

Compassionate Activism Online Seminar – Session 8

Please join us as we wait for the other participants to arrive. We will begin shortly at 6 pm EST / 3 pm PST.

If you had trouble being invited into a break out room, please download the latest Zoom version at:
<https://zoom.us/download>

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The Fourth Practice of Compassionate Truth-Telling and Consciousness- Raising Inquiry

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Choose a Situation

Select a recent specific situation that is **LIGHTLY** emotionally charged for you but not **extremely** charged

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Why It's So Hard (But It Doesn't Necessarily Have To Be)

- Unless there's a threat of imminent physical threat or an act of physical violence, it's just some words, some actions, and some energies happening in external reality.
- In our internal reality, those external words, actions, and energies cause harm because they set off our internal pain that we've been carrying.
- The external situation is emotionally charged because we resist the pain it's setting off and therefore, resist the external reality and the other person's internal reality.

So these external words, actions, and energies DO NOT have to cause us harm if we take care of our pain and acknowledge external reality and the other person's internal reality as they are.

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Toxic Swirl versus Mindfulness for Their Internal Reality

- Focus on how they 'should' know better and it never should have happened
- Assume you know what their internal reality is
- Resist their internal reality and make them wrong as a human being for it
- Tell them why they're wrong for having that experience
- Try to force your internal reality onto to them
- Not care about where they're coming from or how they got there
- Demand agreement even if it's coerced or feel silenced
- Let go of your make believe world and acknowledge that what happened did happen
- Get curious about what happened in their internal reality
- Acknowledge their experience and feelings of the situation as having happened
- Ask them questions to help them unpack their own experience
- Share your internal reality (and other perspectives) and invite them to consider them
- Listen for their pain and how it got created, which is underneath their initial reaction
- Offer another approach that is more inclusive and addresses their pain and/or values

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Reflection Questions

1. What are the common ways I engage in toxic swirl in these situations?
2. What's the impact on the other person and on me when I approach them from the toxic swirl?
3. What specific ways could I approach it that's coming from a place of mindfulness?
4. What might the impact on the other person and on me be when I approach it from mindfulness?

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5-Minute Break!

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Apply to Yourself First!

1. Practice of Humility and Curiosity
2. Practice of Distinguishing Realities and Acknowledging External Reality
3. Practice of Gentle Mindfulness and Compassionate Self-Accountability

Then Apply to the Other Person!

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Share Your Truth

- Share your internal reality as part of your own compassionate self-accountability and in service of your own healing
- It's about you and what you need to give yourself. It's not about how they receive it or if they agree with it.
- At most, you can invite them to consider it as your experience while acknowledging that they also may have a different experience of the situation. They have the right to say no and they just may say yes.

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Just Ask!

1. Inquire to meet them in their internal reality
2. Invite them to meet you in your internal reality

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It's About Staying Focused on the 3 Realities

- More effective if the person who's more stuck in the toxic swirl shares their internal reality first.
- If both people are struck in the toxic swirl, make sure to take care of yourself first and foremost.
- It's not about who's most calm because you can be calm and be in toxic swirl.
- It's about who's more focused on the 3 realities, which can be communicated in a fierce and loud and express anger, frustration, and resentment.

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What This Conversation Is About

- It's not about making them wrong. It's about sharing your truth.
- It's not about them changing their minds. It's about you wanting to understand their truth.
- It's not about getting them to stop. It's about you taking care of yourself and treating yourself like you matter.

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Toxic Swirling of Make Believe World vs. Mindfulness to Your Internal Reality

- Not focused on the present moment
- Resistant and denying what's happening and insisting it should be different what it is not
- Judgmental and shaming of what's happening
- Grounded in your make believe world
- Connected to the present moment
- Acknowledging and accepting of what's happening as happening
- No right or wrong with what's happening / It just is
- Grounded in your internal reality

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Final Takeaways

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