as prejudice and hatred. Recognizing mental states in this way seems abstract until we look directly at our minds and start to observe them with equanimity and without getting caught up in them or trying to repress them. This skill, called emotional awareness, enables us to become less reactive and more resilient, providing a space between a stimulus and response that provides an opportunity to respond consciously and with more wisdom. Observing our minds with equanimity also sheds light on which mental states and habits we wish to cultivate more strongly, and which ones we wish to gradually weaken or transform.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will investigate whether the nature of thoughts and feelings is permanent or transitory.
- Participants will learn to differentiate between what they consider potentially harmful mental states and potentially beneficial mental states for themselves.

Practice

- Participants will cultivate equanimity toward their mental states, learning how to observe mental states with less attachment or aversion.
- Participants will learn to create more space between thoughts and speech/action in order to have greater mental balance and be less reactive.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

Emotional awareness is the ability to be aware of the rising and falling of our mental experiences on a moment by moment basis, and to increasingly discern for oneself beneficial mental states and potentially harmful ones. Our attentional skills that we have practiced thus far in CIT, including tracking sensations inside the body and focusing our attention on cultivation of mindfulness of the breath, can be directed toward any object of focus. To cultivate emotional awareness, we turn the focus of our attention on the mind itself, observing moment by moment mental or sensory experiences. Going back to the wild elephant metaphor, in this practice, the stake in the ground, or the object of focus, is the mind itself. By observing the moment by moment experiences of the mind, we see more clearly the nature of mental experience.

Resting the mind in its natural state means settling the mind by allowing thoughts, emotions and bodily sensations to arise and dissipate according to their own



natural rhythms. As we observe the mind non-judgmentally, we may find that we get less caught up in the thoughts, feelings and emotions that arise. To do this, we simply observe these thoughts, feelings and emotions and let them come and go naturally, without clinging on to them and without pushing them away. We observe our minds with an open curiosity, without trying to manipulate or change anything. At the same time, this practice is not like daydreaming, because in daydreaming we do become caught up in our thoughts and lose the awareness that we are daydreaming. The technical name for this “awareness of awareness” that we are cultivating is meta-cognitive awareness.

A metaphor often used to understand this practice is that of the blue sky. The sky is a backdrop against which clouds, birds, planes and other objects manifest, but it does not show a preference for any of these objects. It does not prefer the plane to the cloud or the rainbow to the bird. It does not attempt to hold on to any of these objects. The sky does not get involved with any of these objects. The sky is always there as a spacious container for these objects or things to emerge and dissipate. This is the same thing that occurs with our own thoughts, feelings and emotions. If we imagine our mind like the sky and think of the thoughts, feelings and emotions that appear, like the objects that emerge in the sky, then we will be able to observe these thoughts, feelings and emotions without getting caught up in them. Typically, when we have an emotion or thought that emerges in their mind, we react in one of two ways. Either we try and push it away because it is unpleasant, because we don’t want to think about it or feel it, or we get caught up in the emotion or feeling. For instance, when we are trying to fall asleep and a thought arises in the mind of something we need to

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

A POWERFUL TOOL
FOR CULTIVATING
EMOTIONAL AWARENESS
IS TO ALLOW
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COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

accomplish the next day, that thought triggers a whole set of new thoughts, emotions and sensations. It might lead to thinking of everything we have to get accomplished, the consequences of not getting it all finished and the likelihood there is simply not enough time to get it all done. This might even lead us to believe we will lose our job. None of these things is true, but is simply mental proliferation driven by anxiety. This fear is very unproductive, yet we get tangled up in our own thoughts and emotions all the time.

Emotional awareness is not about trying hard to clear the mind of thoughts, feelings or emotions. Through the practice, however, there may be moments when all thoughts, feelings or emotions drop away, and one is left with a sense of bare awareness. If so, that is a sign of progress. The benefits of this practice are recognizing the spaciousness of the mind and understanding a sense of equanimity toward our thoughts, feelings and emotions that arise. By allowing ourselves to create a little space or form a gap between the initial experience and

the subsequent reaction to the mental state, we have more space and time to respond in a way that can be more beneficial. It is like the relationship between a spark and a forest fire. A forest fire that is raging out of control is incredibly difficult to put out, but it began from a tiny spark, that if caught in time, anyone could easily have stamped out. This “mental proliferation” occurs when one mental event or sense impression triggers another mental event and so on, in quick succession, often escalating our emotional and physical response to the initial event.⁴⁹ We are often unaware that an angry outburst, for example, was the final stage in a series of many mental events that cascaded out of our control from an initial moment of frustration or irritation.

As we examine our thoughts, feelings and emotions, we can also investigate their nature: are they permanent or impermanent? Are they solid or non-material? Do they come and stay forever, or do they pass away? Are my thoughts and emotions me, or are they something separate from myself? If we examine our mental experience with openness and equanimity, we may come to our own conclusions about the nature of our minds.

Potentially Harmful and Beneficial Mental States

Psychology groups emotions into positive and negative categories based on whether they feel good or bad. In other words, we categorize “joy” as a positive emotion while classifying “sadness” as negative. While this is useful for some purposes, it does not help us understand which emotional states are helpful for us or not in achieving greater well-being for ourselves and others and which we might therefore want to cultivate. For example, being joyful at seeing another person suffer



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



(called *Schadenfreude* in German) may feel good temporarily, but is hardly an emotion that is likely to lead to long-term well-being or something we would want to promote in ourselves and society.

If our purpose is ethical discernment, then we can categorize emotions and mental states in another way, based on whether they tend to promote individual and collective well-being or not. No one can decide for us what is beneficial or potentially harmful, and the approach in CIT is not to prescribe certain emotions, attitudes and mental states as inherently beneficial or harmful. Rather, it is up to each of us to determine what we feel is potentially beneficial or harmful. We can use several methods for doing so. First, is to use common sense. We can ask ourselves, “What would my life be like if I had more of X?” where X can be any mental state, such as generosity, forgiveness, contentment, compassion, patience, self-confidence, self-acceptance or concentration; but also states like resentment, prejudice, anger, fear, arrogance, etc. Then we can ask, “What would

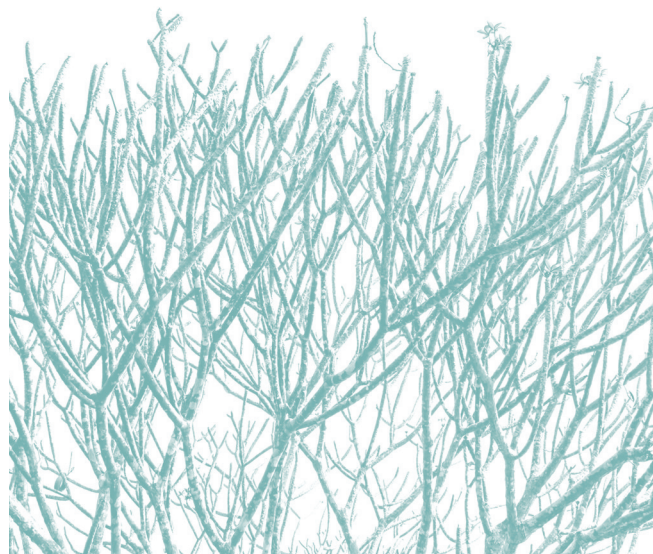
society look like if people in general had more X?” such as generosity, forgiveness, etc. We can also look at our experience, asking, “How do I feel, and what experiences do I tend to have when I am experiencing X?” Lastly, one can look into the emerging scientific literature and see, “What does science say would happen to my body, my mind and my relationships if I had more X?”

Engaging in this process of self-inquiry will lead to an ever-growing understanding about what we wish to cultivate and what we wish to gradually weaken and diminish in our minds. This is directly connected with our values, what kind of person we want to be and what kind of life we want to lead. Fortunately, as noted before, the science of neuroplasticity shows that through repeated practice we have the ability to strengthen certain neural pathways, and that similarly we weaken other pathways when we let them fall into disuse. This means we do have the potential to change over time and reap the benefits of such changes in our lives.

SERIES I: SELF-CULTIVATION

SKILL 4: SELF-COMPASSION

The process of self-inquiry and the ability to examine our mental experiences directly allow for the practice of genuine self-compassion. Self-inquiry may reveal to us that all of our thoughts are driven by our fundamental desire for happiness and the alleviation of suffering, but that harmful mental states actually lead us away from these goals. It has the potential to show us that if we get caught up in material and short-sighted concerns, believing that achieving these goals will actually lead to enduring happiness, it will be harder to find true satisfaction. Both common sense and research show us that material gain, physical pleasure, praise and status bring only temporary happiness and not lasting contentment. Furthermore, unrealistic expectations of ourselves can lead to excessive pressure and self-criticism when we meet with the reality that we cannot be exceptional at everything. Fortunately, self-compassion also leads us to the realization that we are capable of change, since we can gain insight, develop skills and familiarize ourselves with more productive attitudes and emotional responses. The goal of self-compassion, therefore, is to build confidence and resolve in one's ability to achieve lasting well-being, resilience and inner freedom.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will explore whether the underlying motivation beneath all of our thoughts and actions is a desire for happiness and well-being.
- Participants will explore how suffering and happiness do not depend solely on external situations, but on our own emotions, thoughts, attitudes and habits of mind, which we can transform.
- Participants will learn how seeking external sources of happiness (material gain, sensory-dependent pleasure, praise and status), rather than internal ones, often fails to bring lasting satisfaction.
- Participants will explore how unrealistic expectations can lead to suffering and excessive self-criticism.

Practice

- Participants will explore through practice how harmful mental states can be changed, gaining confidence in the possibility of self-transformation.
- Participants will generate increasing resolve and determination to gradually transform their afflictive mental states.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

If we look at all living beings, including animals, it appears that we all want happiness, and none of us wants unhappiness. Since happiness can mean so many things, it is important to clarify that in CIT this basic wish for happiness refers to our fundamental orientation toward that which we consider good for us and those we care for, such as safety, security, well-being, health and so on. Simple observation shows that even non-human animals seek warmth in the winter and a safe place for themselves and their offspring. In fact, even single-cell organisms move toward nourishment and away from danger.

Finding True Sources of Happiness

That being said, research suggests that we are not terribly good at determining what will lead us to happiness. When individuals are asked to predict what future outcome will bring them happiness and will bring unhappiness, they prove consistently poor at predicting the effect these outcomes will have. Those who get what they wanted tend not to experience the lasting change in happiness that they predicted, and those who get what they don't want (an unfortunate thing happening) tend not to experience the decline in happiness that they expected.⁵⁰

Common experience also shows us this, although it is often easier to see in others' lives than our own. How often do we think (or do we see others think) that having something will bring great lasting satisfaction, and yet even when we achieve it, it results in only temporary happiness, or even worse, actual dissatisfaction and disappointment. How often do we see people chasing after the same things again and again, even though we know they will not achieve lasting happiness that way?

The problem is not our wish for happiness and to avoid unhappiness, pain, disappointment and distress, which is

universal and in itself a good thing. Rather, the problem seems to lie in us making mistakes with regard to understanding what will genuinely bring us lasting happiness. It's easy to see the problem in a person who believes that a steady stream of narcotics will bring them lasting happiness. It's harder to see the same problem in ourselves when we believe that increased fortune, status, praise, material possessions or finding the right partner will bring us true happiness. Similarly, it's easy to see that when a friend is dreading a certain outcome (like not getting what they want), that the outcome might not be as bad as they are fearing. It's harder to see this exaggeration in ourselves when we are afraid of something that we believe will bring us great and lasting unhappiness.

As in the previous skill, here we should use various methods to investigate what will in fact bring us greater lasting happiness and well-being. Our universal goal is happiness. If we think an external thing or circumstance can bring us happiness, we should examine this idea and see if it is true. Our society often tells us that certain external things will bring happiness. Four in particular stand out as general categories: pleasure, praise, material gain (such as wealth) and status/fame. However, under these broad categories we may come up with a variety of external circumstances that we think will bring happiness: finishing a major project; getting a raise; being a genius or very talented; winning a certain prize or award; being respected more at work; and so on.

Whatever things we want, if they are external, then we will probably find through investigation that we want them because we think they will lead to one of the four universal external circumstances that we tend to associate with happiness. And we believe that those external means will lead to happiness. Unfortunately, research, common experience and common sense all suggest that external conditions do not reliably lead to lasting happiness, satisfaction and well-being.



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

Beyond a certain minimum level, achieving more wealth, status, etc. do not increase our happiness. Moreover, our pursuit of these external things often leads to problems for ourselves and others. In extreme cases, we may trample on the rights and needs of others in our pursuit of these external things, even violating our own basic values. Ultimately, that only leads to destroy our own happiness, as well as that of others.

There is another path to happiness, however, and that is seeking internal conditions. What would the general categories be here? Again, examining research, common sense and common experience points us in a certain direction, toward compassion, forgiveness, gratitude, self-discipline, wisdom, contentment, integrity and honesty. As before, we can investigate and ask ourselves: if I had more of these in my life, what would my life be like? If society had more of these basic human values, what would society look like? Would an increase in these values lead to an increase in lasting happiness and satisfaction? That is the question we should investigate until we gain a level of conviction.

Like the general categories of external conditions (pleasure, praise, material gain and status/fame), these general internal conditions can also be connected to specific outcomes. For example, it may involve forgiving a specific person; developing stronger relationships with our family members; being more considerate of the needs of the poor and other disadvantaged groups; being able to show compassion to those who harm others; being able to see the humanity in those we previously disliked; and so on.

External circumstances are often beyond our control. We may wish to surround ourselves with nice people, but in reality, we cannot ensure this no matter how hard we try. We may wish to only hear praise, but there is no way to ensure this. We may wish for our wealth to only ever

increase, but this is impossible to guarantee. Instead of focusing on external things as the genuine sources of our happiness, we can instead focus on inner qualities. These are immediately accessible to us, are within our control to influence, can develop them at any moment and cost nothing to cultivate.

One important foundation for self-compassion is the growing realization that between external and internal factors, the internal ones are actually more important for our happiness and well-being. We tend to think the opposite: if only our life circumstances and the people in our lives would simply change to our satisfaction, we would be happy. It is common for many of us to think, “If only I had X external thing in my life, I would be happy.” This is natural. But far more than external factors, our own minds and attitudes are much more powerful in determining our level of happiness and satisfaction. Having more money but being less appreciative will not lead to happiness, nor will finding the right person, if our mind remains filled with confusion and misperceptions. It is crucial, therefore, that we take time to consider what it is we want to cultivate in our life in order to achieve happiness and greater well-being: external things like money, praise, status and sensory pleasure, or internal qualities like compassion, integrity, patience and understanding.

A famous metaphor told by an ancient Indian teacher, Shantideva, explains the futility of trying to achieve happiness by trying to get one’s external circumstances perfect. He states that if we want to prevent getting thorns stuck in our feet as we walk, we have two choices: either we can try to cover the whole world with leather, or we can put leather on the soles of our feet in the form of shoes. Covering our own two feet is as effective as covering the whole world, but far more practical. Similarly, we may think that we can achieve happiness by controlling all our external circumstances: only having nice people around us, only having nice things,



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



CONTRARY TO
POPULAR OPINION,
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DETERMINING OUR
LEVEL OF HAPPINESS
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THAN MATERIAL
POSSESSIONS.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

always receiving good service, living in the best places, having the best cars or possessions, only eating the best food. However, this is unrealistic. In reality, the more we try to achieve happiness by controlling everything in the external world, the more we will meet with frustration, disappointment and unhappiness. It's natural to want to avoid annoying people, but it just isn't practical. Although it may seem more difficult at first, a better strategy is to transform one's own mind and cultivate patience, learning to deal with adversity and beginning to see those annoying people and circumstances as slightly less annoying. This builds resilience, and gradually we begin to see that circumstances or persons we found difficult to tolerate are now much more manageable. By working on our own mental states or internal way of looking at the world and ourselves, we have a much better shot at achieving lasting happiness.

In the last module, we discussed potentially harmful and beneficial mental states. That knowledge supports self-



compassion. It is not that wealth, pleasure, praise or status are inherently bad and we should not seek them at all. There is no question that they play a role in our happiness and well-being. The real question is how much of a role. How invested should we be in seeking them as genuine causes of happiness? It is when this craving — a mental state — becomes too strong and too distorted that we begin to have problems. We lose sight of the fact that our inner qualities are more important and are better guarantees of happiness and well-being. We lose our sense of equanimity, a balanced state of mind where we are not overly-invested in either achieving or avoiding these concerns. This loss of balance is a major source of dissatisfaction.

Research in psychology speaks of being on the hedonic treadmill, where we continuously chase after money, status, pleasure and praise in an endless loop that leaves us needing more and more with less and less actual satisfaction.⁵¹ Moreover, investing overly in external circumstances for one's happiness can lead to compromising one's integrity. Here are a few examples for reflection:

1. I really want my boss to recognize me for being an excellent employee. If I lose equanimity and want this recognition badly enough, it could lead me to take credit for something that I didn't actually do. This is an example of how being so attached to praise and external rewards can lead down a path of unethical behavior.
2. I am terrified of running out of money, despite the fact that I am a wealthy individual. This fear drives me to cheat on my tax returns, so that I do not have to pay as much to the government. At the same time I am breaking the law; I am also cheating someone else out of money they may need to receive through a government program. This is an example of how attachment to wealth and aversion to loss can lead down the path of unethical behavior.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

3. I do not want to feel physical pain, so I drink all day and night. I numb my pain with alcohol because I am so averse to physical pain. Due to my addiction, I steal money from a friend and wrecked my car. This is an example of how being averse to physical or emotional pain can lead down the path of unethical behavior.

As noted, we can with practice reduce our attachment to the external conditions we tend to associate with happiness. They are mental states, and we have the ability to change our mental states. As Viktor Frankl realized while enduring unspeakable suffering in a Nazi concentration camp, “Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms — to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”⁵² Through practice we can increasingly gain more confidence in our power to change, reorienting ourselves away from an exclusive focus on external conditions toward a greater focus on the inner causes of genuine happiness.

Unrealistic Expectations

An especially prevalent mental state in today’s world that can be potentially quite harmful to ourselves is the unrealistic expectations we place on ourselves and others. We live in a society where certain people are held up to be considered the pinnacle of success. These include: rich, famous, beautiful, successful, smart and articulate people. We internalize these things and begin to believe that “I need to be like these people.” We think that we need to be above average in everything.

However, common sense shows that this is a very unrealistic expectation. For instance, if you ask people where they rank in terms of intelligence, job or school performance, popularity and many other areas, 80 to 90% of people will say they are in the top 50% of these categories. In some cases, as many as 40% will rank themselves in the

top 10%.⁵³ Statistically, this is impossible. By definition, half of all people in any category are below average. What this means is that each one of us is below average in about half of every category.

This distortion in our self-perception might be fine if it did not actually lead to harm. Sadly, this combination of perfectionism and self-delusion does often lead to significant harm. Instead of having resilience, it means that when we fail, we may have very damaging experiences of self-hate, self-loathing or we may even feel like ending our lives. This is a complete overreaction, but it stems from this unrealistic sense of perfectionism.

Such perfectionism is a tremendous cause of suffering within our society, causing us to judge ourselves harshly when we fail even in minor ways, and causing us to judge others harshly when they make mistakes and fall short of perfection. We can begin to fix this problem by analyzing these unrealistic expectations and shifting to a more realistic view of ourselves and others, one that is humble and realistic. A fundamental aspect of self-compassion is simply learning to see things more realistically, despite our mind’s tendency to distort reality. We tend to go through life with assumptions about the way things are or should be. When we place these assumptions under scrutiny, however, we often realize they are not accurate.

Self-compassion is deeply understanding the true causes of happiness and suffering, as well as cultivating greater contentment with, and acceptance of, what we have. Happiness and contentment are very closely related. The antidotes to the trap of the “hedonic treadmill” are realism, contentment and a sense of appreciation. This does not mean one does not strive for more in life, but this striving is should be done with an awareness of the genuine causes of happiness and suffering and remaining content with what one has in every moment.

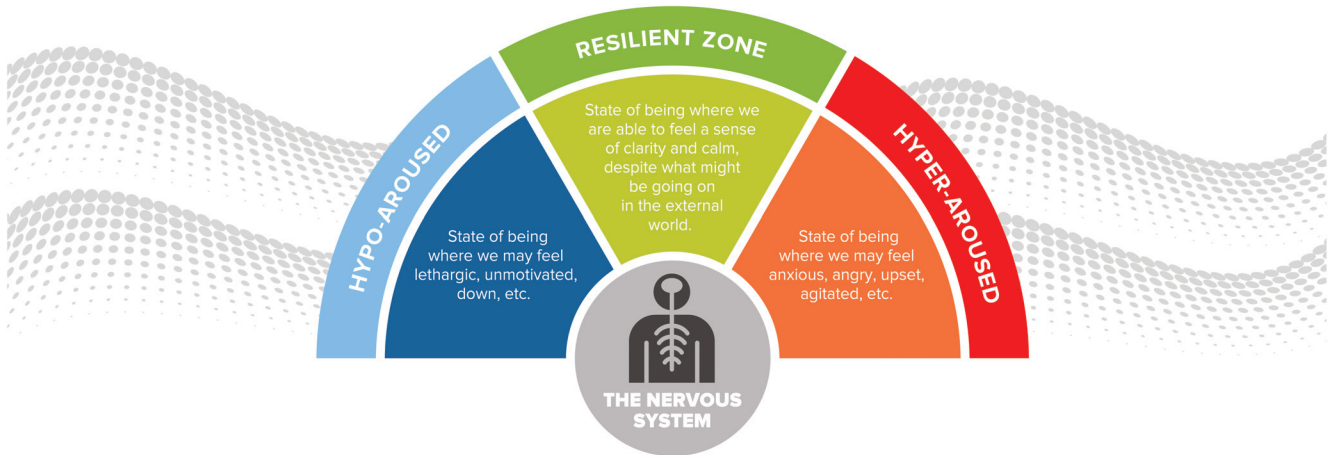


COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

NOTES

SKILL 1: CALMING BODY AND MIND

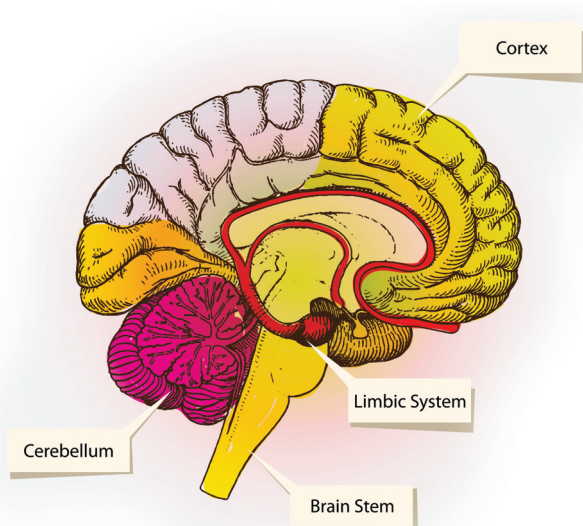


THE RESILIENT ZONE

- Stuck in the High Zone
- Stuck in the Low Zone

ORGANIZING PRINCIPLE: THREE PARTS OF THE BRAIN

- Survival Brain: Instinctual
- Limbic Area: Emotional
- Cortex: Thinking



NOTES

SKILL 1: CALMING BODY AND MIND



THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

- Sympathetic Nervous System
- Parasympathetic Nervous System

SKILLS

- Tracking
- Resourcing
- Grounding

TRAUMA

- Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study
- Connecting trauma and health
- Types of trauma



BUILDING RESOURCE EXERCISE

(This exercise is based on the Community Resilience Model designed by Elaine Miller-Karas.)

SKILL 1: CALMING BODY AND MIND

Write down three things that are resources for you:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

RESOURCES

A resource is anyone or anything that helps you feel better.

It can be internal (something you like about yourself, something you like to do), external (a person, memory, place, animal, spiritual figure, faith tradition, etc.) or imagined.

Circle one of your resources.

Write down three details about the resource that you circled or draw a visual representation of your resource.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Now read the three details you wrote down or look at the drawing of your resource.

See if you **notice** any pleasant or neutral sensations in the body. If you do notice a pleasant or neutral sensation, pay attention to that sensation for a few moments.

Write down any sensations that you noticed on the inside that were pleasant or neutral.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

SKILL 1: CALMING BODY AND MIND

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 3: If you like, would you share any positive or neutral sensations in your body that you notice right now as you are sharing your resource with me?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise.



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 1: CALMING BODY AND MIND

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

1. Bring to mind one of your resources. Try to imagine the resource in as much detail as possible. Either draw your resource in your journal or list some of the most vivid details of your resource.
2. Notice what is happening inside as you think about the resource and notice the sensations that are pleasant or neutral. If you find a pleasant or neutral sensation, stay with it for a few moments.
3. Write down the pleasant or neutral sensations that you noticed. It may be helpful to bring a resource to mind, track the sensations and write about it each time you journal.
4. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they might be valuable.



A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

SKILL 2: ETHICAL MINDFULNESS



- [illegible]

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

A young child with dark hair, wearing a red and white striped shirt, is lying on their side on the back of a large elephant. The elephant is lying down in a grassy field, resting its head on the ground. The child's head is resting on the elephant's back, and they appear to be sleeping or resting peacefully. The background shows a lush green environment with trees and foliage.

- Meditation
- Stability and Clarity
- Building the muscle of mindfulness and awareness

[illegible]



REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

SKILL 2: ETHICAL MINDFULNESS

Instructions: Answer the following questions as freely and openly as possible. Your answers are for you only and are not meant to be shared. As such, do not worry about the quality of your prose or grammar. There's no need to think much before you write; you can just write.

1. Write down one or two examples of times when you lacked heedfulness, mindfulness or awareness and it may have caused you some difficulties.

2. Write down one or two examples of times when you employed heedfulness, mindfulness or awareness and it benefited you or saved you from an unfortunate situation.

3. What is one small step you could take to increase your heedfulness, mindfulness or awareness?

SKILL 2: ETHICAL MINDFULNESS

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 3: What small step do you think you could take to cultivate this skill?

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise.



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 2: ETHICAL MINDFULNESS

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

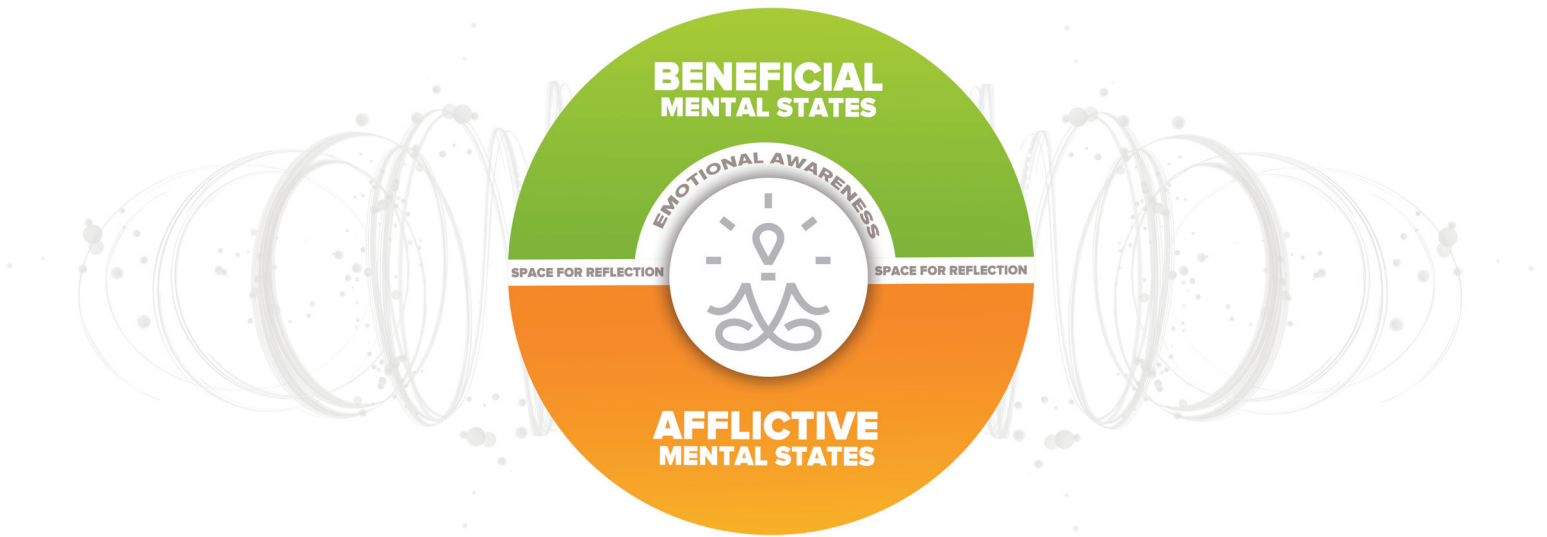
1. Write about a time you used (or forgot to use) ethical mindfulness this week.
2. Which aspect of ethical mindfulness in particular (heedfulness, mindfulness or awareness) did you use (or forget to use), and how did that happen?
3. How might this situation have turned out differently if you hadn't used (or forgotten to use) your ethical mindfulness?
4. What types of things can get in the way of our ethical mindfulness?
5. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they might be valuable.
6. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your ethical mindfulness, how has that been progressing, or what have you been learning?

The next time you practice this exercise, try and use an example that involves one of the three aspects of ethical mindfulness (heedfulness, mindfulness, awareness) that you did not focus on this time.



A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

SKILL 3: EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

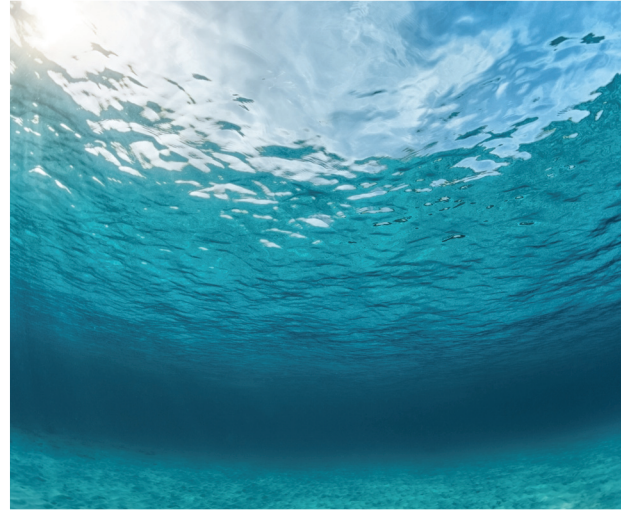


- Beneficial vs. Harmful Mental States
- The Spark to the Forest Fire
- Mental Proliferation
- Equanimity

[illegible]

NOTES

SKILL 3: EMOTIONAL AWARENESS



RESTING THE MIND IN ITS NATURAL STATE

- Blue Sky Metaphor
- The Blue Ocean Metaphor

BENEFITS OF EMOTIONAL AWARENESS



REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

SKILL 3: EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Instructions: Answer the following questions as freely and openly as possible. Your answers are for you only and are not meant to be shared. As such, do not worry about the quality of your prose or grammar. There's no need to think much before you write; you can just write.

1. Describe a time in your life when you could have let your thoughts or emotions get out of control, but you were able to stop the spark from becoming a forest fire.

2. How might this situation have turned out differently if you had not controlled your response or had let it get out of hand?

3. What would your life be like if you were able to be more emotionally aware and less reactive in general?

SKILL 3: EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 3: How would your life be different if you were more aware of your thoughts, feelings and emotions without getting as caught up in them?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise.



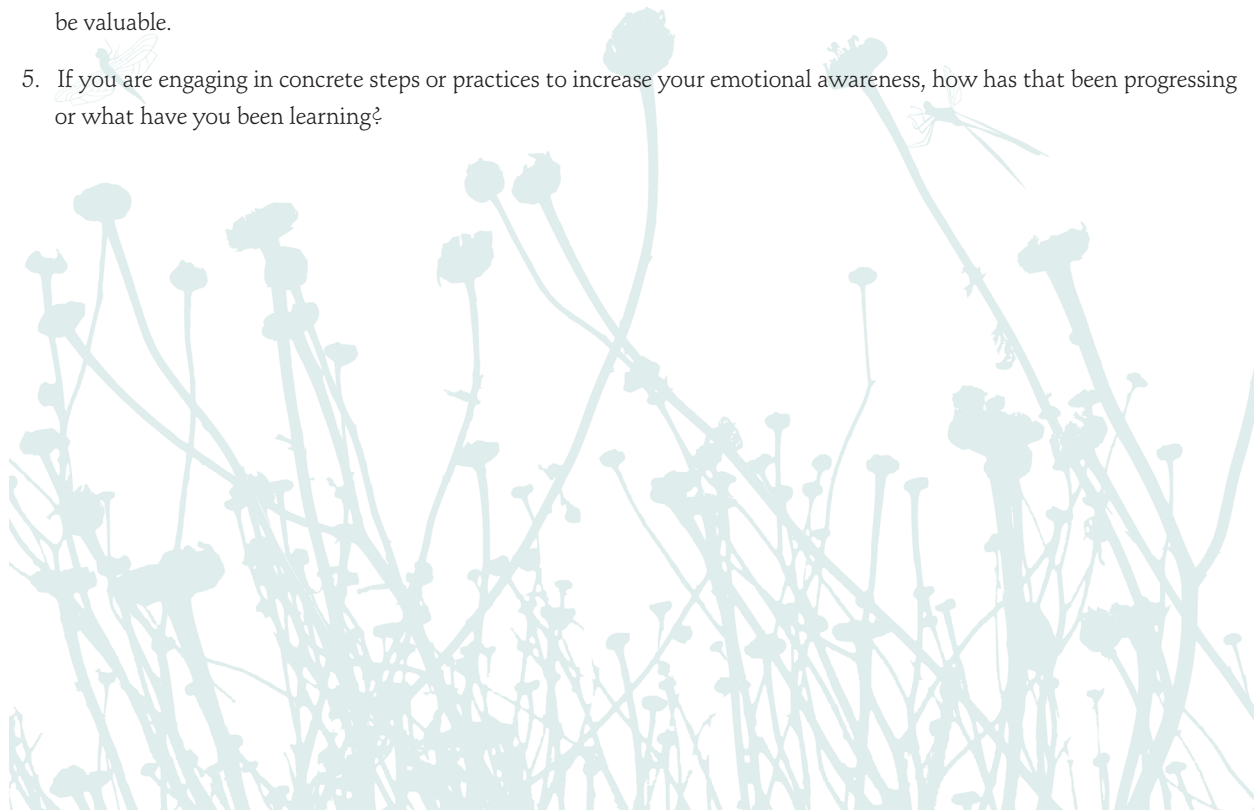
CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 3: EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Describe an aspect of emotional awareness that you now have, but that you didn't have when you were younger (such as an insight into a particular emotion, or an ability to recognize emotions, etc.).
2. Since the last time you journaled, was there a moment when a spark could have turned into a forest fire? Or did? How would this situation have turned out differently if you had had less emotional awareness?
3. Reflect on the skills you used to prevent the situation from being worse than it was.
4. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they might be valuable.
5. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your emotional awareness, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?



A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

SKILL 4: SELF-COMPASSION

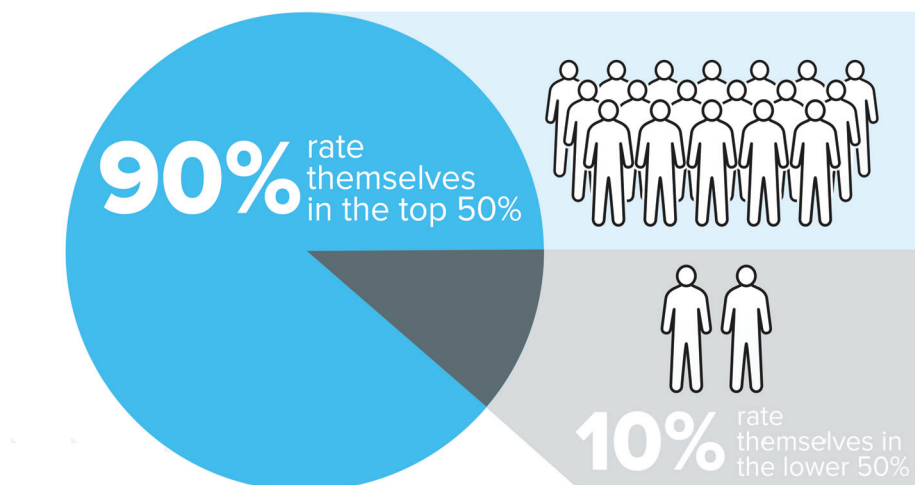


- Hedonic Treadmill

[illegible]

NOTES

SKILL 4: SELF-COMPASSION



SELF-COMPASSION

- Seeing reality more clearly
- Desire for happiness and alleviation of suffering
- Causes of suffering

SELF-COMPASSION

- Seeing reality more clearly
- Desire for happiness and alleviation of suffering
- Causes of suffering



REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

SKILL 4: SELF-COMPASSION

Instructions: Answer the following questions as freely and openly as possible. Your answers are for you only and are not meant to be shared. As such, do not worry about the quality of your prose or grammar. There's no need to think much before you write; you can just write.

1. Can you think of a time when you got overly attached to, or concerned about, something you were trying to achieve (e.g., financial gain, pleasure, status or praise) or avoid (e.g., financial loss, physical pain, blame/disrespect or loss of status)?

2. How did this loss of equanimity affect your life? Why did it seem so important at the time?

3. How would your life have been different if you have had more equanimity in this situation?



MINDFUL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

SKILL 4: SELF-COMPASSION

Instructions: Each participant will select a partner with whom to have a mindful conversation. Take turns answering the following questions. The partner whose turn it is to listen should follow these rules:

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 1: Has your mind ever tricked you into becoming overly attached or concerned with something you later realized was relatively superficial? How did it do this?

Question 2: How might unrealistic expectations of yourself and others lead to problems in your life?

Question 3: Would your life be different if you were less focused on the more trivial concerns of yourself and more focused on the concerns of others? How?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise.



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 4: SELF-COMPASSION

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Exercise #1: Inner Versus External Factors of Happiness

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. List one or more internal qualities that you feel bring (or could bring) happiness to your life.
2. Choose one thing from the list above. What is it specifically about this thing that brings you happiness? If you had more of it, would you have more happiness?
3. List one or more material possessions or accomplishments that you feel bring (or could bring) happiness to your life.
4. Choose one thing from the list above. What is it specifically about this thing that brings you happiness? If you had more of it, would you have more happiness?
5. Repeat the questions from above, but this time looking at the internal and external things that you think bring (or might bring) unhappiness.
6. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they might be valuable.
7. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your self-compassion, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 4: SELF-COMPASSION

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Exercise #2: Hedonic Treadmill

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Thinking about the past few weeks or months, what are some of the things that have occupied most of your thoughts and actions?
2. What are you trying to achieve, if anything, by doing and thinking about these things (i.e., what goals are you pursuing)?
3. What are you trying to avoid?
4. How do these pursuits relate to your inner values?
5. Consider a time you achieved something similar to an item you described in question 2. How long lasting was the happiness you experienced when you achieved this goal?
6. Consider a time you experienced a difficulty like one listed in question 3. How long lasting was the difficulty? How long was it before you shifted your attention to the next difficulty that could befall you?
7. In looking back over your answers, is there any correlation between those goals that strengthen your inner values versus those that rely on external factors?
8. Are there times when striving for these goals and trying to avoid these difficulties causes you stress, anxiety or to act unethically, causing harm to yourself and others?
9. How could you approach these situations differently, where we continue to care appropriately for ourselves and others, without leading to as much anxiety, stress and harm?
10. What inner qualities could you develop to approach these situations with greater mental balance and self-compassion?
11. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they might be valuable.



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 4: SELF-COMPASSION

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Exercise #3: Unrealistic Expectations

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Can you describe a time in your life when you set realistic expectations for yourself and you met or exceeded your expectation?
2. How did it feel to meet or exceed your expectations?
3. Describe a time when you failed to meet your own expectations and reacted harshly to yourself, or a current situation in which you feel you might fail to meet expectations.
4. Imagine someone you love dearly telling you about this situation and their feelings of self-judgment. What specific things would you say to them?
5. Do you think these same things would apply to you in your situation? Why or why not?
6. Although the outcome may not have changed, how would your well-being have been affected if you had set more realistic expectations for yourself?
7. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to set more realistic expectations for yourself, how has that been progressing, or what have you been learning?
8. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they might be valuable.

SERIES 1: SELF-CULTIVATION

CITATIONS

⁴⁵ This section and its terminology have been heavily informed by the work of Elaine Miller-Karas of the Trauma Resource Institute. For further elaboration of the concepts discussed here, see Miller-Karas, E. (2015). *Building resilience to trauma: The trauma and community resiliency models*. Routledge.

⁴⁶ Van Der Kolk, B. (2014). *The body keeps the score*. New York, NY: Viking. 76-88.

⁴⁷ Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: mindfulness and its role in psychological wellbeing. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 84 (4), 822.; Davidson, R. J., KabatZinn, J., Schumacher, J., Rosenkranz, M., Muller, D., Santorelli, S. E., ... & Sheridan, J. F. (2003). Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. *Psychosomatic medicine*, 65 (4), 564-570.; Brown, K. W., Ryan, R. M., & Creswell, J. D. (2007). Mindfulness: Theoretical foundations and evidence for its salutary effects. *Psychological inquiry*, 18 (4), 211-237.

⁴⁸ See for example see, Kabat-Zinn, J., & Hanh, T. N. (2009). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. Delta.

⁴⁹ Grabovac, et. al., "Mechanisms of Mindfulness: A Buddhist Psychological Model." *Mindfulness* (2011) 2:154-166

⁵⁰ See Dan Gilbert, *Stumbling on Happiness* (Vintage Books, 2007), and Ciaran O'Connor, "Predicting Happiness and Unhappiness: A Skill We Never Master," PsychCentral, available at: <https://psychcentral.com/lib/predicting-happiness-and-unhappiness-a-skill-we-never-master/>

⁵¹ Brickman, P., & Campbell, D. T. (1971). Hedonic relativism and planning the good society. *Adaptation-level theory*, 287-305.; Fredrickson, B. L., Cohn, M. A., Coffey, K. A., Pek, J., & Finkel, S. M. (2008). Open hearts build lives: positive emotions, induced through loving-kindness meditation, build consequential personal resources. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 95(5), 1045.

⁵² Frankl, V. E. (1985). *Man's search for meaning*. Simon and Schuster.

⁵³ Elga, A. (2005). On overrating oneself... and knowing it. *Philosophical Studies*, 123(1-2), 115-124. Hoorens, V. "Self-enhancement and Superiority Biases in Social Comparison." *European Review of Social Psychology*. Volume 4, 1993 - Issue 1. 113-139.



SERIES II: RELATING TO OTHERS

Based on the skills in Series I, which focused on developing an awareness of oneself and the cultivation of genuine compassion for oneself, Series II turns to focus outward in order to improve relationships with others. This involves examining how we interact with others so that we avoid actions and attitudes that may cause harm and cultivate the actions and attitudes that help others.

SERIES II: RELATING TO OTHERS

SKILL 5: IMPARTIALITY AND COMMON HUMANITY

Series II shifts from a focus on ourselves to a focus on others and how we relate to them. We already tend to exhibit compassion, empathy, generosity and tolerance toward those we love. This comes naturally. To extend these emotions and attitudes toward strangers and those we feel distant from, we need to recognize common humanity and cultivate a degree of impartiality. Without a degree of impartiality, bias can distort our compassion such that we could even treat others unethically or harmfully out of preference for those we like. Too much preferential treatment and excessive loyalty, however, actually harms ourselves, our society and even our loved ones, because it is a out of step with our interdependence, our sense of justice and our common humanity. By cultivating impartiality and recognizing that all human beings seek more happiness and less suffering, we see that we are equal in a fundamental way. If we think deeply about this equality as we develop pro-social attitudes and skills, we can learn to direct them toward all people impartially.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will explore explicit and implicit bias and methods for weakening them.
- Participants will explore what we all have in common as human beings, such as wanting happiness and wanting to avoid harm and suffering.
- Participants will learn that psychological essentialism (relating to categories as if they had real, fixed essences) can have harmful effects and perpetuate injustice and division.

Practice

- Participants will learn to reduce partiality and bias and increase a sense of common humanity by reflecting on the superficial nature of the categories of friend, enemy and stranger in light of the deeper commonalities shared by all people.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



In thinking about how we want to relate to others, we can consider how we'd like them to relate to us: with kindness, understanding, empathy, forgiveness, generosity and compassion. If we want these things for ourselves, integrity and consistency demand that we should extend them to others also – otherwise we would have a double standard for ourselves and others. Unfortunately when it comes to relationships between individuals and groups, we find that there often is a double standard. We have a common tendency to privilege our own well-being and the well-being of those of our “in-group” (our family, our friends, our religion, our racial or ethnic group, our nation) over others who we consider strangers or enemies. While this is so common that it may be hard to even question the correctness of such a view, we can see that it is a problem if we step outside our own situation and think more broadly. Between any two individuals or human groups, can we say which one deserves happiness more than the other? Even if we were to think we could determine this, would both sides agree with our conclusion?

Furthermore, we can see how bias, prejudice and unfair preferential treatment causes a number of ills in our

relationships and our societies. If these qualities were to increase among family members, would the family be happier? If they were to increase in our society, in our work places, or in our justice system, what would happen? Moreover, we can look at places in the world where bias and prejudice is especially strong between different groups. In such places, as an outsider, we can clearly see that such views lead to protracted conflict, often violent conflict, that only harms the entire community and people on both sides in the long run.

Common Humanity

Fortunately, it is not hard to use common sense, common experience and science to arrive at our common humanity. The principle of “common humanity” is based on what all human beings have in common. For example, we all seek happiness and wish to avoid suffering. Even when we engage in actions that appear to lead to pain or suffering, the motivation underlying them always seems to be seeking a greater well-being.⁵⁴ This isn't just something we share on a mental or emotional level; it is even embodied in our nervous system. As seen in the skill on Calming the Body and Mind, we all have a central nervous systems that reacts to perceived danger and safety in order to keep us safe and alive. In fact, we even have this in common with non-human animals.

Once we recognize aspects of our common humanity, we begin to see other people more and more as equal to and the same as ourselves in a fundamental way, despite our various differences. Gradually, we can even see that others' lives are as important as our own. We begin to see that the categories we create to differentiate groups are superficial and changeable when compared to our common humanity. While these categories can be useful and must be acknowledged, when we lose sight of our

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



common humanity and only see our differences, we are moving toward the possibility of hardened divisions that then justify unfair and unethical treatment of one another.

Impartiality

CIT uses the term “impartiality” to refer to the diminishment of strong prejudice or bias (partiality) in favor of one group over another. This does not mean, however, that we become neutral or apathetic toward everyone. Nor does it mean reducing the positive feelings we have for our loved ones. Rather, impartiality in CIT means elevating how we appreciate and value others who we once saw as unrelated to us (strangers and those in so-called “out-groups”) to a similar degree of closeness through focusing on our common humanity.

Because of our proximity and familiarity with our near and dear ones, we may still have a different and special relationship with them, and this in no way stands in opposition to impartiality. A useful metaphor here is the sun, which radiates light and energy in all directions

without any intention of favoring one person or group over any other, yet which naturally shines its light more strongly on those who are closer to it. Similarly, even though the people closest to us will experience more of our compassion and kindness, this need not be because of our strong bias toward them or a thought that they somehow deserve more happiness and others deserve less.

The Negative Consequences of Bias

We will not be motivated to cultivate impartiality and a sense of common humanity if we do not recognize the harm caused to ourselves, our loved ones and our communities by bias and prejudice. We can easily see how people do not appreciate other people who have a lot of bias or partiality. For example, we do not value judges who exhibit strong bias toward one person or group over another. We do not appreciate it when our supervisor at our workplace exhibits strong bias toward a colleague over ourselves. No one would want to lose a job opportunity, for example, because a hiring manager is friends with the parents of another candidate. In contrast, we do appreciate people who find a way to rise above bias and extend their sense of caring beyond their in-group.

A key step in this skill, therefore, is spending time to reflect on the negative effects of bias, partiality and prejudice. We can ask ourselves, “What happens to an individual if their bias and prejudice grows? What effect does this have on their happiness and their relationships with others?” Similarly, we can ask, “What happens in a society when prejudice and bias increase? What happens if bias increases between two different groups, where they start to develop stronger prejudices about each other?” Lastly we can make it personal and ask, “What if bias and prejudice were to increase in my life?” Then we can go on to ask the reverse of these

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

questions: “What would happen if bias and prejudice were to decrease in a person, in society, between two groups that are often in conflict or in myself?” This method of questioning can be used for all the CIT skills and can be accomplished through quiet reflection, journaling or dialogue. The more we contemplate such questions, the more we will develop critical insight into the harmful effects of bias. Then on the basis of that critical insight, we can cultivate an embodied understanding of impartiality and common humanity, which will undermine and weaken bias in our minds. Going through this process will also enhance our ability to share our understanding of bias and impartiality with others in a compelling way.

Implicit Bias

It is easy to see the harmful effects of bias when considering racism, sexism and the enemy images created in violent conflicts. It is easy to think of people who exemplify bias and prejudice. In general, most of us do not see ourselves as very biased as prejudiced, but surprisingly, even those we consider biased or prejudiced will often say they are not. What we see as their bias, they may see as views based on fact. This suggests that we may not actually recognize many of our own biases, instead mistaking them for fact or simply taking them for granted as “the way things are.”

Recent research in psychology supports the notion that we can have biases that are unrecognized. This is called “implicit bias,” which may be based on norms that we have been exposed to in society and in our culture. Even if we may not be consciously biased against a particular group, we may still harbor negative associations with that group.⁵⁵ For example, one tool developed by psychologists is the Implicit Association Test, which can be taken for free

online at Harvard University. This test uses reaction times to see whether those who take it associate white names and faces with good things as quickly as they associate black names or black faces with good things, and the same for bad things.⁵⁶ If there is a clear discrepancy in reaction times, this may suggest an implicit bias. This test can be used to judge a variety of types of bias, and often the results are surprising to those who take it.

Implicit bias appears to be reflected in many situations in today’s world.⁵⁷ Recently, police departments in the U.S. have been under greater scrutiny for potential implicit bias against African-Americans after a number of tragic shooting deaths. Studies have shown that bias may impact individuals’ decisions on how long of a prison sentence someone deserves, and that even in split-second decisions, such as whether to shoot or not, reaction times may differ based on the perceived race of the person whose image is presented.⁵⁸ Fortunately, studies have also emerged suggesting that intentional training methods, such as the cultivation of lovingkindness, can reduce implicit bias across groups.⁵⁹



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

The problem lies not in our ability to categorize, which is essential for our survival and indeed for all conceptual thought. The problems arise when we mistake our categories for absolutes and then use these to justify treating one group of people as lesser than another group. This process is called “psychological essentialism,” because we “essentialize” a group as a fixed category with set characteristics. Explicit bias, such as racism, sexism and anti-semitism, continues to be a serious problem, but we should also be aware of the potential for implicit bias.

In some cases, learning about implicit bias makes people feel somewhat hopeless, especially people who care about others and are shocked to find that they harbor implicit associations that are negative toward one group of people. It is important to remember that recognizing bias is the first step to overcoming it, and that we have every reason to believe that bias – even implicit bias – can be overcome with time, reflection and practice. Furthermore, while it may not be possible to eliminate all elements of bias, this is not necessary. The most dangerous aspect of bias – explicit or implicit – is when we see a person or group of people as less deserving, less human, less valuable, less equal than ourselves and others like us. That is the type of bias that leads to conflict, violence and dehumanization, and that prevents compassion and our ability to act with integrity. Recognizing that we have biases may make us feel uncomfortable at first, but reflecting on the fact that we can impact our biases directly through effort should increase our motivation and determination to relate to all individuals from the more stable basis of our common humanity, equality and fundamental sameness.



Cultivating Impartiality

We have already examined one way to cultivate impartiality, and that is by focusing on our common humanity. The more we see all human beings as sharing basic qualities, the more we will contextualize our differences appropriately. Another powerful method is to examine the superficiality of our categories, such as the categories of “friends,” “enemies” and “strangers.” Consciously and unconsciously, these categories significantly affect how we relate to others. In general, we are very nice to our friends and want them to have happiness. Enemies on the other hand, we may want to see suffer. For strangers, we tend not to care too much one way or the other.

There is a reflective practice drawn from the Tibetan *Lojong* tradition that can lead to deeper critical insight into this. Choose and then picture in your mind three people: a close friend or loved one, a stranger to whom you feel somewhat indifferent, and a person who you find difficult or who you somewhat dislike. (It is advised not to begin with your worst enemy for the

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

third person.) Think for a moment about how you would really feel if something wonderful happened to your close friend or loved one. Imagine it and picture it in your head. Likely, you would rejoice in their good fortune and feel happy. Now picture the same or a similar wonderful thing happening to the stranger. As you imagine this, it is likely you will feel less joy. Finally, picture a similarly wonderful thing happening to the person you dislike or find difficult. You will likely feel even less joy, perhaps no joy at all, or you may even feel disturbed at the thought.

Now we can spend some time to reflect: What justifies these three different reactions to the same event? We seem to care more about the happiness of those we are close to and not much about the happiness of those we dislike. Is this because they actually deserve happiness to different degrees, or is it a result of our own preference and bias toward them? Upon examination, we can easily see from our own experience how friends can become enemies, enemies become friends, and strangers become both enemies and friends. Although the individuals we place in these categories change throughout our life, their placement completely affects how we relate to them. These categories are no different than any category of people we create, whether it is based on race, ethnicity, political views, gender, etc. These categories are superficial and changeable and do not define any particular essence of all members of that category. The categories may be relevant (it could be problematic to mistake an enemy for a friend), but the key point here is that the differences need not lead to a bias that sees a person or group of people as lesser than others.

Two critical insights that may emerge from doing this practice are as follows. First, we may come to realize that the qualities we attribute to others – both positive and negative – come not entirely from their own side,

but also from our own perception of them. In other words, we see certain people as lovely (such as our family and children) because they are close to us, but are they objectively more lovely than other people (such as others' families and children)? Or do they appear that way because of our close feelings for them? Similarly, we tend to think that people we dislike have negative qualities that come completely from their side. But we can see that they do not appear as objectionable and horrible to their own loved ones and friends. So how much of those negative qualities is in fact our own projection, based on our feelings, and not objective? The psychologist Aaron Beck, father of Cognitive Therapy, has famously said that when we are angry with someone, 90% of the negative qualities we attribute to them are nothing more than our own projection. Dr. Beck sees the root of anger and hostility among people as largely coming from these exaggerated beliefs.⁶⁰ This has clear implications for understanding both small-scale interpersonal conflicts as well as large scale conflicts that are supported by enemy images.⁶¹

While reducing bias is essential for allowing our compassion to extend outward in ever-increasing circles, we are in fact the first to benefit from this practice. Reducing bias and recognizing common humanity makes us feel closer to others and a part of the whole human community. We gradually recognize that the superficial differences that made others feel so different to ourselves are in fact minor compared to what we have in common. This paves the way for empathizing with others and experiencing solidarity with people around the world and those who may be living next door. That sense of connection, which is the very opposite of loneliness and isolation, is a great contributor to our well-being and happiness.

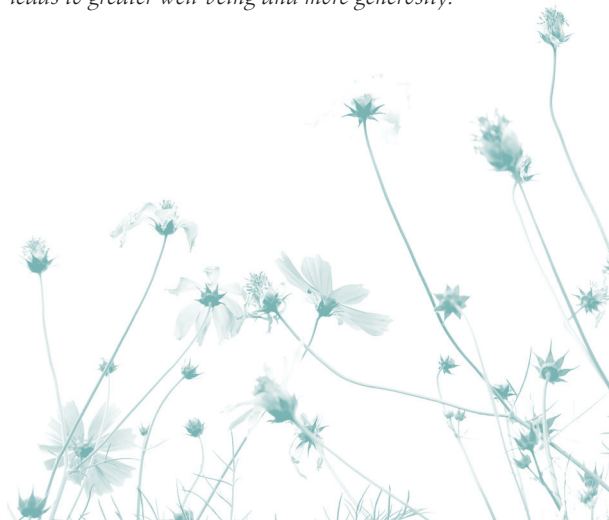


SERIES II: RELATING TO OTHERS

SKILL 6: FORGIVENESS AND GRATITUDE

Forgiveness is often seen as an interpersonal process involving both oneself and a transgressor or perpetrator. But the intrapersonal aspect of forgiveness, which is a releasing of anger and resentment and a replacement of those with positive feelings toward the transgressor, is even more important and is always a choice open to us. This kind of forgiveness is a gift we give to ourselves, because it opens the door for inner freedom and happiness. Without it, we can remain chained to past events and other people, causing continued suffering to ourselves and others.

Gratitude is a powerful way to cultivate forgiveness and is itself essential for happiness. Unfortunately, due to our biologically-wired negativity bias, our minds often play tricks on us, leading us to believe that others do more to harm us than to benefit us, when in most cases the opposite is true. Gratitude for others is an essential step in both cultivating greater happiness and compassion. By appreciating what others do to benefit us and the harm they refrain from doing to us, we can both feel better and develop greater affection and concern for others. Furthermore, by learning to appreciate what we have, rather than what we lack, we can develop a sense of contentment, which leads to greater well-being and more generosity.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will learn the benefits of forgiveness for one's health, peace of mind and relationships.
- Participants will learn to distinguish forgiveness from condoning, excusing, forgetting or reconciling.
- Participants will learn specific strategies for cultivating forgiveness.
- Participants will learn the benefits of gratitude.
- Participants will explore interdependence.
- Participants will learn that it is possible to be grateful even for the harm that someone abstains from doing to them.

Practice

- Participants will get increasingly better at noticing the ways others benefit them and recalling past benefit.
- Participants will cultivate the ability to recognize how they often focus on transgressions rather than the benefits others do for them.
- Participants will develop an increasingly greater appreciation for forgiveness and ability to forgive.
- Participants will gain an increasing ability to see the positive in people, objects and experiences that were previously taken for granted.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

Although forgiveness and gratitude are part of Series II “Relating to Others,” they are both also acts of self-compassion.

Understanding Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a gift we give ourselves. Through the process of forgiveness, we release and let go of pain and resentment, which only serve to negatively impact our own psychological and physical well-being while doing nothing to affect the transgressor.⁶² It is important to understand that forgiveness is not forgetting. Sometimes it is not possible or even beneficial to forget what happened in the past. Forgiveness is also not condoning, because it does not mean that the harm that was done is justified or was right in any way. Forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation either; it does not imply that there will be a new positive relationship between ourselves and the person who transgressed against us. Forgiveness is also not a sign of weakness or an excuse to allow someone to continue abusing us. Rather, many find the key to forgiveness to lie in releasing internal anger and hurt, accepting what has happened and moving on with no ill-will in one’s heart toward the transgressor.⁶³



Forgiveness has been shown to be very beneficial to our own well-being and can promote better relationships with others, yet it is often so hard to find. That is why it can be helpful to learn strategies for cultivating forgiveness.

One strategy is to try and separate the actor from the action. We make this distinction for ourselves all the time. We do something wrong to someone. When we recognize this wrongdoing, we may apologize, but we tend not to condemn ourselves forever for each and every mistake we have ever made, nor do we quickly reach the conclusion that we are an evil person. Similarly, if we examine someone to whom we feel anger or resentment, we may recognize that we are failing to extend the same understanding toward them. Are they necessarily evil or a bad person because they made a mistake or did something harmful? Are we condemning them more harshly than we would ourselves or those we love? Have we lost sight of our common humanity with them?

If so, we may employ another strategy, which is to focus on our common humanity. When we have a lot of anger or resentment toward an individual or group of individuals, we don’t want to see them as like ourselves. It is easier to be angry at someone who we have decided is “nothing like me.” Yet if we do focus on the similarities, it can have the effect of diminishing our anger. We can do this by contemplating, “Just like me, this person seeks happiness and doesn’t want suffering. Yet just like me, they lack genuine lasting happiness and still experience various forms of suffering. They are vulnerable to sickness, illness and, one day, death. They struggle with all sorts of issues. They have doubts and fears, as well as hopes and aspirations. In this way, they are very similar to me.” Of course, thinking this once may not have much impact, so this is a reflective practice that may need to be dwelt on over time in order for it to sink into the level of embodied understanding.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

If we can see the other as a fallible human being, just like ourselves, and not hold him or her to an unrealistic standard, we can often find it easier to forgive them. Recognizing that the transgressor is acting out of afflictive mental states (such as greed, delusion, anger, prejudice) and is suffering from these distorted states may even elicit compassion.

A wonderful exemplar of forgiveness is Richard Moore, who serves as a Fellow of the Center of Compassion, Integrity, and Secular Ethics at Life University. Richard was shot by a British soldier with a rubber bullet in Northern Ireland in 1972 at the age of ten while walking home from school. The bullet knocked one of his eyes out, blinded him in the other and damaged his skull. Although the rubber bullet did not kill him, he has been completely blind from that moment forward. When he found out he was going to be blind for life, instead of reacting with anger, he simply accepted it. He realized that there was no point in harboring resentment toward the British in general or to the man who shot him. Later, when the Dalai Lama met Richard Moore and heard of his story, he started calling Richard his personal hero, something he continues to do, because of Richard's amazing practice of forgiveness.

More than thirty years after being shot, Richard managed to locate the soldier who shot him and sent him a letter to express his forgiveness and his desire to meet. The soldier and Richard met shortly thereafter and are now friends. Richard now gives talks on forgiveness and likes to say that "holding anger and resentment is like drinking poison and expecting other people to be hurt, and they are not."⁶⁴ Richard went on to found the charity Children in Crossfire, which has brought life-saving aid to tens of thousands of children in Tanzania, Ethiopia and elsewhere. He says he would not have been nearly as successful, or nearly as happy, if he had not practiced forgiveness.⁶⁵



Gratitude for Others

Like forgiveness, gratitude is also an act of self-compassion, because it increases our happiness and well-being powerfully at no cost to ourselves whatsoever. Scientific research suggests grateful people are happier, have more positive relationships, cope better with adversity and exhibit more pro-social tendencies.⁶⁶ The greater the gratitude that people have in their lives, the more it will impact their connections and relationships with others.⁶⁷ Like forgiveness and many other skills in CIT, gratitude is a skill that can be developed and strengthened over time, almost like a muscle. Therefore, to cultivate gratitude, we can begin with family and friends, since it is easiest to see how they benefit us. Then we can move on to strangers, where it is a bit harder to see the benefit we receive from them. Finally, when we are ready, we can take on the most difficult task, which is cultivating gratitude in relation to those who have caused us harm, such as the case of Richard Moore.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

Gratitude for Family and Friends

It is easiest to cultivate gratitude with regard to those we love. Yet if we reflect closely, we may find that even in the case of such people, we tend to take things for granted and to minimize the full scope of the role they play and have played in our lives. Opening ourselves to gratitude means opening the door to being utterly amazed at the countless ways others have supported us and continue to support us. It means gradually realizing that we could never survive, much less thrive, without the constant support and care of others. This recognition can lead to a profound sense of humility, a deep appreciation for others and a wish to repay their kindness, which paves the way for genuine compassion.

In marriage counseling, when clients are asked what percentage they contribute to their relationship, most people say sixty percent. Clearly, it is not possible for each partner to contribute sixty percent of the relationship. This is only one way that we over-inflate ourselves and take others for granted. When we think of our accomplishments in life, do we recognize the myriad individuals who made each accomplishment possible – most of whom we probably do not even know personally?

Our gratitude is also affected by what psychologists call a “negativity bias.”⁶⁸ As the name suggests, a negativity bias is an instinct to focus first on what is negative in a person or situation. From an evolutionary perspective, this bias can be helpful. For our distant ancestors, it was much more costly to not immediately notice danger when assessing a person or situation rather than seeing what was beneficial. Although this bias serves a useful function, it also leads us to distort reality by exaggerating what is wrong with a person or situation and obscuring the positive. This distortion is not conducive to forgiveness and gratitude.

An example of a practice that helps us recognize the ways we truly benefit from others is the contemplative practice of Naikan, which originated in Japan and has now spread to Europe and North America.⁶⁹ In this practice, we bring to mind a person in our life, usually beginning with our primary caregiver, such as our mother. We then ask three questions: “What have I received from this person?”, “What have I given in return?”, and “What trouble have I caused them?” Although Naikan is traditionally practiced all day for seven days straight, which leads to powerful memory recall, it can be done effectively in shorter sessions over a longer period of time, such as 20-30 minutes a day for several weeks or months.

Naikan uses memory along these structured questions to help us see how much we take for granted and how much support we have received from others over the course of our life. To practice Naikan, we should find a quiet place where we will not be distracted for a minimum of 10 minutes or so (although we can spend much longer per session should we wish to). Then we should pick a



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

person in our life and a period in our life spanning a few years, such as from birth to age 3 (you can even begin in the womb if you wish to). Then we simply reflect on the three questions and try to answer them: What did we receive, what did we give back and what trouble did we cause to that person during that time period? We should then write down what we remember from that Naikan session. In our next session, we can continue with the same person and move forward chronologically in our life: such as taking the age from 3 to 6 years old. It may be that we cannot remember much from that period, but we should persist patiently. Research on Naikan has shown that the more Naikan sessions we do, the more we will gradually start to remember.⁷⁰ Once we have reviewed our entire life from the perspective of one person, we can then choose a second person and begin again from the time we first met that person until now. Once we have reviewed several people in our lives, our familiarity with the process and our ability to do Naikan will have increased. We can then go back and do Naikan on our primary caregiver again.



There are additional activities in Naikan that can also be effective. One is to calculate the total number of hours our primary caregiver(s) spent cooking for us, doing our laundry and transporting us from place to place. We can spend a few minutes thinking about this and then jotting down the numbers and doing the calculations. When we have completed this simple process, we may find that our primary caregiver spent thousands of hours for our benefit. When translated into years, this could amount to several years of their life spent doing these rather mundane chores for us.

It can be eye-opening to realize how much time and energy people have spent on us. If we engage in this process sincerely, we will likely feel moved to a degree by the care that has been shown to us – care that we previously took for granted. We may begin to realize that without the constant help of family, friends and strangers, we would not be able to lead our lives and be happy. When we recognize this, it may shift our attitude toward genuine gratitude and appreciation. Furthermore, we may come to a deeper understanding of how valuable we are in the eyes of others. When we see that value, it may lead us to value our own life more, filling us with a greater self-confidence as well as a desire to make use of our life, in which so much has been invested, to return that kindness by benefiting others and making the most of our opportunities. This can lead to great psychological and physical health benefits.⁷¹

Gratitude for Strangers

Those skilled in Naikan can use this method to cultivate gratitude for strangers and even enemies over time. In addition, there are other methods in CIT for extending our gratitude beyond our families and friends. One chief tool is reflecting on interdependence.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

We often think of ourselves as relatively self-sufficient and independent. When we do recognize our dependence on others, it may be on only a few people, such as our spouse, our employer, a parent or a caregiver. But to what extent is this true? Isn't it true that everything we need in life in fact comes to us in dependence on other people? We can see this more clearly by drawing an interdependence web – either literally on a piece of paper or through reflection.

For example, consider a cotton shirt. No matter how we came by the shirt, at some point someone had to assemble the shirt with thread and cloth. In order for the shirt to be assembled, people had to spin the thread, weave the cloth and dye the cloth. Before that, people had to plant the seeds, cultivate the plant, pick the cotton on a farm and so on. Each of the people involved in this process also had to have others who cared for them and supported them in such a way that enabled them to be on the job that day. Furthermore, in between each of these steps along the way from seed to shirt, the products had to be transported by truck, train, ship and/or plane to the next destination. Every part of every vehicle, no matter how small, has its own interdependent chain of people who enable that part to be made. As we draw out this web of interdependence, we find that there are literally millions of strangers whose acts enabled us to have this shirt. And we also can quickly recognize that the same process would apply to all the other things we need to survive and thrive: our clothes, our food, our houses, our cars, our computers and so on. Every day, every moment, we are inextricably connected with millions of others who enable us to live the way we do. We can certainly regard their actions as acts of kindness, even though they are strangers to us, because they enable us to survive and provide us with countless things we need to live and to be happy.

In the beginning, this activity may seem abstract and intellectual, but with practice it can lead to critical

insights regarding our interdependence. It may help to do the interdependence exercise with an object or accomplishment that is particularly important to you. For example, think of something that happened in your life that was particularly important and trace out the web of interdependence, recognizing the role that others played in making what happened possible. If we reflect on these insights more deeply, this can lead to genuine gratitude.

Another technique that can be very powerful for generating gratitude is to cultivate gratitude for what others have not done. We tend to think that gratitude can only arise by thinking of the things others have done intentionally to benefit us, but this is not true. In order to drive safely on the street, we need others to cooperate by also driving safely. If they drove recklessly, it would cause great problems for us and would make it hard for us to reach any destination without injury. So when others drive in a reasonable way, they are protecting us from harm by the simple act of their conscientious driving. If we reflect on this, we can feel grateful when we see others doing things like driving in a reasonable way.

Similarly, when we are around others, most of the time they are not abusing us physically or verbally, nor are they stealing from us or lying to us. We normally take this for granted, but we can actually use it to generate gratitude, because to refrain from harming another is actually a form of ethical behavior. Consider if everyone acted like that all the time? There would be no threat of violence, verbal abuse, being lied to or being stolen from. The world would be a wonderful place. Therefore, when we see people acting in this way and refraining from harming us, we can recognize this good behavior and feel grateful toward them, since their actions are protecting us from harm, even though prior to this reflection, we saw them as doing nothing special at all.



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

As Matthieu Ricard says, we should not be speaking about the banality of evil, but the banality of goodness, because when we look at human behavior objectively, we tend to see ethical action. Although our negativity bias makes us see violations as more salient, the reality is that most people, most of the time, are not engaged in actively harming or seeking to harm others. When we walk out into a public place, we do not expect the majority of people to attempt to harm us; we expect them to refrain from harming us. If we reflect in this way, we may decide that it is unethical action that is the aberration, not the norm.⁷²

Gratitude for Enemies

All the above practices involve using our powers of reason to engage in analytical reflection so that we can gain new insights. We can use this same process to engage in the hardest task of all: extending our gratitude toward our enemies or those people we find very difficult. The first thing that must be stated here is that we are not attempting to justify or feel grateful for the harm that was caused. Harm and wrong actions should be recognized as such. Rather, we are seeing if we can connect with the person who caused the harm and develop a human connection with them. This separation of the act from the actor is an important distinction.

First, we can ask ourselves, “Has the person who harmed me ever done anything that benefited me?” Often when we feel wronged, it is by individuals who we are close to and who have actually done many things to benefit us in the past. When we feel wronged and angry, as Dr. Beck pointed out in the section above, we lose sight of these things, only seeing the hurt and the harmful actions. When we contextualize this and recognize the benefits we

also received, using the techniques provided above, we may gradually feel more inclined to forgive the other, and we may even be able to cultivate genuine gratitude for them, recognizing the good things they did to benefit us. This is a difficult process that may take time, and in the beginning it may even seem impossible. If this is a process you wish to engage in, it can be very beneficial to read stories of forgiveness and gratitude, such as Richard Moore’s book “Can I Give Him My Eyes?” or the accounts of people who have done Naikan recounted in Chikako Ozawa-de Silva’s book on Naikan, entitled “Psychotherapy and Religion in Japan.”⁷³

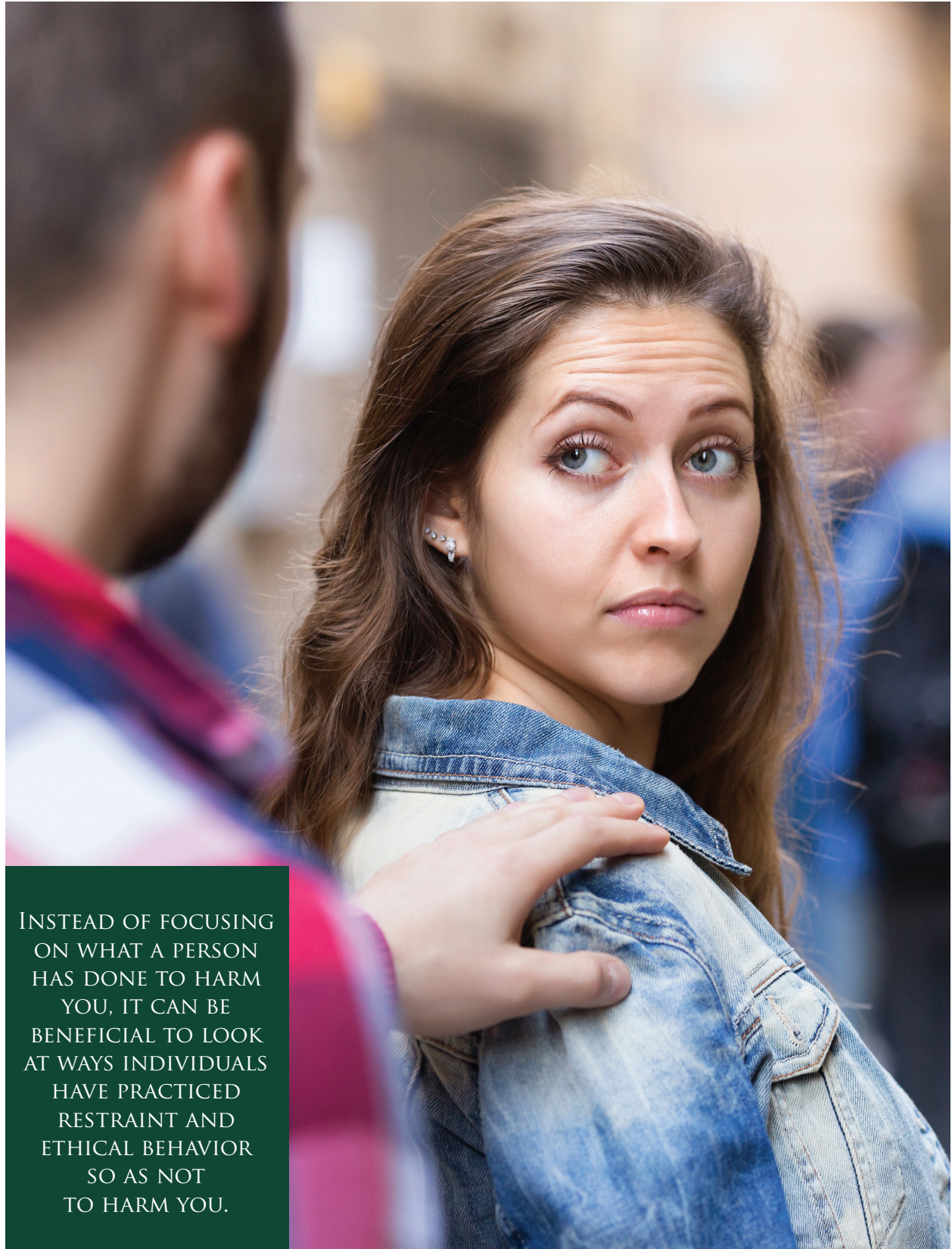
Another strategy is to contemplate whether we have benefited from the negative interaction with the person who has harmed us. For example, often a break up in a relationship may lead to positive outcomes, or losing one job leads to other opportunities. We also learn a great deal about ourselves and develop resilience through going through difficult circumstances, as in the case of “post-traumatic growth.” Sometimes all we can say from watching another person’s bad behavior is that that person taught us how not to behave. That too is valuable.

Once we consider all these ways of cultivating gratitude, we see that there is no limit to the amount of gratitude we can experience toward others. Since gratitude is directly related to happiness, cultivating gratitude in these ways can greatly improve our well-being, our happiness, our outlook on life and our relationships with others. Like forgiveness, gratitude is a practice that benefits us first and foremost, and it is something that we can go on to cultivate more and more of throughout our life. So if we care about ourselves and want more happiness in our life, we would do well to sincerely make an effort to cultivate more gratitude.



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



INSTEAD OF FOCUSING
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SO AS NOT
TO HARM YOU.

SERIES II: RELATING TO OTHERS

SKILL 7: EMPATHIC CONCERN

Empathy is the ability to understand the emotions, thoughts, and motivations of another and to resonate with them. While important for ethical development, empathy can be irrational and biased. It can also lead to empathic distress (an inability to handle one's own feelings) rather than empathic concern (an other-oriented concern). For these reasons, we need to expand upon our biologically-based empathy through practice, expanding it beyond our in-group and making it a better tool for compassion and ethical behavior. Exploring empathy is very helpful for developing a deep concern for others and for reducing our focus on ourselves. The vast majority of the problems we face are rooted in narrow self-interest and a lack of consideration for the needs of others. Empathic concern for others, on the other hand, leads to greater individual and collective flourishing.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will learn empathy operates on two levels: affective and cognitive.
- Participants will learn the difference between empathic distress, which is self-focused and leads to burnout, and empathic concern, which is other-oriented and leads to compassion.
- Participants will learn one can have empathy for another's joy (sympathetic joy) as well as difficulties. Cultivating sympathetic joy reduces envy, jealousy and greed.
- Participants will learn the benefits of having consideration for others over narrow self-interest for our individual and collective well-being.

Practice

- Participants will increase their ability to experience emotional resonance with others' joy and suffering.
- Participants will strengthen perspective-taking.
- Participants will cultivate affection for others and an ability to see the preciousness of each individual.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

When we increase our forgiveness and gratitude for others, we naturally increase our sense of closeness to them. This sense of closeness then creates a fertile ground for enhancing our empathy. Empathy is the ability to understand and feel the thoughts, feelings and emotions of another, and comes in two types: cognitive (understanding) and affective (feeling). Affective empathy is when one resonates with another person on an emotional level. For example, if someone feels very sad or disappointed, and we “feel their pain” ourselves. Or if one of our loved one’s experiences something wonderful, and we too feel joy in their happiness. Cognitive empathy is an ability to discern the emotional state of another person, whether or not you are resonating with their emotion yourself.

Empathy is a natural process. As humans, we experience “emotional contagion.” This dates far back in our evolutionary history, probably at least as far back as the last common ancestor between mammals and birds, which is also likely when maternal care developed. Emotional contagion is the automatic transfer of emotions and behaviors from one person (or animal) to another. From an evolutionary perspective, this is highly adaptive, as it allowed one to quickly react to a threat before having to see the threat for oneself. If a companion suddenly becomes frightened and runs, then it would probably be a good thing for us to run also, even if we didn’t know what for (or from).⁷⁴ We see this today when someone yawns and it makes others around them feel like yawning, or when someone who is very anxious walks into the room and suddenly we feel a bit anxious ourselves. Emotional contagion can be passed through facial expressions, body language, vocal cues and other ways. Emotional

contagion is not yet full-blown empathy, but it shows that the foundations of empathy are deeply embodied and deeply rooted in our evolutionary history.⁷⁵

Cognitive Empathy

The second channel of empathy is cognitive empathy, which involves knowing the mental or emotional state of another person. Cognitive empathy can happen just by looking at someone and recognizing their emotion from their facial expression, or it can involve a process of perspective taking, where we try to understand what a person is thinking and feeling. Cognitive empathy is helpful if we want to help another person, since if we cannot understand their feelings and emotions, or if we misread them, it might prove difficult to relate to them in a helpful way.⁷⁶

Cognitive empathy by itself is not enough, however, since we can use our understanding of another’s emotional state to harm them. Psychopaths may perform fine on cognitive empathy tasks, such as discerning another’s emotional state or intention, yet they do not resonate with the pain of others. That lack of affective resonance



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

in fact allows them to harm others without feeling pain themselves. Normally, if we inflict pain on another person (such as unintentionally), we are disturbed to a degree by seeing their suffering because of the affective resonance we naturally share with others.

Empathy Can Be Irrational

Although empathy can be clearly very helpful to us, it has come under fire recently because of how irrational and prone to bias it can be. For one thing, our empathy is greatest for those who are like us and who are members of our in-group. As we have seen in the section on impartiality, our empathy tapers off when it comes to strangers and those in our out-group. Studies with oxytocin, a bonding hormone, show that increased levels of oxytocin are associated with greater affection and empathy for one's in-group and a denigration of one's out-group.⁷⁷ If empathy is restricted to those we like and feel close to, it would not appear to be a very sound basis for ethical development.



Empathy also does not scale appropriately. As noted in the Foundational Concepts chapter, research has shown that we experience the greatest empathy when only a single individual is in danger, in need, or suffering. Oddly, if we increase this to two people in need, our empathic response goes down rather than up. If we increase it to hundreds, thousands, or millions, we have an even weaker empathic response.⁷⁸ This decrease in empathy makes no sense, because if the need is greater, our empathic response should also be greater. These limitations on our empathy are why we must use practices to help us further our empathy to widen the playing field.

Empathic Distress and Empathic Concern

Both of these problems of empathy can be countered to some extent by cultivating impartiality and a sense of common humanity, which is why that skill precedes this one. The more we can gain a recognition of our fundamental equality, the less our empathy will be limited to our in-group. Furthermore, the more we recognize that suffering is universal and expand our view to include all of humanity, the more we will recognize that problems are not limited to individuals, but extend out to large numbers of people and must be addressed on that scale as well.

Another important tool for countering the irrational aspects of empathy is to distinguish between empathic distress and empathic concern. Empathic distress occurs when one feels overwhelmed by the suffering of another. This occurs because it is naturally distressing for us to see others in pain, especially those we resonate with, such as vulnerable individuals like children and animals, or close loved ones. For example, we may think of a problem that seems particularly distressing, such as the

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



threats to the environment or the fact that some 20,000 children die every day due to malnutrition. If we try to think about these issues, they may appear so overwhelming that we feel hopeless, powerless, afraid and begin to shut down. Or we may have a friend who we try to help again and again, but who keeps falling into the same problem time and again. Although we care for our friend, we may give up because that caring is causing us so much distress. These are all signs of empathic distress.

To combat empathic distress, we have to have strong resilience and an ability to deal with suffering ourselves, as well as a sense of hope. These all come from the practice of self-compassion, described earlier. Through

self-compassion we understand that change is possible, we develop a realistic and hopeful outlook, and we also understand how to navigate our own emotions so that they do not overwhelm us. Dealing with the suffering of others may then still cause us a degree of distress, but we learn to better manage that distress so that it does not overwhelm us. In this way we manage to direct our empathy toward empathic concern and compassion, rather than empathic distress. If we do not learn to do this, we may find that empathic distress only leads to burnout.⁷⁹ With empathic concern, however, we are focused on the other more than ourselves.⁸⁰ This is the kind of empathy we are trying to cultivate in this module and leads directly to compassion.





Sympathetic Joy

It is important to recognize that empathy is not limited to another person's suffering. We can also feel empathy for others' joy. This is called "sympathetic joy" or "symhedonia." This ability to rejoice in another's good fortune is very important and can be surprisingly difficult to practice at first.⁸¹ Often when we see another experiencing something positive, we feel jealousy or envy, instead of joy, and this can happen even if it is someone close to us. Parents can even feel jealousy over the success of their children. If we reflect, however, we may find that our envy is connected to our belief that external circumstances lead to happiness, something we explored earlier in CIT. We may also reflect on whether envy and jealousy are things we want in our lives or whether their

presence actually decreases our happiness. We may also subtly believe that another's success is somehow our loss, when in reality this is rarely the case. If we do find that envy and jealousy are problematic, then we can determine to gradually minimize them by cultivating sympathetic joy and actively rejoicing in the good fortune of others. Although difficult at first, like anything, this can become second-nature through repeated practice. As our ability to rejoice in others' good fortune increases, it is only natural that we will also begin to feel closer to them. That in turn will reduce our sense of loneliness and isolation and will increase our happiness, health and well-being.



SERIES II: RELATING TO OTHERS

SKILL 8: COMPASSION

Compassion is the desire to address the needs of another grounded in care for their well-being. On the most basic level, this skill requires three things: noticing another's needs, experiencing empathic concern for them and feeling empowered to act skillfully and meaningfully. True compassion should not increase one's own suffering, but instead should build confidence, hope and energy. Like empathy, compassion is biologically-based, but must be expanded so that it does not remain limited to our in-group. Extended compassion recognizes the universality of human value and seeks to meet the needs of others out of a genuine sense of concern for their well-being regardless of their relationship to ourselves.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will learn that compassion is not weakness. Instead participants will learn that compassion is the motivation to alleviate the suffering of another, which takes great strength and gives us strength.
- Participants will learn the three necessary components of compassion – seeing needs, having empathic concern for the one suffering and feeling confident that one has the ability to do something to help the other.
- Participants will learn that suffering and needs occur on multiple levels, not just obvious ones.

Practice

- Participants will increase their ability to resolve to extend compassion by experiencing wishing, aspirational and engaged compassion.
- Participants will increase their awareness in the universality of needs and suffering and thereby extend their compassion beyond in-groups.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



Compassion is the desire to address the needs of another grounded in care for their well-being and a degree of self-confidence. It is important for us to investigate this definition, because if we do not understand compassion properly, we may mistake it for weakness. In our society, we are often told that compassion makes us “doormats” or “pushovers.” If we are compassionate, people may say we will not get what we want and need for ourselves, and others will take advantage of us. Moreover, we may lack the strength to bring about positive change in our relationships and in the world.

Compassion as Inner Strength

All this rests on a misunderstanding of compassion. Our desire to give in to others, regardless of whether this will be truly beneficial or not, typically comes from empathic distress, not compassion. On the contrary, compassion is other-oriented, and therefore is a form of inner strength and requires courage. It does not mean simply giving others what they want, but recognizing on a deeper level what they need. Compassion can require that we have to

be very tough with certain individuals and hold our ground, recognizing that to give in would be harmful to others and to ourselves. For example, imagine a friend who comes to us who is addicted to a drug but is going through a rehab process. That person pleads with us to give them access to drugs. If our response is empathic distress, we may be so troubled by their pain that we give in and accommodate them, even though we know what we are doing is wrong. Compassion, however, dictates that we remain strong and do what is in their genuine best interest, and not what makes us feel better in the short-term. That may mean kindly saying no to them and explaining why we cannot do what they are asking of us.

Parenting serves as a good example for this kind of other-oriented care and concern. A good parent does not simply give in to whatever their child wants. They have to set boundaries and even discipline their child at times in order to enable them to grow up into a healthy, responsible adult who can lead a happy life. If a child in a grocery store is throwing a temper tantrum because he or she wants candy, the compassionate thing to do may be to refuse the child's



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

outbursts. If the parent's desire is to help the child learn self-control and to eat healthier, this refusal would be focused on the child's benefit and his or her long-term needs. Giving in to the tantrum, in this case, might simply be giving in to empathic distress, which would be about meeting the needs of the parent, not the child.

As can be seen in the examples above, compassion requires discernment. There is no right or wrong answer to the situations given above, just as there are rarely obviously right or wrong answers in life. Compassion refers to our orientation toward the other – cognitively, affectively and motivationally – but it does not tell us what action is best in any given situation. For that, we need to complement compassion with discernment, critical thinking, knowledge and understanding. What compassion does do, is that it guarantees that our sense of concern is genuinely other-oriented and that we are seeking to meet the others' needs, not our own. Because of this, compassion is essential to ethical action and to leading a life of integrity.

The Three Components of Compassion

As noted, compassion is comprised of three components: recognizing needs, empathic concern and a feeling of self-confidence that one can take action. The first component of compassion, recognizing the needs of others, can be quite subtle. While it is often easy to see obvious forms of outward suffering, such as someone crying or bleeding from a wound, often people are suffering or have needs in ways that are less noticeable.

Referring back to common humanity and self-compassion, all human beings suffer and have needs. By virtue of merely being alive, we all face emotional pain and distress, we all encounter sickness, we are all aging, and we will all die. On the surface, a person may appear to have no problems

whatsoever, but if we take time to investigate, we will doubtless discover that they do indeed experience emotional pain, relationship issues, financial worries, non-obvious physical ailments, or any of countless forms of suffering that are not readily obvious to an outsider. Even if they are not suffering now, we know that as a human being they are vulnerable to suffering just by being alive on this earth. We may need to reflect repeatedly in order to gain and strengthen this insight. It is essential for feeling empathic concern and therefore also compassion, because without seeing a need, we will feel no need to address it.

The second component of compassion is empathic concern itself, the ability to care about and resonate with the other person. As discussed in the last module, we have a great deal of empathic concern for our loved ones, but far less for strangers, and often very little for those we dislike. Therefore, noticing suffering and needs is not enough; we must care and have empathic concern.

Lastly, without a sense of self-confidence in our ability to take action, our compassion will hit a brick wall and we will feel helpless, powerless and eventually apathetic – a result of empathic distress. We have to believe that we have the ability to do something constructive, however small. We have to think creatively also about what this constructive action could be. Often there is no immediate solution to the problems that face us, but that does not mean we are powerless to do anything. An incredibly powerful example of this concept is highlighted in the work of Samuel and Pearl Oliner, who interviewed rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe during the Holocaust. Among other factors, one of the distinguishing differences among those who chose to rescue Jews and those who did not was an internal sense of efficacy or agency. In other words, those who rescued believed that their actions, even in the midst of chaos, destruction and the Nazi war machine, however small, actually could make a difference.



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



By contrast, non-rescuers and bystanders reported that they didn't believe their actions (small or large) could or would make any difference against the forces that were too great, so they didn't bother to act at all. Thus, a sense of internal self-confidence in their ability to make some difference allowed the rescuers to see a choice to act where others perceived only compliance – and believed they could succeed where others only saw failure.⁸²

Of course this is an extreme example that few of us have or will ever face, but the principle holds true whatever the circumstance. Therefore, on a more realistic level for us, even the simple act of learning and educating ourselves about an issue, talking with others, and cultivating inner qualities like compassion can be seen as proactive steps that will gradually lead us closer to a solution. We need to be patient and recognize that just because we cannot immediately solve a problem, that does not mean that no solution exists or that we are powerless to contribute to a solution one day.

At its highest level, compassion involves not merely wishing to help others and feeling concern for their needs and their suffering, but actually taking responsibility for others. This level of compassion, called “active” or “engaged” compassion

in compassion training protocols like Cognitively-Based Compassion Training, has the capacity to give us great inner strength and help us recognize the power we have to make a difference in the world and in other people's lives. This level of compassion is like that of a loving parent for their child: they do not merely wish happiness for their child, they actively engage to do whatever they can to protect their child and make his or her life better. If we can cultivate this compassion for even one additional person beyond our in-group, it brings great benefit to our lives, improving our sense of self-worth, our confidence and our meaning in life. His Holiness the Dalai Lama says, “The first beneficiary of compassion is always oneself. When compassion, or warm-heartedness, arises in us and shifts our focus away from our own narrow self-interest, it is as if we open an inner door. Compassion reduces our fear, boosts our confidence and brings us inner strength. By reducing distrust, it opens us to others and brings us a sense of connection with them and a sense of purpose and meaning in life. Compassion also gives us respite from our own difficulties.”⁸³ As the Zen teacher Roshi Joan Halifax says, compassion is about having a soft front and a strong back.

There is a great deal of benefit to relating to others in a compassionate manner. As well as helping improve relationships, being compassionate to others also enhances health. Scientific studies are progressively demonstrating that through the cultivation of compassion one can even affect their own immune function, stress levels, or work or family relationships.⁸⁴

As mentioned, it is important to recognize that compassion is an emotion, a motivation and an intention. It does not dictate a particular course of action to alleviate the suffering of another. Compassion alone, therefore, is only part of the solution. Choosing how and when to act requires discernment, wisdom and understanding, which will be covered in detail in Series III.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



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OTHERS.

NOTES

SKILL 5: IMPARTIALITY AND COMMON HUMANITY



IMPARTIALITY

- Tilling the Soil
- The Sunshine Metaphor

IN-GROUP VS. OUT-GROUP

NOTES

SKILL 5: IMPARTIALITY AND COMMON HUMANITY

IMPLICIT BIAS

COMMON HUMANITY

CULTIVATING IMPARTIALITY



REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

SKILL 5: IMPARTIALITY AND COMMON HUMANITY

Instructions: Answer the following questions as freely and openly as possible. Your answers are for you only and are not meant to be shared. As such, do not worry about the quality of your prose or grammar. There's no need to think much before you write; you can just write.

1. Have you ever had an enemy become a friend, or a friend become an enemy or stranger? How did it happen?

2. Do you think there are any negative consequences of bias to a person or to a society? Conversely, are there benefits to having an unbiased, impartial attitude?

3. Would your life be different if people were less biased to you or around you? How?



MINDFUL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

SKILL 5: IMPARTIALITY AND COMMON HUMANITY

Instructions: Each participant will select a partner with whom to have a mindful conversation. Take turns answering the following questions. The partner whose turn it is to listen should follow these rules:

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 1: Can you describe an experience you've had where you were negatively impacted by bias?

Question 2: Are there stereotypes or fixed categories that you or others around you have experienced that are problematic?

Question 3: Would you like to share any insights that emerged for you during the meditation or writing exercise?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise.



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 5: IMPARTIALITY AND COMMON HUMANITY

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Exercise #1: Common Humanity

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Bring to mind three people:
 - a. someone you consider a friend or loved one.
 - b. someone who you find difficult (start with someone who is only slightly difficult).
 - c. someone who is a stranger (someone to whom you feel neither close nor distant).
2. Write the name of the person or how you know them and three physical details or characteristics about each person. Try to imagine them in your mind as vividly as possible.
3. List five meaningful things that each person has in common with you. (This may be difficult at first for someone who is difficult or a stranger, but try your best.)
4. Do any insights arise as you think about what you have in common with each of these people?
5. Thinking of the difficult person and stranger, do you think each has ever experienced disappointment, loneliness, loss of a loved one, or some other difficulties?
6. As you think about their challenges, do any insights arise?
7. Do each of these people want genuine happiness and to avoid suffering?
8. Looking back at the list you created in question 3, is there anything you want to add?
9. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they might be valuable.
10. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your impartiality and sense of common humanity, how has that been progressing, or what have you been learning?



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 5: IMPARTIALITY AND COMMON HUMANITY

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Exercise #2: Impartiality

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Describe a time when something good happened to someone you find difficult, and it made you uncomfortable or unhappy.
2. Bring to mind someone you consider a friend or loved one, and try to imagine as vividly as possible this same good thing happening to this person. Write down the thoughts, emotions and sensations you notice as you imagine this good event happening to your friend or loved one.
3. Did you react differently to the beneficial thing occurring to your friend than to the difficult person? If so, why do you think that is?
4. Is it possible that some of the reason for the difference is simply based on the different way you relate to each person, rather than to the event itself?
5. See if you can list three or four people in your life who have moved between the categories of friend, difficult person, and stranger – for example, an adversary who became a friend, or a friend who became a stranger. Do you think these categories are fixed or changeable?
6. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they might be valuable.
7. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your impartiality and sense of common humanity, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

SKILL 6: FORGIVENESS AND GRATITUDE



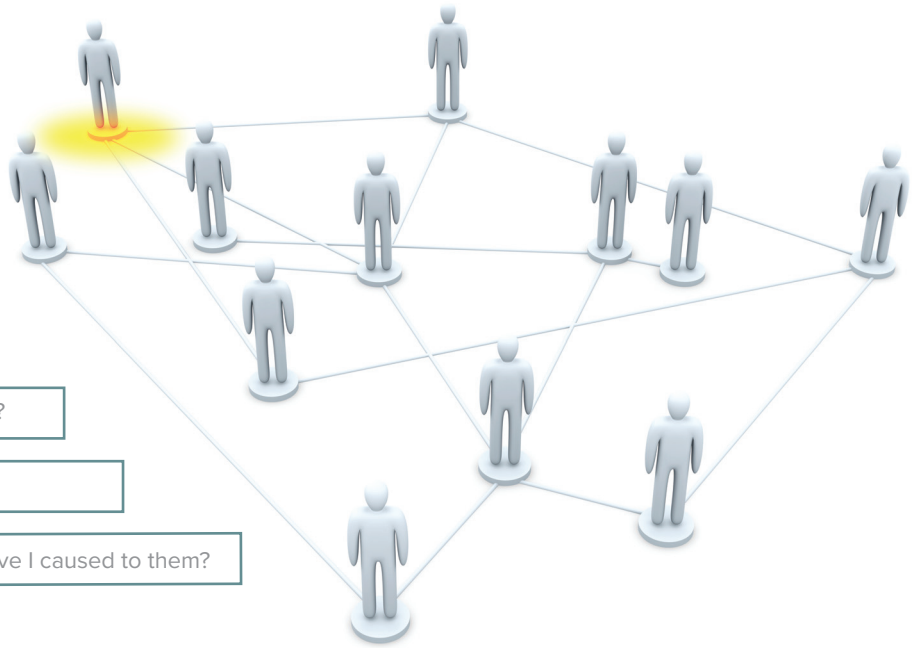
- Strategies

[illegible]

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

SKILL 6: FORGIVENESS AND GRATITUDE

What troubles and difficulties have I caused to them?



- Strategies

[illegible]



REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

NAIKAN PRACTICE

Instructions: Calculate the number of hours your primary caregivers spent doing things to benefit you from the time you were born until you were independent, focusing specifically on the number of hours they spent:

1. Preparing meals for you,
2. Taking you from place to place, and
3. Doing your laundry and making sure you were clothed.

If there are other basic necessities you'd like to include, include them also. If it is helpful, use the chart below to aid in your calculations. When you have finished with your primary caregiver, you can continue with other caregivers if you like.

NAME	HOURS SPENT PREPARING MEALS FOR YOU	HOURS SPENT TRANSPORTING YOU FROM PLACE TO PLACE	HOURS SPENT DOING LAUNDRY AND PROVIDING CLOTHES FOR YOU	HOURS SPENT PROVIDING OTHER BASIC NECESSITIES FOR YOU	TOTAL HOURS
	_____ Hours/Week x 52 Weeks _____ = _____ Hours/Year x _____ No. of Years _____ = _____ Hours	_____ Hours/Week x 52 Weeks _____ = _____ Hours/Year x _____ No. of Years _____ = _____ Hours	_____ Hours/Week x 52 Weeks _____ = _____ Hours/Year x _____ No. of Years _____ = _____ Hours	_____ Hours/Week x 52 Weeks _____ = _____ Hours/Year x _____ No. of Years _____ = _____ Hours	
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MINDFUL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

NAIKAN PRACTICE

Instructions: Each participant will select a partner with whom to have a mindful conversation. Take turns answering the following questions. The partner whose turn it is to listen should follow these rules:

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 1: What was it like to calculate the total hours your primary caregiver spent doing things for you?

Question 2: What would you say you received from this person?

Question 3: What did you give back to this person?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise.



REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

SKILL 6: FORGIVENESS AND GRATITUDE

Instructions: Answer the following questions as freely and openly as possible. Your answers are for you only and are not meant to be shared. As such, do not worry about the quality of your prose or grammar. There's no need to think much before you write; you can just write.

1. Identify a person or thing that you benefit from, like something that you enjoy or a person who helps you or whom you appreciate. To the extent possible, write down all that had to happen in order for that person or thing to be in your life. Focus especially on the people that took part in this process. If you like, you can draw a web of interdependence to illustrate this.

2. How would your life be different if people stopped providing you with intentional or unintentional benefit? Can you think of any concrete examples?

3. How would your life be different if the people around you had more gratitude?



MINDFUL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

SKILL 6: FORGIVENESS AND GRATITUDE

Instructions: Each participant will select a partner with whom to have a mindful conversation. Take turns answering the following questions. The partner whose turn it is to listen should follow these rules:

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 1: What was it like to explore the object or person that you previously took for granted and all the things they or it depended on?

Question 2: Is your life supported by acts of kindness that you typically take for granted, and if so what acts?

Question 3: Would you like to share any insights that emerged for you during the meditation or writing exercise?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 6: FORGIVENESS AND GRATITUDE

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Exercise #1: Gratitude

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Bring to mind someone from your life on whom you would like to do Naikan practice. (If this is a person you have known for more than a year, you may wish to choose a specific time period to start with, such as the first year or few years you knew this person, and then continue from there the next time you do this practice.)
2. List all the things you received from this person, being specific.
3. List all the things you gave back.
4. List anything you did that caused trouble for this person.
5. What thoughts, emotions and sensations arise in your body and mind from doing this practice?
6. When you finish writing, end with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.
7. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they might be valuable.
8. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your gratitude, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?

Continue next time from the time point you left off, or move on to a different person.



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 6: FORGIVENESS AND GRATITUDE

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

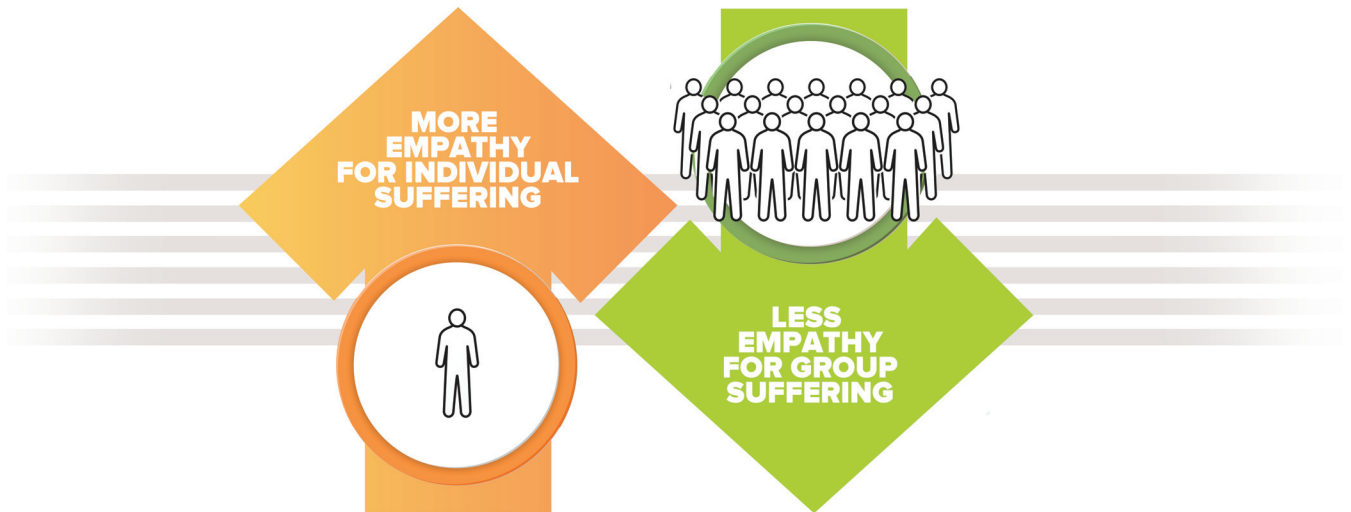
Exercise #2: Forgiveness

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Describe a time in your life when someone forgave you.
2. What was it like to be forgiven?
3. Were there benefits to being forgiven by this person? If so, what?
4. Would your life be any different had this person not forgiven you? If so, how?
5. What does it feel like to harbor resentment?
6. Can you describe a time in your life when you forgave someone?
7. Were there benefits to you from forgiving this person? If so, what?
8. How might your life be different had you not forgiven this person?
9. How do you think society might be different if people practiced more forgiveness? What if they held on to more resentment?
10. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they are valuable to you.
11. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your forgiveness, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?

NOTES

SKILL 7: EMPATHIC CONCERN



EMPATHY

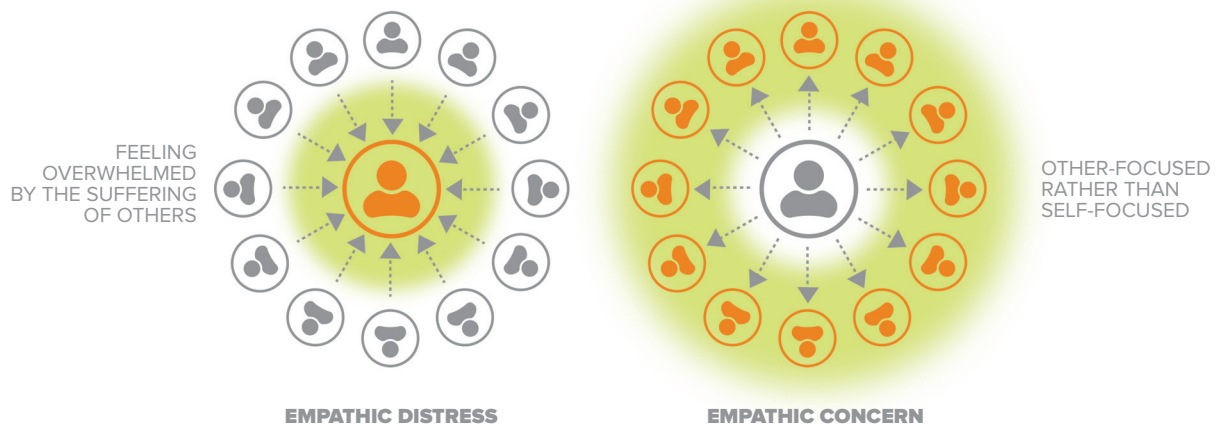
- Affective Empathy
- Cognitive Empathy

THE DOWNSIDE OF EMPATHY

- Empathy can be irrational and biased
- Compassion Fade
- Empathic Distress

NOTES

SKILL 7: EMPATHIC CONCERN



EMPATHIC CONCERN

ENDEARMENT

SYMPATHETIC JOY

BENEFITS OF EMPATHY



REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

SKILL 7: EMPATHIC CONCERN

Instructions: Answer the following questions as freely and openly as possible. Your answers are for you only and are not meant to be shared. As such, do not worry about the quality of your prose or grammar. There's no need to think much before you write; you can just write.

1. What are some drawbacks of lacking empathy? If you like, you can recall a moment from your own experience.

2. What are some things holding you back from feeling more empathy for others?

3. How would your life be different if you were more concerned for the well-being of others?



MINDFUL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

SKILL 7: EMPATHIC CONCERN

Instructions: Each participant will select a partner with whom to have a mindful conversation. Take turns answering the following questions. The partner whose turn it is to listen should follow these rules:

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 1: What are the drawbacks of a lack of empathy, in your view?

Question 2: Is there anything you feel may be holding you back from feeling more empathy to others?

Question 3: Would you like to share any insights that emerged for you during the meditation or writing exercise?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise.



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 7: EMPATHIC CONCERN

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Exercise #1: Empathic Concern

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Can you think of a time in your life when someone had empathic concern for you (they had a sense of what you were experiencing and showed a sense of care and concern)? If so, describe it. If you cannot think of such a time, describe what you imagine it would be like to have someone show empathic concern to you.
2. What were the benefits of this person's empathic concern? (Or what might you imagine the benefits of receiving empathic concern to be?)
3. If you can, describe a time in your life when you had empathic concern for another person? Or if you cannot think of such a time, imagine what it would be like and describe that.
4. When we show empathic concern to others, what benefits might there be for us from doing so?
5. How would our life be different if we were more concerned for the well-being of others, individually and collectively?
6. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they are valuable to you.
7. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your empathic concern, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 7: EMPATHIC CONCERN

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Exercise #2: Sympathetic Joy

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Bring to mind someone who is dear to you, such as a close friend, a loved one, or a pet. To bring them to mind more vividly, it may help to write down the individual's name and a short description of the person.
2. Close your eyes and imagine, in as much detail as possible, something good happening to this person. Describe what you imagine this person is feeling or doing when they experience this joyful event.
3. Write down the thoughts, emotions and sensations you notice as you imagine this good event happening to this person.
4. In reflecting on what you just wrote, were your feelings similar to or different from those of your friend? Explain.
5. What are the benefits of experiencing more sympathetic joy as opposed to jealousy or resentment?
6. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they are valuable to you.
7. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your sympathetic joy, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?

As you feel ready, you may want to repeat this Contemplative Journal exercise, and replace the loved one with a stranger, and, when you are ready, a difficult person.

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

SKILL 8: COMPASSION



1. Wishing Compassion
2. Aspiring Compassion
3. Engaged Compassion

[illegible][illegible]



REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

SKILL 8: COMPASSION

Instructions: Answer the following questions as freely and openly as possible. Your answers are for you only and are not meant to be shared. As such, do not worry about the quality of your prose or grammar. There's no need to think much before you write; you can just write.

1. Can you describe a moment in your life that exemplifies compassion for you?

2. What would it be like if you experienced more compassion from others around you?

3. Are there ways you could cultivate or express more compassion for others?



MINDFUL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

SKILL 8: COMPASSION

Instructions: Each participant will select a partner with whom to have a mindful conversation. Take turns answering the following questions. The partner whose turn it is to listen should follow these rules:

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 1: Describe a moment in your life that best exemplifies compassion for you?

Question 2: Can you describe a moment in your life where you wished you had greater compassion?

Question 3: If possible, can you name which component of compassion (i.e., noticing suffering, empathic concern, sense of agency) you would like to strengthen?

Question 4: Is there something you could do that would increase your level of compassion, and if so what?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise.



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 8: COMPASSION

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Seeing Suffering on a Deeper Level

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Write down the name of one of the people you journaled about in the Empathic Concern skill.
2. List at least three ways this person has benefited you or others.
3. As you think about all the ways this person has benefited you and others, describe your feelings for this person.
4. Close your eyes and bring to mind whatever difficulties this person may be facing, faced in the past, or might face in the future. After you have done that, take a moment to think about what this person would really want more than anything else. Then imagine yourself giving them, or making it possible for them to receive, whatever it is they truly desire and feel would make them happy. If it is helpful, you can imagine sending white light from your body that envelops them and that symbolizes your compassion for them. After you have done this, note down how this makes you feel.
5. Recall the fact that every moment of every day we are supported by a vast network of people we know and do not know. Recognize that no matter our social status or economic privilege, we are all vulnerable to present and future problems. We all experience all manners of suffering, aging, illness, separation from loved ones, stress, worries, anxiety, physical and mental illnesses, and disappointments. Contemplate on how others, like your loved one, deeply wish for happiness. After doing this, note down any observations you have about your feelings or thoughts.
6. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they are valuable.
7. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your compassion, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?

SERIES II: RELATING TO OTHERS

CITATIONS

- ⁵⁴ For example, it seems that even extreme behaviors like self-cutting are often done in order to relieve intense emotional pain and even attempts at suicide are often attempts to free oneself from a situation perceived as very painful and/or hopeless. See Nock, Matthew K. "Why do people hurt themselves? New insights into the nature and functions of self-injury." *Current directions in psychological science* 18.2 (2009): 78-83.
- ⁵⁵ Greenwald, A. G., McGhee, D. E., & Schwartz, J. L. (1998). Measuring individual differences in implicit cognition: the implicit association test. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 74(6), 1464.
- ⁵⁶ You can take this test online by visiting <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html> or searching for "Harvard Implicit Association Test."
- ⁵⁷ Amodio, D. M. (2014). The neuroscience of prejudice and stereotyping. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, 15(10), 670-682.
- ⁵⁸ Payne, B. K. (2001). Prejudice and perception: the role of automatic and controlled processes in misperceiving a weapon. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 81(2), 181.
- ⁵⁹ Kang, Y., Gray, J. R., & Dovidio, J. F. (2014). The nondiscriminating heart: Lovingkindness meditation training decreases implicit intergroup bias. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 143(3), 1306.
- ⁶⁰ See Aaron Beck's dialogue with the Dalai Lama on this issue, available at: <https://www.beckinstitute.org/a-cognitive-explanation-for-anger-and-hostility/>
- ⁶¹ Flores, T. V., Ozawa-de Silva, B., & Murphy, C. Peace Studies and the Dalai Lama's Approach of Secular Ethics: Towards a Positive, Multidimensional Model of Health and Flourishing. *Journal of Healthcare, Science and the Humanities*, vol 4, no 2.
- ⁶² Bono, et. al. "Forgiveness, Feeling Connected to Others, and Well-Being: Two Longitudinal Studies." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. 2007. 1-14; Lawler, et. al. "The Unique Effects of Forgiveness on Health: An Exploration of Pathways." *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, Vol. 28, No. 2, April 2005; Worthington, et. al., "Forgiveness is an emotion-focused coping strategy that can reduce health risks and promote health resilience: theory, review, and hypotheses." *Psychology & Health*, 19:3, 385-405.
- ⁶³ McCullough, M. E., Root, L. M., Tabak, B., & Witvliet, C. v. O. (2009). Forgiveness. In S. J. Lopez (Ed.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (2nd ed.). (pp. 427-435). New York: Oxford.
- ⁶⁴ Moore, R. (2011). *Can I give him my eyes?* Long Preston: Magna.
- ⁶⁵ See the short documentary on Richard Moore, entitled "The Dalai Lama's Hero," available on YouTube.
- ⁶⁶ Watkins, Philip C., Van Gelder, Michael, and Frias, Araceli. "Furthering the Science of Gratitude." *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology*. 2011. pp.437-446. Oxford University Press.
- ⁶⁷ Emmons, et.al., "Counting Blessings Versus Burdens: An Experimental Investigation of Gratitude and Subjective Well-Being in Daily Life." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 2003, Vol. 84, No. 2, 377-389.
- ⁶⁸ Baumeister, et. al., "Bad is Stronger Than Good", *Review of General Psychology*. 2001. Vol. 5. No. 4. 323-370.
- ⁶⁹ Ozawa-de Silva, C. (2006). *Psychotherapy and religion in Japan: The Japanese introspection practice of Naikan*. Routledge.
- ⁷⁰ Ozawa-de Silva, C. (2006). *Psychotherapy and religion in Japan: The Japanese introspection practice of Naikan*. Routledge.
- ⁷¹ Bono, G., & McCullough, M. E. (2006). Positive responses to benefit and harm: Bringing forgiveness and gratitude into cognitive psychotherapy. *Journal of cognitive psychotherapy*, 20(2), 147-158. Ozawa-de Silva, C., & Ozawa-de Silva, B. (2010). Secularizing religious practices: A study of subjectivity and existential transformation in Naikan therapy. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 49(1), 147-161.
- ⁷² Ted. (2015, January 20). *Matthieu Ricard: How to let altruism be your guide* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_p_GKCr8rq8
- ⁷³ Moore, R. (2011). *Can I give him my eyes?* Long Preston: Magna. Ozawa-de Silva, C. (2006). *Psychotherapy and religion in Japan: The Japanese introspection practice of Naikan*. Routledge.
- ⁷⁴ De Waal, F. (2009). The age of empathy. New York: *Harmony*.; Rochat, P. (2009). *Others in mind: Social origins of self-consciousness*. Cambridge University Press.
- ⁷⁵ De Waal, F. B., & Suchak, M. (2010). *Prosocial primates: selfish and unselfish motivations*. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B: Biological Sciences*, 365(1553), 2711-2722.; Byrne, R., Lee, P. C., Njiraini, N., Poole, J. H., Sayialel, K., Sayialel, S., ... & Moss, C. J. (2008). Do elephants show empathy? *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 15(10-1), 204-225.

SERIES II: RELATING TO OTHERS

CITATIONS (CONTINUED)

- ⁷⁶ Smith, A. (2010). Cognitive empathy and emotional empathy in human behavior and evolution. *The Psychological Record*, 56(1), 1.; De Waal, F. (2009). *The age of empathy*. New York: Harmony.; Rochat, P. (2009). *Others in mind: Social origins of self-consciousness*. Cambridge University Press.
- ⁷⁷ De Dreu, et. al., "Oxytocin promotes human ethnocentrism." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States*. Vol. 108, No. 4, 1262-1266.
- ⁷⁸ Vastfjall D, Slovic P, Mayorga M, Peters E (2014) Compassion Fade: Affect and Charity Are Greatest for a Single Child in Need. *PLoS ONE* 9(6).
- ⁷⁹ Klimecki, O., & Singer, T. (2012). Empathic distress fatigue rather than compassion fatigue? Integrating findings from empathy research in psychology and social neuroscience. *Pathological altruism*, 368-383.
- ⁸⁰ Batson, C. Daniel; Duncan, Bruce D.; Ackerman, Paula; Buckley, Terese; Birch, Kimberly. "Is empathic emotion a source of altruistic motivation?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol 40(2), Feb 1981, 290-302.; Schroeder, D. A., Dovidio, J. E., Sibicky, M. E., Matthews, L. L., & Allen, J. L. (1988). Empathic concern and helping behavior: Egoism or altruism? *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 24(4), 333-353.
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- ⁸³ Tenzin Gyatso (2012). *Beyond religion: Ethics for a whole world*. Random House. p.45.
- ⁸⁴ Pace, T. W., Negi, L. T., Adame, D. D., Cole, S. P., Sivilli, T. I., Brown, T. D., ... & Raison, C. L. (2009). Effect of compassion meditation on neuroendocrine, innate immune and behavioral responses to psychosocial stress. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 34(1), 87-98.; Singer, T., & Bolz, M. (2013). Compassion: Bridging practice and science.; Kok, B. E. (2013). The science of subjective experience: positive emotions and social closeness influence autonomic functioning. In *Compassion: Bridging practice and science* (pp. 314-324).; Bolz, M., & Singer, T. (2013). Mind you hormones! The endocrinology of compassion. In *Compassion: Bridging practice in Science* (p. 230).



SERIES III: ENGAGING IN SYSTEMS

As human beings we do not exist alone, nor do we exist merely through direct interpersonal relations. We exist in interdependent systems, structures and networks that are as small as our family or local community, or as vast as the world. Without recognizing the ways systems impact and shape us, and how we can play an effective role in them, our ability to address many issues will remain limited. Compassion by itself is not enough for ethical and effective decision-making; it must be conjoined with critical thinking and an understanding of reality. Gaining insight into the interdependent nature of our reality can be empowering and can lead to a deeper connection with others and the world around us. Practicing critical thinking guided by the context of our values, interdependence and our common humanity is the best guarantee for a more fulfilling, happy life for ourselves and others.

SERIES III: ENGAGING IN SYSTEMS

SKILL 9: APPRECIATING INTERDEPENDENCE

Interdependence is a basic fact of our reality as human beings. We require others to come into the world, grow and survive into adulthood, and even as adults we require countless others for our food, water, shelter, companionship, protection, and so on. Moreover, everything we depend on for our well-being and happiness itself depends on an extended network of other people and things stretching ever outward. Recognizing our interdependence is a powerful way to cultivate gratitude, as seen earlier, but it also supports holistic, long-term and systems-level thinking, whereas ignoring interdependence can lead to short-term thinking and poor decision-making.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will learn about the radical interdependence of the world, which includes ourselves.
- Participants will learn about the importance of context in systems thinking.
- Participants will learn about the way identity is constructed in a contingent and fluid way.
- Participants will learn about “structural inequality,” “structural violence” and “cultural violence.”
- Participants will learn that, due to interdependence, any truly compassionate solution must be sustainable and account for collective flourishing.
- Participants will learn to approach dilemmas through the lens of critical inquiry.

Practice

- Participants will practice evaluating ethical dilemmas through the larger context of interdependence.
- Participants will familiarize themselves increasingly with interdependence by analyzing how objects, situations and actions come to be.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



The themes of Series I and II are greater compassion for ourselves and others. The question now becomes, “How do we move that compassion into the world to bring about lasting change?” This highlights another important question, “Is compassion enough?” It is clear that to take constructive action to address problems in organizations, society and the world at large, we will need a sophisticated understanding of the problems at hand.

Direct, Structural and Cultural Violence

If we have cultivated a degree of impartiality and a sense of common humanity, then when it comes to a systems level, we will wish to promote the greatest flourishing for all. Clearly one of the things that prevents flourishing is harm and violence, which are directly opposed to both compassion and well-being. An analysis of systems reveals that violence and harm can happen not only directly by one individual harming the interests of another, but also in deeper ways.⁸⁵ If we examine instances of repeated

direct violence, we often find that there are structures that allow that violence to occur. The institutions and laws can be seen as “structural violence,” because they support and perpetuate violence, inequality and injustice. For example, if there is a law that allows men to beat their wives without punishment, then we can clearly see a structure that will allow, condone and perpetuate direct violence. Similarly, the institution of legal slavery in the United States and the institution of apartheid in South Africa are examples of structural violence, because they are systems that allow for injustice, violations and violence.

Analyzing to the level of structural violence shows the importance of reforming institutions when they are destructive. But what allows those institutions to exist? It is the beliefs and values of society that condone, approve or tolerate institutions such as slavery, apartheid or mass incarceration. This is the level of “cultural violence,” which makes structural violence possible. Cultural violence is the values, ideas and beliefs of individuals and society, which may be conveyed through religion, ideology, popular

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

culture and science, and which can take physical form through media such as film, television, literature, public speeches, art and flags. A more technical definition might state that cultural violence refers to those ideologies, beliefs, symbols and messages that any society utilizes through its various avenues that: rationalize, legitimize, and promote devaluation, discrimination, stigmatization, prejudice, or violence toward certain individuals or groups. Structural and cultural violence can overlap: for example in the media, which is both a communications structure and a cultural disseminator of messages and symbols.

Through the lens of interdependence, we can recognize the ways in which these systems may contribute to dysfunction in society and can reflect on how changes can be made.

The process we are using to develop a systems perspective on well-being and violence is by using interdependence. We are asking: what makes these acts of direct violence possible? What do they depend on? This leads us to structures, such as laws and institutions. Then we ask: what makes these structures, laws and institutions possible? What do they depend on? This leads us to the beliefs and values of the society. Then we can ask: what are those beliefs and values? Are they reflective of impartiality and common humanity, of forgiveness, gratitude and compassion? Or do they reflect potentially harmful attitudes and mental states? If we have learned to discern between what is harmful and what is beneficial during our cultivation of self-compassion, then it will be easier for us to see the parallels when analyzing society. We will see that the very things that harm our own happiness on an individual level can be toxic to society when they are prevalent as cultural norms. Fortunately, this also provides us with a way of taking action: we can begin with

ourselves. If the very things we see as dangerous and problematic in society are the same things we recognize as harmful to ourselves, then we can resolve to weaken and gradually eliminate these mental attitudes within ourselves first, and then help others with our deepened understanding and realizations.

A Systems Perspective

As we have seen, when one has a systems perspective by appreciating interdependence, one can see that there are many causes and conditions that give rise to any particular problem, whether it is with an individual or a whole society. It is always simpler and more convenient to see a direct cause and effect when viewing a problem, but this is rarely the reality that is uncovered through investigation. To provide a further example, when we see a homeless person on the street, it is easy to simply see that person as the cause of his own suffering, without regard to the myriad causes and conditions that gave rise to his present situation. By appreciating the various causes and conditions that gave rise to this person, it can increase our compassion for the individual and help us find better solutions to his plight. If our understanding of this homeless person is simply that of the individual without the system-perspective, then we might think that giving the person money will make them better. But when looking deeper, one can see how poverty is a product, not just of an individual, but of an entire economy and society that is set up in a specific way. Ironically, when we judge ourselves, we are quick to rationalize our behaviors by factoring in all of the external factors that led to us behave in the way we did. Using this same perspective for others can be beneficial to ourselves and society.

We might witness other systems in society, such as domestic violence, incarceration, racism and prejudice as

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



also being examples of structural violence. As we become aware of the depth and complexity of these problems, sometimes we can become hopeless. So it is important to keep in mind that these systems and structures are reflections of the values of individuals. As these values change, the systems will naturally change to reflect the values of the people making up the rules and institutions. In other words, institutions are not hard and fixed; rather,

they are capable of change. Most importantly, humans have the ability to change them. The other component of interdependence is humans have the ability to affect these systems, and not only that humans are the products of systems. Our actions and consequences are far reaching. This is a very enduring aspect of interdependence, and with this knowledge in mind, we can begin to use critical thinking to make lasting social change.



SERIES III: ENGAGING IN SYSTEMS

SKILL 10: ENGAGING WITH DISCERNMENT

All the previous steps are intended to lead to skills and insights that facilitate decision making centered in compassionate integrity. This final step involves putting all this together in concrete situations and practicing the art of discernment. In addition to having compassion and integrity, ethical decision making depends on knowledge, discernment and critical thinking — all employed in the context of our basic human values and our understanding of common humanity and interdependence. This is furthered by taking an attitude of humility and recognizing the benefit that comes from working with, and learning from, others. This last step involves practicing this combination of compassion and insight.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content

- Participants will learn that compassion must be complemented with insight and understanding for decisions to lead to the most positive outcomes.
- Participants will learn to use common sense, personal experience and scientific evidence as a foundation for discernment.
- Participants will learn to check their personal motivation when facing a dilemma
- Participants will learn the concept of epistemic humility.

Practice

- Participants will practice examining an issue in context from multiple perspectives, considering the viewpoints of each group involved and debating the pros and cons of multiple sides.
- Participants will practice accessing creativity and imagination, problem solving capacities and other practical skills necessary for engaged action within their community and the world.

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



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Often when one thinks about compassion, what comes to mind is compassionate actions, such as giving money to the poor or helping someone who is sick. As we have seen, however, compassion is better understood as an emotional state that motivates one to action, but that does not dictate what that action is. The same action can be used to help or to harm someone. A surgeon, for instance, and a thief can both cut someone with a knife, but the surgeon is motivated by a wish to assist someone, whereas the thief may be motivated by a wish to harm. This helps us to see that the compassionate nature of the action is not determined by the act itself but by the underlying motivation.

Discernment

Compassion orients us toward compassionate action and provides us with a destination toward which we want to go, without necessarily knowing the most effective way to

get there. For example, when we see someone suffering from illness, we may want to alleviate his or her suffering, but we may not know right away how to do so. We know where we want to go, but not how to get there. This intention could take us in many directions, from simply taking the person to the doctor to deciding to go to medical school. Despite being motivated by compassion, our actions can even sometimes lead to greater harm, which is why discernment is so important.

Discernment is the wisdom to know what to do. Although we cannot always know what to do in every situation, there is a process we can go through in order to maximize the chances of doing what is productive for others and for ourselves. In order to fully grasp the concept of discernment, which will be explored in greater depth in Module 10, it is helpful to first better understand interdependence. Through the recognition of interdependence, one can see that nothing happens in a vacuum. As discussed earlier, interdependence



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A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



INTERDEPENDENCE
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COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

is the recognition that every person is deeply interconnected and dependent on everyone else in order to survive and thrive. This interdependence extends also to the environment of which we are a part. In CIT, interdependence is also the recognition that everything happens within a set of interrelated and mutually constituted systems, such as economic, political, social and criminal justice.

Practicing Discernment and Critical Thinking

Once one is motivated by compassion, the next step is to figure out the most effective means for making a positive contribution to the problem one is trying to address. This process requires the application of critical thinking. When the Dalai Lama speaks about applying critical thinking or using discernment in order to tackle any problem in a compassionate way, he poses a series of questions that one can ask oneself in order to decide upon the best course of action.⁸⁶ These are:

1. Check your motivation by asking, “Do I truly have the others’ well-being at heart or am I under the sway of any afflictive mental states, such as greed, anger or jealousy?”
2. If your motivations are sound, bring to mind your understanding of interdependence and ask, “What is the broader context of the problem? What are the various causes and conditions that have given rise to the problem?”
3. Based on this broader understanding, ask, “What choices do I have and what are the likely outcomes of each choice?”
4. Finally, ask yourself, “Which solution will cause the least harm and enable the greatest amount of well-being?”⁸⁷

The goal of these steps is first to ensure that our motivations are sound. The reason this is so important is that no matter how thorough we are in devising our plans, we can rarely know in advance the outcomes of our actions. We do not control all of the variables, and we cannot see into the future. As a result, our actions may not have any effect or may even cause greater harm. We must therefore, begin with a sound motivation, without ulterior motives.

The second reason for these steps is to ensure that we are taking a wider view of the situation, in order to understand the context for the reason why something is a certain way. Part of the problem is that when we do not take a wider view of all the causes and conditions, we are more likely to cause unintended consequences.

One of the potential dangers of seeing interdependence and all of the causes and conditions is that it could lead to a form of paralysis. Because there are so many conditions in this web of interdependence, we could lose sight of how we should act. Here we can be benefited by considering the Pareto Principle (also called the 80/20 rule), which states that in many situations 80% of the effects are caused by only 20% of the causes. A person might find that they need to raise a certain amount of money. Eighty percent of the money they raise comes from 20% of the donors; similarly, a business person may find that 80% of their profit comes from 20% of their products. If we understand this, then small changes, focused on a few key causes, can have a big impact.

In thinking about unexpected consequences, it is very important to recognize that interdependence also means that although we might have intended a certain outcome, there are many other outcomes that might come along the way. This is why it is important to think about the wider context and to seek the opinions and expertise of others.



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

One example of this is the Crime Bill signed by President Clinton in 1994. This bill was supposed to be a “tough on crime” bill, making the country safer and ending the war on drugs. Unfortunately, what was intended and what actually happened were two very different things. What transpired was the beginning of the biggest explosion of the prison population in the United States in history. In 2015, President Clinton addressed the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People stating, “I signed a bill that made the problem worse and I want to admit it.”⁸⁸ The original intention may have been good, but in the end there were unforeseen consequences that were not at all beneficial.

Epistemic Humility

As we use discernment, it is important to have a degree of humility in our recognition of the problem and the decisions that we are making. This is called “epistemic humility,” which is humility with regard to our own point of view and what we know and what we can know. The basic idea is when looking at a complex issue, we can only see part of the picture at any given time. We see things from the lens of our own experiences and knowledge. If we have epistemic humility, rather than thinking that we are always right and others are always wrong, we can be more open. Rather than treating others with different ideas or perspectives as ignorant or ill-informed, we can view their perspective as a contrasting point of view and as an opportunity for learning. By recognizing that one can only see part of the picture and that the other person has a different perspective to offer, one can decide to listen and understand how the other sees the situation. If we can do this, we can gain a bigger sense of the picture. We tend to think that we are right and that our views are absolute, but a moment’s reflection will reveal that many of our views have in fact changed

over time, showing that our knowledge is imperfect. Epistemic humility is the best tool we can use to learn more, and learn more quickly. Ultimately, this leads us to solutions that will be more likely to be productive and sustainable.

Using a Systems Perspective to Explore Equity and Contentment

To develop a systems perspective, it is helpful to make a map of the system that shows its various elements and stakeholders, and then to analyze that system by exploring how transactions and interactions affect the various individuals and groups involved. This analysis from a systems perspective is very helpful in revealing how we may participate in benefit or harm in unintended ways. For example, when we only consider our own well-being and do not think of our interdependence with others, it is easy to see things from only our own point of view. It is natural to want more well-being for ourselves and our loved ones, but it is important that this not come at undue expense to others. For example, in our natural pursuit of happiness, we may want more money, more status, more power, more privilege, more rights, more opportunities for ourselves and those we care for. In itself, of course, there is nothing wrong in wanting these things, but it is important for us to analyze whether our pursuit and accumulation of them comes at any expense to others. A systems perspective helps us see that in many cases, our having more means that others will have less.

This may not seem obvious at first, so it often requires going through a process of discernment and critical thinking. In any system with a finite set of resources – such as material or human resources – accumulation by

COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

one individual or group inevitably translates into less for others. If we live in a rich country, we may take it for granted that the expansion of our economy and its accumulation of more wealth is a good in itself that causes no one else any harm, but that is not always the case. Sometimes growth comes from new technology or more efficient use of resources, but often it comes through the exploitation of those less fortunate than us. This picture only reveals itself when we investigate the details of foreign aid and trade deals. Is the enrichment of one group a reasonable goal if it results in the impoverishment of another?

The same holds true on an individual basis. We may celebrate a raise or promotion and the fact that we are now earning more money, without thinking from whom that money is coming or whose opportunities we may be inhibiting. Even if we do analyze who the money comes from, we may only analyze one or two steps down the causal chain: our employer, the company, the consumers and investors involved in the company, and so on. Without sufficient analysis, it may even seem to us that the money comes from nowhere, which of course is not true. If we are not careful, we may not realize how our accumulation of wealth is actually often moving wealth away from others. The same holds true for power, status and privilege: we may see our own accumulation of influence as in no way connected with others having less power and ability to participate.

This is not to say we should not earn what we need or enjoy any status or influence. It is merely to say that a systems perspective encourages us to balance our wish for accumulation with a recognition of others' needs and their equal rights as fellow human beings. This is because it encourages us to step outside of ourselves for a moment and look from the perspective of all participants in a system. If we were to consider the whole world and

global GDP and then decide what a reasonable distribution of resources would involve for the individuals and families within it, what would that number look like? If we came up with a number, but then wanted more for ourselves than others, what reasons would we use to justify the idea that we deserve more?

A body of research is already growing that shows that individuals who have much more than others in terms of wealth and status tend to act less ethically and less generously than those who have less.⁸⁹ Indeed, studies suggest that as wealth increases, empathy tends to decline.⁹⁰ Unless we can come up with a reasonable justification for why we deserve more than others, such imbalances are a threat to our integrity, because they create a double standard for ourselves and others. Integrity requires that we hold ourselves to the same standard as others, not that we make exceptions for ourselves. Compassion requires that we recognize and care about the needs of others. Therefore, contentment and a sense of what is enough for us when considering



COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

the entire system is essential if we are to cultivate compassionate integrity. When considering “how much is enough,” this is not something that someone else can dictate to us; it is something we come to decide for ourselves, using our discernment and our awareness of the system. As Gandhi said, “The world has enough for the needs of all people. But it does not have enough for the greed of even one person.” Far from diminishing our happiness, having a reasonable sense of measure in our life increases our gratitude, our connection with others and our well-being. It frees us from the hedonic treadmill and leads to greater generosity and sharing in our lives, which has been shown to lead to greater happiness and well-being.

Bringing Basic Human Values Into Decisions

The most important step in discernment is to remember to bring the values that were discussed in the previous skills to the forefront of our decision making and allow it to drive our creative action to bring about a better world for ourselves and others. In the United States, economists often want to see GDP growth in excess of 3%. If GDP is growing by more than 3%, then the economy is doing well; if not, it is doing poorly. Yet GDP growth is a poor indicator of whether we are making the world a better place, with more sustainable harmony and well-being. If we understand, for example, that part of GDP is the money that fuels prisons, war, and tobacco production, then it may be that a 3% growth in GDP is actually a bad thing. Economic growth is not inherently a good; like all materials things, it is a means to an end. In fact, analysis may reveal to us that if we want our economy to truly thrive, the best thing we can do is promote secular ethics. This is because the greatest costs to our economy come from things like violence,

mistrust, deceit, fraud, corruption, and the financial and human costs created by prisons, security forces, armaments and war. If people in our societies engaged in life with a stronger commitment to basic human values, we would find each other more trustworthy, cooperate more, and engage in less conflict and corruption. The result would be a society with far greater productivity and higher material and psychological well-being. Even better, such economic growth and prosperity would not come at the cost of impoverishing others or our environment.

For example, the Institute for Economics and Peace publishes an annual report (The Global Peace Index) that details the economic costs of violence as measured against the world GDP. For the last two years, the economic costs of violence and violence containment comprise about 13.3% and 12.6% of the world GDP respectively. This averages to about 13 trillion dollars of the world’s annual economic activity for those years. This represents money, resources and lost lives usurped from enjoying life’s opportunities and building sustainable peace in the world. The analysis is based on a systems perspective that also takes into account identifiable components not just of violence production and containment, but also system components of building sustainable peace in the world. What is clear in both domains is what is called the “multiplier effect” – resources devoted to violence tend to multiply and strengthen the structures of violence and consume more resources to that end, while resources devoted to structures of peace, such as for education, healthcare, economic development and democratic institutions, tend to exponentially multiply potential for human flourishing and well-being. This report illustrates empirically how we are allowing and actually allocating absurd, and arguably



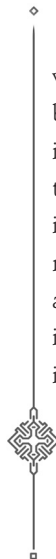
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A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING



immoral amounts of GDP toward destructive ends. Countries that do not allocate resources toward violence production and containment, but rather invest them on peace infrastructure, rank very high in the Global Peace Index.⁹¹ It is a matter of values and priorities.

So as we look at the kinds of problems that we are trying to change in the world, the questions we may wish to ask ourselves are: “Are we really digging deeply enough?”, “Are we being creative enough?” and “Are

we being driven by those values that are in our own best long-term interest, such as compassion?” Most importantly, we can ask ourselves, “Are we seeking out the greatest well-being for the greatest number of people in a way that is sustainable and equitable for all?” The more we can answer yes to that question, the more we are beginning to live our lives out of compassionate integrity, and the more we are contributing to our own individual and collective flourishing.



A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

SKILL 9: APPRECIATING INTERDEPENDENCE

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A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

SKILL 9: APPRECIATING INTERDEPENDENCE

[illegible]



REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

SKILL 9: APPRECIATING INTERDEPENDENCE

Instructions: Answer the following questions as freely and openly as possible. Your answers are for you only and are not meant to be shared. As such, do not worry about the quality of your prose or grammar. There's no need to think much before you write; you can just write.

1. What are some benefits of appreciating interdependence?

2. What are some things holding you back from appreciating interdependence?

2. How would your life be different if you were better able to appreciate interdependence while making decisions?



MINDFUL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

SKILL 9: APPRECIATING INTERDEPENDENCE

Instructions: Each participant will select a partner with whom to have a mindful conversation. Take turns answering the following questions. The partner whose turn it is to listen should follow these rules:

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 1: How did it feel to reflect on interdependence?

Question 2: What could you do to appreciate interdependence more often?

Question 3: How does appreciating interdependence impact how you view the systems you would like to make a positive impact on?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise.



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 9: APPRECIATING INTERDEPENDENCE

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Exercise 1

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Think of an event in your life such as an accomplishment or something that contributed or contributes to your well-being now (e.g. getting a job, earning a degree, finding accommodation, meeting a spouse or partner, or even a more minor event). Start to consider all the people who contributed to this event or accomplishment. Try to list everyone who played a role, even a minor role. If there are people whose names you don't know, list them by their role, profession or some other designation.
2. Now consider the people you listed. Who did they themselves depend on? Who did they need in order to be able to play the role they played in enabling your accomplishment? If there are people whose names you don't know, list them by their role, profession or some other designation. If there are groups of people, you can name those too.
3. Total up the number of people you come up with through this process.
4. Are you surprised by the number of people on whom this one event in your life depended? How many of these people were strangers or people you do not know very well?
5. What benefits might there be if we developed a greater appreciation of this type of interdependence?
6. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they are valuable.
7. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your appreciation of interdependence, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 9: APPRECIATING INTERDEPENDENCE

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Exercise 2

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Pick an object in the room that benefits you, but you may not notice often. Draw a picture of this object in the center of a blank piece of paper in your journal. Then, using words, arrows and pictures, draw a visual representation of all of the people and things it took for you to have this object. You might ask yourself these questions as you complete this activity: "How did this item get here? How did it come to be? Who made it? What else was needed to get it here? Who made those items? etc."
2. After your diagram is complete, write down the number of people who are associated with each part of the process and then total up the number of all of these people.
3. How does this object benefit you? What would your life be like without this object or others like it?
4. Are you surprised by the number of people on whom this item depends? How many of these people are so-called "strangers" to us?
5. What benefits might there be if we developed a greater appreciation of this type of interdependence?
6. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they are valuable.
7. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your appreciation of interdependence, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?

A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

SKILL 10: ENGAGING WITH DISCERNMENT



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A SECULAR ETHICS APPROACH TO CULTIVATING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FLOURISHING

SKILL 10: ENGAGING WITH DISCERNMENT

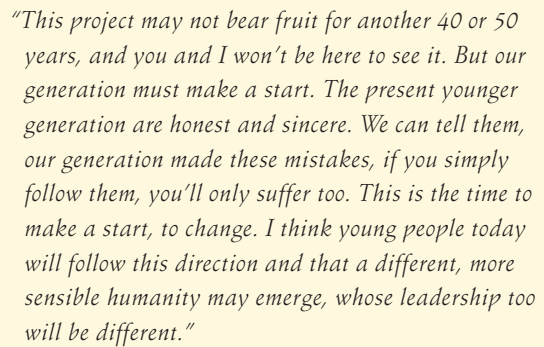


photo: Vipflash / Shutterstock.com

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REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

SKILL 10: ENGAGING WITH DISCERNMENT

Instructions: Answer the following questions as freely and openly as possible. Your answers are for you only and are not meant to be shared. As such, do not worry about the quality of your prose or grammar. There's no need to think much before you write; you can just write.

1. What are the benefits, if any, of recognizing that systems provide both benefit and harm to individuals?

2. What are the benefits, if any, of appreciating the aspirations and fears of each group of people engaged in a system?

3. Would our attitude toward these systems change if we better appreciated the common humanity of all those involved in them and affected by them?



MINDFUL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

SKILL 10: ENGAGING WITH DISCERNMENT

Instructions: Each participant will select a partner with whom to have a mindful conversation. Take turns answering the following questions. The partner whose turn it is to listen should follow these rules:

1. Be totally present for the other person.
2. Avoid asking questions.
3. Avoid giving advice.
4. Maintain total confidentiality: anything that your conversation partner decides to share must be held in strict confidence.

Question 1: What is a system you would like to have a positive impact on?

Question 2: How does appreciating interdependence and common humanity impact the way you see yourself engaging in this system?

Question 3: How would this system change if there were more compassion among those in it, rather than hate or resentment?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Use this space to capture any insights or ideas that emerged for you during this exercise.



CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNAL QUESTIONS

SKILL 10: ENGAGING WITH DISCERNMENT

Instructions: These journal questions are designed to help reinforce the skills you are learning in CIT. The greatest benefit will come from repeated consideration of these questions over time. They can be used in connection with, or in place of, the Contemplative Practice recordings found on the CIT website. Since space in this book is limited, you may wish to answer these questions in your personal journal.

Start with bringing to mind a resource or focus on the contact of your body with a surface, object or another body part, and allow yourself to notice any neutral or pleasant sensations that arise in your body.

1. Write down a system that you are involved in or wish to have a positive impact on. Be specific.
2. As you did for Appreciating Interdependence, on a piece of paper create a visual representation of the human and non-human components that make up the system.
3. On your system map, note the places where you see the system causing harm to people and where you see the system creating benefit for people. If you can, note whether this harm and benefit is direct, structural or cultural (as described in the manual). As negativity bias can sometimes push us to focus on harm, try and be fair with how the system also creates benefit.
4. For each group of stakeholders in the system, list what you think their aspirations and fears are. What insights emerge for you as you note these aspirations and fears?
5. How would the system change if at any place in the system there were more compassion? What about anger and resentment?
6. What would be the most compassionate way for you to positively impact the system and benefit others affected by the system?
7. Did you gain any insights from today's journal entries? If so, explain what insights you gained and why they are valuable.
8. If you are engaging in concrete steps or practices to increase your discernment, how has that been progressing or what have you been learning?

SERIES III: ENGAGING IN SYSTEMS

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⁸⁶ Tenzin Gyatso (2012). *Beyond religion: Ethics for a whole world*. Random House.

⁸⁷ Tenzin Gyatso (2012). *Beyond religion: Ethics for a whole world*. Random House. p. 77.

⁸⁸ Baker, P. (2015, July 15). Bill Clinton concedes his crime law jailed too many for too long. *The New York Times* [New York City].

⁸⁹ Piff, Paul K., et al. "Having less, giving more: the influence of social class on prosocial behavior." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 99.5 (2010): 771.

⁹⁰ Piff, Paul K., et al. "Higher social class predicts increased unethical behavior." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109.11 (2012): 4086-4091.

⁹¹ See: Institute for Economics and Peace (2017). Global Peace Index 2017. Retrieved from <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/06/GPI17-Report.pdf>; Compared with Global Peace Index 2016. Retrieved from http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/02/GPI-2016-Report_2.pdf. See also, The Economic Value of Peace. Retrieved from <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/02/The-Economic-Value-of-Peace-2016-WEB.pdf>

FURTHER READING

If you are interested in reading more about many of the topics covered in CIT, we recommend the following books:

- Bloom, P. (2017). *Against empathy: The case for rational compassion*. Random House.
- Bolz, M., & Singer, T. (2013). Mind your hormones! The endocrinology of compassion. In *Compassion: Bridging practice in Science* (p. 230).
- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss*. (Vol. 3). Basic books.
- De Waal, F. (2009). *Primates and philosophers: How morality evolved*. Princeton University Press.
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