

compassionate activism

Session 6 Chat Log

17:55:15 From Jessamyn : Hey hey :)
17:55:37 From Josette Souza : Hello!
17:55:57 From Josette Souza : How's everyone feeling? Notice any changes?
17:56:27 From Josette Souza : In springtime weather or in life? :)
17:56:32 From Mareena : Hi
17:56:51 From Jessamyn : huge week for me, just got back from a long weekend women's retreat
17:56:59 From Josette Souza : Nice!
17:57:06 From Bernardita : That's awesome!!!
17:57:08 From Jessamyn : it was amazing
17:57:10 From Bernardita : Ah!
17:57:24 From Sandra Kim to Josette Souza (Privately) : that's hilarious that i wasn't on mute lol
17:57:32 From Josette Souza to Sandra Kim (Privately) : LOL SORRY
17:57:32 From Sandra Kim to Josette Souza (Privately) : I was like how are we laughing at the same time lol
17:57:40 From Bernardita : It's been a HUGE week here as well (new jobs, ending the semester)! And I missed joining the call last week! but I am catching up now
17:57:45 From Sandra Kim to Josette Souza (Privately) : no need to be sorry lol :)
17:57:46 From Josette Souza to Sandra Kim (Privately) : Hahahah yeah!
17:58:19 From Alexis : Doing well.
17:58:20 From Jen : hello :)
17:59:21 From Sandra Kim : how's the weather where you're at? it's still a bit chilly here in DC but getting warmer thankfully!
17:59:39 From Jessamyn : been slow to warm up
18:00:14 From Jen : In Costa Rica it has been slow to cool down. Having problems with El Nino, but rain is finally coming
18:00:26 From Josette Souza : josette@everydayfeminism.com
18:01:27 From Josette Souza : To download the latest version of Zoom: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362233-Where-Do-I-Download-The-Latest-Version-?mc_cid=c858100c4e&mc_eid=074bbdab2d
18:06:20 From Jessamyn : the women's retreat I was at last weekend was called "The Right to Feel" — very aligned with this work :)
18:06:27 From Josette Souza : Nice!
18:12:22 From Akila Richards : I practiced every day acknowledging my internal reality without judgement and that was an interesting and liberating experience. Last

night I thought my friend to practice when she feels anxious and she was amazed how freed she felt in a matter of minutes. This course is fantastic.

- 18:12:36 From Jessamyn : Akila that's great!
- 18:13:09 From Akila Richards : Yes the impact is being felt already
- 18:13:44 From Emily : I have a question/struggle
- 18:14:34 From Jen : what an awesome place to be joining the class from!
- 18:14:50 From Brittany Rea : I was just thinking the same
- 18:15:07 From Bernardita : same!!! definitely an impact
- 18:16:38 From Mareena : <applause>
- 18:17:09 From Deanna : Male violence at its finest. /angry sarcasm
- 18:17:23 From Bernardita : that is a rough situation to be in!
- 18:17:30 From KaiEoa : I have a response to Emily.
- 18:17:37 From lorraine : THANKS Emily for raising gender spectrum concerns!
Too bad they were so unreceptive.
- 18:17:38 From Bernardita : tell him!
- 18:18:06 From Bernardita : some people cannot accept or understand systemic oppression and how prevalent it is in our lives
- 18:18:07 From Jessamyn : I feel you, that is tough
- 18:18:12 From Bernardita : esp the oppressors
- 18:18:14 From Deanna : Thank you for being so aware & realizing that it is NOT a laughing matter to oppressed groups!
- 18:18:29 From Mareena : applause for bringing up the question*
- 18:18:35 From Bernardita : i am snapping my fingers so much right now lol
- 18:18:37 From abbyalexanian : ^agreed!
- 18:18:56 From Bernardita : that's such a great reminder: it's not about controlling
- 18:19:01 From Bernardita : we CAN feel things
- 18:19:06 From Bernardita : yeaaaaa
- 18:19:40 From Jessamyn : that was great: "It's not about not getting into that space, it's about what you do once you get there."
- 18:20:04 From aa : check yo privilege
- 18:22:13 From Adventuress42 : but also to recognize the trigger in self and NOT change the conversation away from the point at hand, but be able to come back to it at another time, in it's own time.
- 18:23:23 From Jessamyn : I really hear that, Adventuress — I've been really going inside lately.
- 18:25:36 From cbigurs : If I don't address a hateful perspective, I feel like I am contributing to the problem. But then if I don't say anything and just decide I'm not gonna own that, I feel shame or weak for not responding.
- 18:25:59 From aa : As aQTPOC, I imagine recentering underrepresented folks instead of simply including...
- 18:26:41 From Mareena : love aboc
- 18:26:50 From Akila Richards : Is that wanting to make the internal or external reality different or both? So what I hear is simply acknowledging what Emily feels as well as the response of the person ...
- 18:26:53 From Mareena : love above*
- 18:27:09 From abbyalexanian : yes, enabling

18:27:13 From Sheila : I find the stages of change model helps me.... seeing them as pre-contemplative.... having not yet reached that stages of understanding.... having to be patient with that.... but I know that it is still somewhat judgemental.....

18:27:31 From aa : A quote I find useful is "I speak to be understood, not to convince you I am right. I listen to understand, not to formulate my rebuttal."

18:27:35 From Deanna : They are different things, Akila. Internal is what's happening inside you in response, external is the situation you've been put in.

18:28:09 From Jen : @aa I like that quote! A good reminder too :)

18:28:14 From KaiEoa : I second Sheila, that's a lot of what I try to do, as well.

18:28:28 From Akila Richards : Yes Deanna, I get that and so I wondered wondered whether we accept both the internal and external reality for what it is without judgement ...

18:29:33 From Deanna : Well, I suppose you have to judge the external & internal situation in order to become less judgmental of both things.

18:30:51 From abbyalexanian : this example is so helpful

18:31:02 From Akila Richards : Do you though? Is n't the judgement where the trouble starts? Isn't is just about stating what is before putting any judgement to it, before responding

18:31:27 From Jessamyn : agreed, abby, I encounter these things a lot

18:32:11 From Deanna : I suppose the difference that I've noticed is when I'm not asking "how can X person think that/how can I justify feeling this way?" & instead asking "why do I feel this way, why might they feel this way?"

18:32:54 From Deanna : Exploratory versus accusatory, if that makes any sense.

18:33:01 From Aurora : One quote I've heard is "you can't be so open minded tht your brains fall out." Judgement can be seen as inherently biased/problematic, but I try to reframe it as a term that simply expresses I'm forming an opinion

18:33:17 From Akila Richards : Ah yes you just reminded me it is about asking, questioning, interrogating that brings up the issues at hand

18:33:22 From Deanna : So I suppose it's not really judgment, so much as pausing to see why the situation unfolded the way it did.

18:33:26 From Aurora : Think of a supposedly non-biased legal judge passing "Judgement" at the end of a trial

18:33:43 From RFVega : The Stoics used judgement something like "state of mind"

18:34:04 From Akila Richards : Yes Deanna, pausing I love it. it gives time to reflect and look deeper

18:34:07 From Deanna : Thanks Aurora, that's what I was trying to say!

18:35:04 From Jessamyn : I feel that, about briefing

18:35:17 From Aurora : I guess you can compare it to the acknowledgment versus acceptance semantics we're looking at in this course. Acknowledgement doesn't necessarily mean acceptance, and judgement doesn't necessarily mean an opinion that's weighted with prejudice

18:35:34 From Deanna : Yes Aurora!

18:35:35 From Aurora : And "acceptance" doesn't necessarily mean approval

18:35:44 From Akila Richards : yes Aurora there is a distinction

18:36:06 From Deanna : "I accept that you see things this way, but I don't necessarily agree with it"

18:36:06 From RFVega : I agree, Aurora.
18:36:46 From abbyalexanian : Fight or flight?
18:39:44 From abbyalexanian : You're doing so great Emily!
18:42:08 From Sheila : I am revisiting the pain and helplessness I felt working with aboriginal youth and seeing their pain..... and knowing that I was part of and a child of the oppressors
18:42:32 From Akila Richards : Emily it is an honour to watch you process your grief, thank you for sharing so generously
18:42:40 From Josette Souza : <3 All the love to you Emily
18:42:51 From Sheila : I see your pain..... and honor it....
18:43:17 From Jessamyn : Thank you, Emily, for daring to care.
18:43:38 From Jessamyn : It *is* hard to care about something when others dismiss it.
18:43:41 From Mareena : <3
18:44:12 From Deanna : That's an interesting discovery, Emily.
18:44:32 From Deanna : A calm presence in a sea of grief.
18:48:27 From aa : I can hear Emily fine, but Sandra sounds distant (maybe its just my connection).
18:48:37 From Josette Souza : No it's the competing audio
18:48:42 From aa : ah ok
18:48:46 From Josette Souza : Sorry for that, I'm trying to mute when needed
18:50:49 From Brittany Rea : horray!
18:50:53 From Deanna : Thank you so much for sharing, Emily!
18:50:59 From Josette Souza : Thank you Emily!!
18:51:04 From Jessamyn : <3
18:51:05 From RFVega : thank you, Emily!
18:51:05 From cbfigur : Thank you Emily!!!! So brave!
18:51:07 From Sheila : love from Canada
18:51:08 From Mareena : Thank you
18:51:14 From Aliya : <3
18:53:01 From Deanna : Oh, Josette, I have a question.
18:53:13 From Josette Souza : Yes?
18:53:32 From aa : eliminate struggle! yaaaaaaaas!
18:53:48 From Deanna : I've been trying to find something worth practicing on, but I've actually had a surprisingly good couple of weeks without any hitches. How can I find a way to practice with few triggers happening in my daily life?
18:54:32 From Deanna : If the feelings aren't fresh, I have trouble focusing on the issue I'm trying to practice with.
18:54:36 From Josette Souza : @Deanna - that's awesome! :) Perhaps going back and seeing things that happened in the past and thinking about those things?
18:54:46 From Akila Richards : much love from the UK Emily and thank you!
18:54:56 From KaiEoa : I want to apologize, I took space when it would have been better to wait.
18:55:18 From Deanna : I've been trying, Josette! Perhaps I just need more focus.
18:55:55 From Josette Souza : @Deanna - Or, you can also think about things you've witnessed in yourself by yourself. Like for example, sometimes I notice self-

doubt creeping in, I suggest trying to do these excercises with that sort of feeling/
moment

18:55:59 From Aliya : <3 @ KaiEoa
18:56:13 From Deanna : You know what, I haven't tried that.
18:56:17 From Deanna : Thanks!
18:56:25 From Deanna : Sorry to keep you from your break. :P
18:56:41 From Josette Souza : Haha no worries, glad I could help!
18:58:29 From Jessamyn : Deanna, sometimes when I feel like I have extra energy
I go into situations where I know there may be the need for advocacy.
18:58:48 From KaiEoa : I also want to say that my mistake has really opened my
eyes to some of the distinctions and differences between how I feel excluded
sometimes based on my faith, and exclusion based on a marginalized identity. There's
some complexity to it, but at the end of the day, any type of "Christian" has a certain
amount of privledge. And it is problematic to act as if they were in equal need of
defending (Hence part of why it would have been better to wait).
18:59:10 From Jessamyn : That's a great observation, KaiEoa
19:00:36 From mmanzanedo : i'm here :)
19:00:37 From Brittany Rea : Hello!
19:00:38 From Deanna : Back!
19:00:40 From Jen : i'm here
19:00:41 From Jessamyn : heheh
19:00:45 From KaiEoa : Thanks, Jessamyn. I think because I'm so often asked to
act as "the voice of the gender/sexual minoirity" that I forget that I don't need to be so
forceful all the time.
19:00:46 From abbyalexanian : back!
19:01:02 From Deanna : Thanks Jessamyn, that's a good point.
19:01:03 From Adventuress42 : back!!
19:01:12 From Laura Anne Haave : Thanks for owning that, KaiEoa! I just had a
conversation with a colleague about how rare it is for people to simply admit,
19:01:22 From Adventuress42 : yes!
19:01:29 From Laura Anne Haave : "I've made a mistake" and take ownership for
that.
19:01:46 From Deanna : Perfect phrasing Laura Anne!
19:01:52 From Deanna : I like that a lot.
19:03:41 From KaiEoa : It's so much easier to be defensive, especially if you're
trapped in the hegemonic way of thinking, and you can't be compassionate and
forgiving to yourself. Another reason these skills are so important!
19:04:06 From Jessamyn : self-compassion and forgiveness is important (and
often difficult)
19:07:48 From Aliya : I'm currently reading "Self-Compassion" by Kristin Neff and
it's been great
19:08:21 From KaiEoa : Thanks for the recommendation!
19:08:32 From Aurora : KaiEoa - I don't know if you identify as LGBTQ at all in
addition to Christian, but check out Believe Out Loud. It's a website/online magazine/
blog dedicated to giving voices to queer Christians.
19:10:52 From Deanna : Optician?

19:10:56 From Deanna : Optometrist
19:10:59 From Bernardita : optometrist
19:11:00 From nziemba : optometrist
19:11:00 From Bernardita : right?
19:11:08 From Deanna : Optician!
19:11:12 From aa : associate
19:11:12 From Aliya : lol
19:11:30 From KaiEoa : Aurora - Wow, thanks! That sounds like an amazing resource. Google is a super scary place to try to find "christian" and "lgbtq" resources.
19:11:42 From mmanzanedo : the dude...that's hilarious!
19:12:41 From Aurora : You might also want to try and reach out to some of the types of things going on at the Harvard Divinity school. They can provide a much more open resource for queer folx who are also followers of Abrahamic faiths because they're not exclusive to any one religion.
19:13:23 From Aurora : Like, if I, as a queer follower of an Abrahamic faith wanted to get a Master's in Divinity, they're one of my best bets because schools specific to faith traditions tend to be pretty literal.
19:17:30 From Deanna : Seems like he was projecting his fears onto the people he was hating on. But it sounds like it happened because he hadn't before framed their perspectives outside of his own frame!
19:18:21 From KaiEoa : So Im having trouble understanding how you do this when the words they're saying are actively hurtful to you?
19:18:35 From Sheila : Love the statement take struggle out and shift that ...
19:18:36 From RFVega : Nice plug!!
19:18:38 From RFVega : love it
19:18:43 From Aurora : It kind of reminds me how... one of the things I learned in therapy that's a pretty popular sentiment is "if you are able to give compassion to other people, try to extend it to yourself - you wouldn't behave this way to your best friend, so why are you doing it to yourself?" So instead of taking that philosophy, he sort of... flipped it.
19:18:50 From Sheila : thanks for resource
19:19:05 From RFVega : this is a great example
19:19:06 From Aurora : "I would feel negative about myself if this was true for me so therefore I should project that negativity onto others"
19:19:35 From lorraine : nice example! it embodies that "open curiosity stance that can be so useful
19:22:26 From Emily : Thank you @cbfigurs <3 And thank you everyone for your kind words, cool quotes, and overall support. So amazing to have a group like this committed to supporting each other in this difficult work
19:23:04 From Emily : @KaiEoa, I really appreciate you sharing your reflections too. I definitely don't want the critique of Christianity in native communities to then be interpreted as a wholesale invalidation of Christianity. As you said, there are many nuances to pull through in that topic of Christian privilege and the place of social justice in Christian communities.
19:23:20 From aa : Own your Intentions AND your impact

“Sit in it” – resist the urge to fix things (When we hurt each other and receive feedback - take the feedback, receive it, don't take up space apologizing, justifying, saying “I didn't mean to...”)

Use “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings

Track and name behaviors in the space

19:25:53 From Deanna : Sandra, do you ever find yourself get way too caught up in the toxic swirl, after all the practice you've had?

19:26:23 From Josette Souza : @Deanna - she does! She's given a couple of examples of this in a couple of previous sessions

19:28:23 From Deanna : Oh yeah, I recall! Thanks. :)

19:30:39 From Aurora : Would it be appropriate, now (or at some other time) to discuss what I call the "Batman" syndrome? How we have a tendency to imagine a world wherein we can take violent physical or verbal recourse against an oppressor without consequence, or our tendency to use hyperbolic/hypothetical language regarding violence when it comes to a response to an oppressor?

19:31:23 From Aurora : Emily's and Sandra's responses to oppressive systems made me think of that. Like when Emily said she wished she could be on the street with that guy.

19:32:38 From Deanna : That's a good point for future self reflection, Aurora. Where does that need to imagine violent recourse come from?

19:32:38 From Emily : ^ good topic

19:33:28 From Emily : « riot is the language of the unheard »

19:33:30 From Josette Souza : @Aurora - what specific question do you have about it in relation to the workshop?

19:34:14 From Emily : I think our habit to imagine violent recourse is often a reflection of the sense of powerlessness/voicelessness

19:34:29 From Emily : is often *

19:34:51 From Aurora : So... how do you sit with that kind of desire (because obviously we are not Batman and cannot actually do that/relating to the acknowledging toxic swirl) and how do we avoid that hyperbolic/hypothetical language? Because as Sandra's pointed out a couple of times, taking on a more... calm... tone in a discussion tends to set up better situations for change.

19:35:23 From Aurora : Glasses dude, for instance

19:35:30 From Josette Souza : @Aurora - great thank you, I'll add that to the question queue!

19:35:41 From Emily : Oooh, I would also add in the question about « respectability » and trying to tell POC especially the « right » way to respond to oppression

19:36:42 From Aurora : ^ Emily, yes. Our society tends to really fear anger, and how dare any of us feel anger and express it, never mind if you're a PoC

19:37:10 From KaiEoa : ^ Yes!

19:37:57 From Emily : Honestly, I'm a firm believer/practitioner of tough love. Plenty people don't need more coddling, they need a reality check lol

19:38:40 From Emily : So yeah, no need be sweet, calm, and « respectable » all the time. Keep it real when it needs to be real

19:38:45 From Bernardita : Has anyone experienced people resisting this? For example, what Sandra is mentioning: when you attempt to have that type of conversation and approach a supervisor with this concern, but they respond with further abuse and controlling and general fucked-upery. How do you handle that? What can be some ways that plays out? (Besides it just growing as an unhealthy relationship with your boss that ends up getting you fired)

19:39:00 From Mareena : I have seen a lot of tone policing by more privileged queers against more marginalized portions (Bisexuals, Transgender, Asexual, POC queers, Disabled queers etc) :(

19:39:06 From Aurora : yes

19:39:09 From Aurora : because he is a vigilante

19:39:44 From Aurora : yes =)

19:39:47 From Aurora : you're good

19:40:23 From Bernardita : i guess the question is, how do we deal with people resisting this honest compassionate truth telling? (Is that what Sandra said we are covering next week??)

19:40:32 From Jessamyn : Bernadita, I've quit a lot. Not an option for many, I realize.

19:40:51 From Jessamyn : I kept going until I found better workplaces.

19:41:40 From aa : Awareness -> Knowledge -> Skills -> Action

Most folks go from Awareness to Action

19:41:48 From Bernardita : Yea. that's what i wanted to do. I ended up having to wait until she got the ovaries (and made up the reasons) to fire me. It was a rough year last year

19:41:53 From Josette Souza : Oooh I like that aa!

19:41:54 From Mareena : tone policing/ respectability politics*

19:42:24 From Deanna : Bernardita, if avoiding them isn't an option, what has worked for me in the past is setting strict communication boundaries. "I would like to keep our discussions limited to tly work-related topics."

19:42:28 From Deanna : *strictly

19:42:54 From Jessamyn : I've done the same thing as Deanna in at least one severe situation.

19:42:58 From Jessamyn : *severe

19:43:57 From KaiEoa : Similar question to Bernardita: I have a (former) friend that I spoke to about his harmful language and jokes, and he seemed understanding and expressed a desire to not hurt people, but continued to use the same language and same oppressive jokes. I ended up getting angry and quitting the relationship, but I'm wondering if I could have done something to be more constructive and helpful for him. Seems like aa's comment helps to answer this question.

19:43:57 From Bernardita : Thanks for hearing me out and responding, folks. I think I just still have A LOT of healing to do about that situation

19:43:59 From Deanna : & I know that it isn't a foolproof solution, but it did work, & gave me a little bit of power over my situation.

19:44:24 From Deanna : best to you in your healing process, Bernardita.

19:44:24 From Jessamyn : that makes lot of sense, Bernadita... sounds very painful and that means healing work

19:44:53 From aa : When folks apologize to me - my response is usually - Don't be sorry, change your behavior...

19:45:23 From Bernardita : yeah. after it happened. i dove into building my new career-life and have been very focused on that (teaching). but now the semester is ending and in July it's a year since the firing. So I think I'm reaching a point of reckoning... and seeing it all again and realizing I need to emotionally process a lot that i haven't finished processing

19:45:24 From Deanna : Changed behaviour is the best apology!

19:46:14 From Bernardita : thank you, folks. <3

19:46:36 From Mareena : to me apologies with out a change in behavior (or even attempts to) seems hollow

19:46:52 From KaiEoa : But how do you respond to a hollow apologizer?

19:47:44 From Mareena : I'm not sure

19:48:08 From Deanna : I think that would be grounds for a callout.

19:48:30 From aa : however youd respond compassionately to yourself - you cant control their reality

19:48:33 From Deanna : "You've promised me you would start/change/do X, but I have seen no evidence of this"

19:48:38 From Jessamyn : that's actually an ongoing challenge for me... what to do when someone says they will do something, and then they don't (or says they won't, and then they do)

19:49:01 From Deanna : "Until I have proof of X, I am choosing to step away/ distance myself/cease contact/etc"

19:50:49 From Bernardita : oof. i am feeling some kind of way tonight!

19:50:51 From Bernardita : oy.

19:51:08 From KaiEoa : Ahhh, I didn't do step two, I think in the interaction I had I just tried to force him to accept my perspective. Stepping away at that point would have achieved my goal of reinforcing the importance of being inclusive, without instigating a confrontation and harm. Thanks Deanna!

19:51:59 From Deanna : you're welcome!

19:53:52 From Mareena : tks

20:03:52 From Brittany Rea : how does one be accountable for their actions if they are afraid of the consequences?

20:04:04 From Brittany Rea : sorry

20:04:26 From Bernardita : can i add to that question?

20:04:35 From Bernardita : to my previous question you just asked

20:04:38 From Josette Souza : Go ahead bernadita

20:09:49 From Jessamyn : "yes, and" just like improv

20:13:54 From Deanna : This is such a good idea!

20:14:50 From Deanna : I'd love to take advantage of this.

20:14:59 From abbyalexanian : can you send us all this info in an email?

20:15:02 From Adventuress42 : I have to run! Sorry. I'll check in on this later. This sounds great!

20:15:02 From Brittany Rea : thank you Sandra

20:15:04 From Josette Souza : We will!

20:15:11 From abbyalexanian : Thanks!

20:16:18 From Bernardita : breathe and listen. :)

20:16:29 From Josette Souza : Trauma informs trauma - we are all human

20:16:40 From Jen : You can't force anyone to heal

20:16:41 From Emily : daaaaaang

20:16:43 From Jessamyn : the big one for me was about how it isn't about not getting into the toxic swirl, it's about what you do once you get there

20:16:52 From abbyalexanian : ask "where is that coming from?"

20:16:57 From Aurora : It didn't occur to me how much respectability politics have affected me in the past. I was so focused on being nice that I felt bad when other people called me out on reacting to something angrily!

20:17:16 From Alexis : When you come from a place of being vulnerable and in touch with your own pain, you can invite a conversation.

20:17:17 From RFVega : Being moved by pain to compassionate action

20:17:18 From Deanna : Give the other person space to explore their views by being curious.

20:17:18 From iPad : yes, no, counter offer.

20:17:20 From Mareena : toxic swirl quote

20:17:30 From KaiEoa : There is no silver bullet--it's okay if it doesn't work. Y

20:17:30 From Akila Richards : yes I am really interested in the Healing Circle and the Q&As. I will think of testimonials I experienced. Thank you so very much Sandra. This was a very powerful session. What I will take from this session is to breathe and listen and to acknowledge what is rather what I'd like to be and start interrogating more for myself and the other person, question ...

20:17:31 From mmanzanedo : Having a feeling and taking action are independent. There are a myriad of different options of how to respond.

20:17:34 From Emily : love this talk, everything about it

20:17:44 From mmanzanedo : Thank you!!

20:17:47 From Brittany Rea : Thanks!

20:17:51 From Jessamyn : <3 you all!!!

20:17:53 From Mareena : thank you

20:17:57 From Josette Souza : <3!

20:17:59 From nina : thank you

20:18:01 From Deanna : Thank you! Excellent session!

20:18:12 From KaiEoa : Thank you