

Before You Even Walk In The Room:

Cultivating the Compassionate Mind as Part of the MI Spirit.

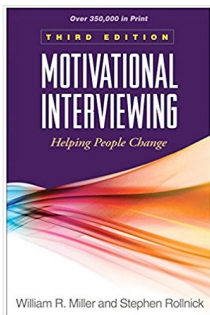


Compassionate self is deeply reflective and joyously playful, with ultimate wisdom and the utmost humility, showing the grounded strength of a mountain and the warm friendliness of a Labrador, wrapped up in an unshakable commitment to be helpful to self and others.

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Compassion in Motivational Interviewing

To be compassionate is to actively promote the other's welfare, to give priority to the other's needs.

Compassion is a deliberate commitment to pursue the welfare and best interests of the other.

To work with a spirit of compassion is to have your heart in the right place so that the trust you engender will be deserved.

- Bill Miller and Steve Rollnick

Defining Compassion

Turn to the person next to you and see if you can answer the question, "What is compassion?"



Compassion is the sensitivity to suffering in self and others, with a motivation and commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it.

Gilbert (2014).



May I be helpful, rather than harmful, towards myself and others.

Sensitivity and Commitment

Boy, that other person is really suffering right now. Their situation is hard and painful.

I really want to take steps to do something that might make things a little easier.

What's something I could do right now that would be helpful for them and most supportive of their well-being?

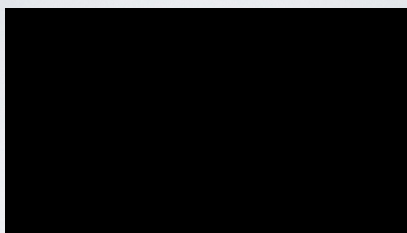
Wisdom, Strength and Courage

Compassion is...

...wisely assessing a situation in which another person, or ourselves, may be suffering, and then arriving at a course of action to help alleviate that suffering.

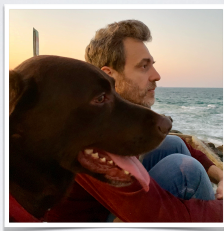
...with the strength and groundedness that ready us in the presence of suffering to cope with feelings that may arise, knowing a calm mind thinks differently.

...courageously approaching suffering, even when we feel fear, hesitation or urges to avoid, and take the actions we wisely know will help to alleviate that suffering.



Compassion is the courage to descend into the reality of human experience. — Paul Gilbert

Your Ideal Compassionate Other

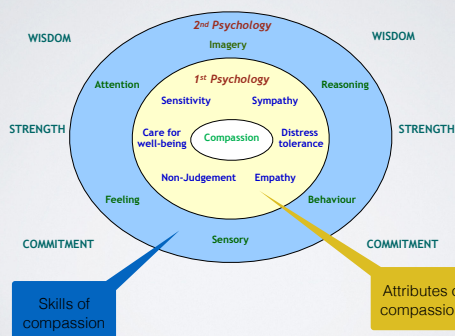


What are some of the attributes you would like in your ideal compassionate other?

The Attributes of Compassion

- Sensitivity
- Non-judgment
- Empathy
- Sympathy
- Care for Well-Being
- Distress Tolerance

Compassionate Mind



Sensitivity

Today I will practice sensitivity.

Today I will be aware of the interconnectedness of people, life and the universe.

Today I will be sensitive to the hardship or suffering of others and myself.

Today I will look for opportunities to be kind, helpful and compassionate.

Non-judgment

I am noticing myself judging.

Was this judgment just my mind on autopilot? Can I try and see this in other ways?

Is this person just a person? Can I relate to them as someone with their own history of triumphs, perceived failures, moments of adventure, moments of disappointment, and wanting the same things I do, to be understood and cared about?

May I open my heart and mind to accepting them without judgment.

Empathy

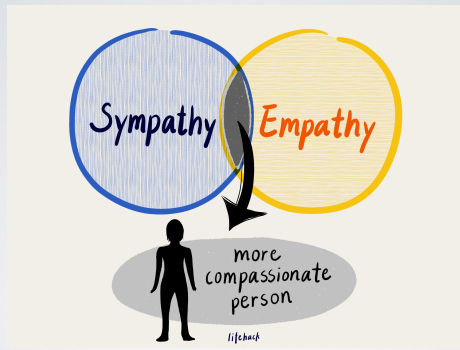
What am I feeling right now?

How might this feeling have arisen?

In what ways might this feeling make sense in the context of my whole life?

Sympathy

I am aware of this person's suffering. I understand how painful it must be for them. I know I am not to blame for their suffering, and nor do I have the power to completely remove it for them. However, I care for this person's well being. I feel sad and sorry that they have to go through all this. I'm concerned for them and I want to try to do what I can to help them.



Care for Well-being

May you and I be safe

May you and I be peaceful

May you and I be healthy

May you and I live with ease

May you and I be free of suffering

Distress Tolerance

I'm feeling distressed and upset right now, trying to work with this suffering. Suffering is a part of life, everyone can feel this way and it is understandable that I should feel this way sometimes too. What is it that I really need right now to soften my feelings and alleviate my own suffering?

A Note of Research

Compassion Motivation and Action Scale (Steindl, Tellegen, Filus, Seppälä, Doty, & Kirby, in preparation)

The Distress Tolerance subscale (related to coping self-efficacy and confidence) was the best performing in terms of its correlations with established psychometric measures.

Distress Tolerance regarding compassion for others was significantly correlated with fears of compassion for others at $-.268$. Distress tolerance regarding self-compassion was correlated with fears of self-compassion at $-.597$. ($p < .01$).

It is proposed that distress tolerance may be particularly important in a clinical setting when preparing for participation in compassion focused therapy and/or cultivating more compassion or self-compassion in daily life.

It may also be important for clinicians themselves...

A Note on: Fears, Blocks and Resistances



Embodying Compassion

His Holiness, The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet, has been quoted as saying:

There is a developmental process for cultivating compassion for others... The first step is knowledge... Then you need to constantly reflect and internalise this knowledge... to the point where it will become a conviction. It becomes integrated into your state of mind... Then you get to a point where it becomes spontaneous.

(The Dalai Lama & Ekman, 2008)

Please close your eyes...

Become the Embodiment of Compassion



And so, we can begin to embody compassion in our daily lives.

Beyond learning about it, or thinking about it, or imagining it, or even practicing it... we can strive to become the *embodiment* of compassion.

We see compassion as a part of us, and us a part of compassion, and we commit to noticing and alleviating suffering, both in other living beings and within ourselves.

Let's not leave it to others. Let's not wait to be inspired. Let's not put it off to another day.

We can manifest our embodiment of compassion through our actions today, taking steps towards kind, wise and courageous action in all aspects of our lives.



In compassion...

...we become **sensitive** to the suffering of others and ourselves, with **non-judgmental acceptance** and **empathic understanding**, feeling **sympathetically moved** by this suffering and motivated by a **care for well-being** to offer help, while also developing our ability to **tolerate our own feelings of distress** if or when they arise.

Making a Commitment

What would you LIKE to do, or change, in order to cultivate your compassionate self?

What are your personal REASONS for taking these actions or making these changes?

What is it that makes cultivating compassion IMPORTANT to you?

So, if you were to cultivate compassion, HOW would you go about it?

And now, if you like, it's time to commit! So, have a think about commitment...

What WILL you do next to cultivate compassion in your work with others, in your daily life, or perhaps even towards yourself?



PLEASE STAY IN TOUCH

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