

compassionate activism

Sandra Kim: Hey everybody. Thank you so much for showing up. This is Compassionate Activism three month online training program. This is part of the initial training, which is the 2 days on June 4 and 5, and we'll be covering the entire Compassionate Activism model. What that means is that we're going to walk through the model of what the goal is, what we want you to be able to do after completing the whole program. The way to get to that point is to approach everyday oppression with love and justice. The way that we get to that point is by engaging the five practices, which I'll be covering over in just one minute.

This initial training is really to give you a sense of the entire model, but it's really about practice. You could read about this. You could hear me talk about this endlessly. It'll help. It'll definitely help. Really, where it comes alive is obviously as you do it. That's when you're going to come up against struggles, obstacles, misunderstandings, whatever it may be. We want to make sure that you're able to get support along the way, and that's why it's actually a 3 month online training program as opposed to just this weekend training that you're getting right now.

In the rest of the course, you're going to be getting access to bimonthly Q&A sessions, where basically, you're going to show up and we're going to ask me questions. I'll provide some coaching, and it's really just a time to regroup, be able to get the specific questions you want answered, and when you see somebody else sharing as well about what they're struggling with, you'll also learn from their experience, because a lot of times, we have the same struggle. It's sometimes easier for us to learn watching somebody else go through it because we have greater clarity and empathy and compassion for that other person than we do for ourselves, who we often are harsh on.

Just so you know, that is available and I really hope you take advantage of it. That's also going to be recorded as well, in case you can't make it. They are twice a month. The schedule is ... I send it to you via email and it is also in your online portal. If you access that through course login on the Everyday Feminism website. I will be sending you updates via email, letting you know when those recordings are available, so you'll get prompted. Don't worry about that.

Also, in case folks did not know this already, I'll send another email about it, but we do have a Facebook group. Also available where you can access. Ask different questions, get support, and so that's one way of

meeting other people who also have a shared framework and language. These include people from the past online seminar, which is a ten week seminar. They are a little bit more advanced than you, obviously, so they can be really a great help. You also have access to me on an individual basis. You get three coaching sessions, and all you need to do is ask. We have a form you can fill out online, as well just shoot me an email, and then I'll send you my availability. Normally, that's Thursday mornings, but I also work with folks who live in different time zones and have other commitments. They cannot make Thursday morning Easter.

We're really trying to make sure that you have a lot of support to take what I present to you and put it into practice so it becomes a daily habit. As I will continue to talk about throughout these trainings, is just that we haven't been taught how to do this. We haven't been taught how to acknowledge our experiences, our feelings, and treat our needs as if they're valid, because they are. We haven't been taught to do that. We've been taught to deny, ignore, judge, shame ourselves, as well as other people, which actually distracts us from dealing with the pain that we're experiencing, including, and especially due to, systemic oppression.

It's a practice, and that's something that we're known for at Everyday Feminism, is that how do you bring this into your everyday life to make a difference for you? Because it makes a difference for you, it makes a difference in your community in terms of how you show up, in terms of what you make possible for other people about who you are being.

I want to just start out ... Let me share my screen. I want to just start out with folks thinking about what brought you to enroll in this online training problem called Compassionate Activism? Obviously, this is a commitment on your part. You decided to set aside both time and possibly money as well to be a part of it. This takes energy. This takes something to want to incorporate in your life. What do you hope to be different for you after taking this course? I want folks to take just a second to reflect on it, and type it in the chat box. I'm going to put these questions in it, because I'm going to show you all how to do a fun thing called whiteboards. [inaudible 00:05:36] truly enjoy. Josette, you want to tell people how to do the whiteboard as they're reflecting and typing in the chat box?

Josette: Sure thing. The whiteboard is there for you to be able to put text and drawing on the screen together. What you want to do in order to get the annotation tools is make your screen full screen. On the top right hand corner, there should be an expanding icon. Once you do that, you will see at the top a green box that says you are viewing Sandra Kim's screen. Next to that box is something called Options. You hit on that, and you go to annotate. There should be a toolbar with all sorts of colors and text and draw. I'm going to draw a heart, so that is what you should be able to do.

You can feel free to write in the chat box the answers to these questions, or write it on the whiteboard, and let me know if you have any questions.

Sandra Kim: This will just be a quick maybe you're tired of being so frustrated and resentful and stressed all the time. Maybe you can see that you've been changing over time, hardening up, perhaps. Or maybe you just want some extra tools in your toolbox, and you want to be part of a community that's working on this. Whatever it may be, we just want you to get really grounded in why you're here. The reason why I want people to get grounded in it is because ... I can talk and talk and talk and talk. This is really about application, and that takes effort. That takes really thinking critically about what you've been doing so far, because I'm going to be showing you a different way of doing it. That requires folks to reflect and think "Maybe the way I've been doing it is not really the best way, or maybe it's not quite having the impact that I want. Maybe I want something different."

Whenever we want to make a shift, a transition to a new habit, I think it's important to understand why we're doing that, and that keeps us motivated. As we do this, the impact of doing these practices will lead you to become more motivated, because you'll see that it is showing up. It is having a positive impact in your life. In the beginning, it's going to be a little harder for you to believe that, because it hasn't happened yet. I get that. I don't want you to simply trust what I'm saying because I'm saying it and I'm the founder of Everyday Feminism. I'm this bigwig or something like that. No. I'm asking you to not blindly trust me, or just without trying, trying it out, trust me. I want you to try it out. If it works for you, great. If it's not working for you, let me know why. I'll see if I can support you at it.

Folks are sharing some of the reasons why they want to enroll is curiosity, they're struggling with hardening up and trying to figure out what's going on with anxiety and having enough spoons. Leaving a toxic and abusive workplace, and having yet to recover from it mentally, physically, and emotionally. Wanting to improve communication skills in difficult situations. Tired of status quo. Realizing I'm a good ally when someone else has a code of conduct concern, but I have trouble bringing my own code of conduct concern to an event. For example, my stalker ex showed up. Developing skills to be a better employee resource group leader, and have healthy quality inclusion work going forward. Being able to breathe and help others, but also be able to advocate for myself, if needed.

Being a black, pansexual, cisfemale in the South, I facilitate a trans-centric LGBTQ support group, and I hope to incorporate more black issues into my activism. Wanting to build a bridge between activists and spiritual seekers, mystics, and artists. Expressing compassion in the most impactful way. Working as an advocate for survivors of sexual intimate

partner violence and dealing with my own survivorship. Wanting to hold an intentional space to respond to violence and healing, graceful and gentle ways. Healing from complex trauma in abusive relationships, embodied healing has been a key part of my healing process. For my community, wanting to spread this. Practice at self-care.

Lots of different things. People are coming from real pain. Real trauma, real life situations, and I think one of the things I really wanted to bring together in this model is that it is the spiritual and the healing practices and methodology is out there in the world with social justice and anti-oppression work. I'm going to stop for a second with the whiteboard and I just want to give you a quick little background. I asked you to share why are you here, and I want to share a little bit why I'm here. Why am I even talking? Why did I create this program?

For myself, I created Compassionate Activism program because it's really my own personal journey. My personal journey was one that is really built upon the past work of others, primarily from Zen Buddhism, as well as other programs that have been heavily influenced by Zen Buddhism. Pertaining to the past 10 years, I've had a very strong healing practice that is grounded in mindfulness and compassion. That's really what led me to go from being someone whose main coping strategy, way of surviving the world, due to various things that had happened to me growing up and as an adult as well, was really to deny my feelings. Really repress them.

It got to the point where I'm around 13 years old and my mother was in the hospital, and I didn't have any feelings about it. I wasn't concerned, I wasn't anxious, I wasn't scared, I wasn't worried, I wasn't anything. You can imagine that's a pretty severe lack of reaction to your mother being in the hospital. She had been driving my grandmother and had fainted suddenly in the car. Thankfully, nobody was hurt, but obviously, that could have gone bad in a lot of different ways. It didn't, thankfully, but my reaction was not appropriate for that situation.

That's when I started thinking that maybe something was off about my emotional system, but it really wasn't until I was in my early 20s that somebody mentioned emotional processing as a concept to me. I was like, "What are you talking about? What is this emotional processing?" I genuinely didn't know. I hadn't heard anything about it before. Can people hear me fine?

Josette: Yeah. Someone just said that the volume is changing as you move back and forth.

Sandra Kim: Okay. I get a little animated sometimes, but I always try to be a little more still. The most that I knew when I was younger was fake it until you make it. I was like, "Maybe I'll try that. Try to be more expressive, even if I'm not

feeling it so strongly." It really wasn't until, like I said, my early 20s, that somebody mentioned to me that emotional processing is a thing and taught me, said, "Just sit with it. Just sit with the feeling. Let it arise." I was like, "Oh, that sounds simple enough. Let me try that." I went home and I tried it. I realized the thing I was initially annoyed at, turned out there was something much deeper happening in it. That's something you'll find over and over again as you do this work, that there are layers to our reaction and our pain.

That really began my journey. Like I said, I had PTSD from various things from childhood, from adulthood, and really wanting ... The way those dynamics were playing out in how I responded and reacted to different situations in my life, it was causing a lot of harm to myself. I took a step back to just really focus on my own healing process. I was fortunate enough to do that. I was also fortunate enough to have a partner who was able to financially support me during that period. I had access to therapy, a good therapist. A good therapist, good group support, and lots of books and time. These are not things that a lot of people have access to. They are not privileged and fortunate in these ways to actually take that level of time and do that level of work and research and reading and participating in programs like I could.

As I did this, I realized that a lot of these programs weren't grounded in the context of systemic oppression. My question to them, to the self-help, healing world, is why are we so all universally wounded? Why do we all universally need these things to heal? There's a reason why. We're not born wounded like this. We're not born thinking that there's something inherently wrong with us, that we're not lovable, important, competent. That we matter. Babies fully believe that they're important. They cry. They make their needs known. They make their feelings known. Things happen to us over time that teach us no, your feelings aren't important. Your needs? You got to shut those down. Don't cry.

We have to look at that. Where does that come from? I'm a big fan of looking at systemic oppression, and usually we can trace it back to that. Because systemic oppression naturally says ... Their thing is that there's only one truth, that certain people are better than others and they need to act a certain way. That shows up, whether or not that's sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia and ableism, fatphobia, classism, whatever type of systemic oppression that may be. There is this ideal box that people need to fit in in order to be worthy, in order to be okay. Of course, we're complex. We're complex human beings. We have a whole range of ways of being in this world that are authentic to ourselves, and we're incredibly diverse. Even internally, we're not one way all the time. I can be extroverted one day. I can be introverted the other day. I can want to be at

home. I could be very visionary one day. I could be very implementation oriented. We're very diverse people.

Maybe this scarf is interfering with the microphone, Josette said. Every now and then, I will stop and I will smile at Josette and Josette will smile at me and that's really what this is about. [By the by 00:17:21] we're having these private texting messages, just so you know. Where was I?

As I did this work, I noticed this real lack of a link. Somebody else mentioned wanting to build the two worlds of the healing, self-help, spiritual world with the activist, social justice, feminist world. Because that's where I come from is having worked in the non-profit sector my entire career, and seeing just how important having anti-oppression analysis is to doing healing work, because our response to being targeted and violated by the ways that people perpetuate systemic oppression is at first usually to blame ourselves, judge ourselves, police ourselves, because that's what other people do to us as well.

It was really important to me to hold that context of systemic oppression as I did the healing work. I saw that in activist, non-profit, social justice world, we were burning out left and right, left and right, and were not dealing with the pain that we were carrying from our own individual trauma as well as collective trauma. Because we were not dealing with it, we were not processing, we were not healing from it, we are playing those dynamics, those very same oppressive dynamics out in our work with our colleagues, with people in our movements, and actually against who we think of as the opposition. We are often carrying out the very dehumanizing tactics, those dynamics, where we make them wrong as a human being. We erase their reality. We deny what they're going through. We dehumanize them and put them into just the tiny box and don't see them for the complex human being that they are.

This comes from pain. This comes from trauma. This comes from a place of wanting to protect yourself, which is all incredibly understandable, and since we haven't been taught how to do otherwise, I think the point is that we are doing our best. We are always doing the best that we can based on what we know, and the point is not to blame, judge, shame people for where they are, but to help them build and learn so their best becomes better. That's why I created Everyday Feminism, that's why we have the approach that we do, and that's why I created this program, Compassionate Activism, in order to give people the tools and support so that their best can be better, so that we can heal. I believe that we are naturally whole. Except we were torn away from that truth by systemic oppression that taught us, like I said, that we don't matter. We're not important. We're not lovable. We're not competent. We're not worthy somehow.

Getting back to that truth, and it is what that work's about. From that place, anything is possible. When we stand on the fact that we are naturally whole and I believe that we originally want with others, that there is this actual sense of connection that we all have with everybody else, which also obviously gets taken away, gets broken, by systemic oppression that wants to say certain people are better than others. Whenever we do that, whenever we get disconnected from other folks, we feel pain. This is why I think our society is so obsessed with finding our romantic life partner, because we're trying to get back to a place of belonging, of being one. "You complete me. You're my better half." That kind of stuff.

This work is really, for me, is about helping ... Having people have the tools to restore, to heal themselves, so they can get back in touch with that sense of being naturally bold and being one with others. From there, there's nothing that we can't create together. That's when we have access to our power, and not just our individual power, but our shared power. To really create something from our values. That's just a bit of a story about where I come from and why I'm doing what I'm doing. Like I said, I share this because it's important to know why we're here, why we're doing this work. I'm not asking you to think that my journey needs to be your journey. It doesn't. It can't be. What I'm asking you is to think and reflect upon your own journey, where you want to go. When you have a sense of that, that's when you can start moving forward. I'm going to give you some tools to help you get where you want to be.

To start out, I want folks to think about a situation. This is an incredibly application-based program. In every session, I'm going to ask you this. Choose a situation. I want you to choose a situation that is moderately emotionally charged for you. The reason why I say moderately emotionally charged is because, if you pick something very highly charged, that's going to be hard to do a lot of work around in two hours or even over the course of two days, just because usually if it's highly charged, there are many moments potentially what I call Big T Trauma. There are what I call Little T Trauma all the time happening, which may not be something as drastic as violence, for example, or a sickness or a death, but Little T Trauma can be anything that's made you feel like you were overwhelmed. Like you had no choice, you were powerless, there's nothing that you could have done for yourself, or you blamed yourself for the situation that was arising and that was harmful.

These are things as children we often do. It's easy. We were very emotionally and physically vulnerable as children, so a lot of what we are dealing with when it comes to fears from the past is usually related to childhood. That's why it's important when doing this work, you want to start out with some easier wins. This is a skill that you're building, and because it's a skill, you're going to suck at it in the beginning. You're not good at

this in the beginning, and that's totally okay. I know a lot of people who are like, "I tried. I wasn't able to do it, so I never tried again." You've been taught the opposite of how to do what I'm going to be teaching you.

I want you to focus on picking something that's moderately emotionally charged for you. Scale of 1 to 10, 10 being super charged, go for like a 4. A 3 to 4 to 5, maybe, but not higher than a 5, and I want you to think about why is it so emotionally charged for you? There's a history to this, and if you have a strong anti-oppression analysis, you have an understanding of the collective trauma that is related to these types of situations. Based on that, based on your own experiences, your own anti-oppression analysis, how do you react to that situation?

[inaudible 00:25:35] I really want you to focus on what do you pay attention to? What do you focus on when you react to it, because we can focus on a lot of different things, and much of what I'm going to teach you is actually about how to shift your focus. Do you focus on the other person and what you wish they did differently? Do you focus on the situation and how it shouldn't have happened? Do you focus on yourself and how you should've known better or you shouldn't have just let it happen or some way that you're engaging in resisting what's going on or wanting to change it or making yourself wrong or the other person wrong? Just kind of notice where your focus is for situations that are moderately emotionally charged for you.

I just want to quickly stop and take any questions if people want to ask. If they're unclear about what I'm asking them to do, because I'm going to keep asking you to do this in every session, so I want to make sure this is clear for everybody. Are there any questions, Josette?

Josette: Not that I saw/didn't answer in the chat. For folks on the phone, if you would like to jump in with a question if you don't have the chat box in front of you, you can do *6 and that will unmute you. Otherwise, folks can chat in the box or also just jump in if you have any questions.

Sandra Kim: Want a more concrete example? Right. For example, an emotionally charged situation is where you feel stuck, is usually the response. Say, for example, someone makes a sexist joke around you. There are many different ways that you can respond to that, but one of the common ways that would be to react is just to get upset and angry and frustrated and stressed about this is happening. What I want you to focus on is situations where because you get stuck in it, where you don't feel like you can make a move. You don't feel like there's anything you can do, either because you don't know what to do or because you're just so worked up.

There's no right or wrong to feel in having these feelings. There's no right or wrong to having anger, frustration, stress, resentment, and having that

cause you to become stuck, where you don't know how to respond. Maybe you respond in a way that you don't necessarily want to. A lot of folks, if they don't get stuck, sometimes they lash out as well. That is a response, so maybe that's not exactly what they want to do, because that's not exactly creating a world that's more loving and more just, actually. They don't know what else to do, so they still feel stuck. They did something, but they still feel stuck. They didn't do exactly what they would have wanted to do from their highest self.

This could be any microaggressions that people do, making comments, talking about stereotypes, assuming things about you because of your identities, or people supporting different oppressive thinking from Donald Trump to saying All Lives Matter to saying "Go make me a sandwich." I don't know why anti-feminists like to say that all the time, but we get that. "Make me a sandwich." Just what assumptions, or if you're a woman and you don't have children, "When are you having children? Why aren't you having children?" If you're a man and you're starting to express some stress, some pain, some sadness. "Real men don't cry. Boys don't cry. What are you, a pussy?" Things like that.

It could be anything that sets you off. Tone policing is a big thing that often happens. Cultural appropriation is another big thing. Really, anything that makes you feel like, "Aaahhh." You don't get to choose how you respond. It just feels like "Aaahhh." That would be an emotionally charged situation.

Someone shared in the chat box that they were in a social justice theater this year. Two people repeatedly talked over a woman of color, making this person very angry, and when this person called attention to it, they got blamed for "ruining" the end of the evening. Often happens when you call out something that's oppressive, people try to minimize it, blame you for it. That's a great example as well.

As you have this example in mind, I'm going to be walking you through this model, which is distinct from the practices. The model is really what I want you to be able to do by the end of this program. What you're creating each time, you are engaging the five practices, as I mentioned before. The five practices is what gets you to have this model. It's not the end goal itself, actually, though they are very useful practices in and of themselves.

Oftentimes, when we are engaged in a situation, an emotionally charged situation, because we are committed to a vision of a world that is more just, more fair, we actually oftentimes end up resisting what is currently happening in front of us. What happens when we resist what is happening in front of us, we actually find it very difficult to do anything about it, because we're actually spending all our time focused on how we want our current reality to be different, because we're actually committed to a different world.

I want to tweak this for us, and say we should be, yes, keep being 100% committed to a vision of a just, loving, fair world. True. Keep that. That's the goal. That's what we want to be creating. And I'm saying that we need to be 100% acknowledging of our current reality if we want to get there. To give you an example what I mean by this, when it's cold outside, no one likes to be cold. We sometimes think people do, but most people don't enjoy being really cold. When it's cold outside, we could be resisting it and saying, "How could the weather be cold? Damn you, temperature. How dare you? Why is my body so weak that I feel cold?" We go on and on and being raging against the cold temperature. That's resisting.

That's resisting the current reality that's cold, and as you can see, when we put all our time into resisting the fact that it's cold, have we actually done anything about the fact that it's cold? No. We actually just stayed in what I call Make Believe World. Make Believe World because we're trying and we're acting as if our current reality should be different than what it is. It's not. It is cold. Insisting that it should be different is not going to make it any less cold, so that's why I call it Make Believe. If instead I was like, "Hey, it's cold. I get that. It is cold. What do I want to do now? I need a jacket. I don't have a jacket. Let me ask somebody for a jacket, if I can borrow one."

You see how easily it shifts, actually, once we're like, "Hey, it's cold." Then you're like, "I don't want to be cold. I want to be warm." Okay, so that's the vision I'm committed to, is to be warm. I can move forward now. That's a physical example, one that we would feel silly to react in that first way, when I was talking about resisting. We do it all the time when it comes to emotional situations, when it comes to situations of everyday injustice.

For example, somebody ... We're walking by, and somebody hollers at us. Somebody harasses on the street. Somebody we don't know, and for me, oftentimes, the way that I'm approached, primarily by men, is in very racist as well as sexist ways. I obviously want to be in a world where I'm not getting that. Where there aren't men who feel entitled to have access to me like that and aren't racializing and sexualizing that for me, and I'm able just to walk around. I also want to live in a world where people are related to each other and you can have conversations with each other, even if you don't necessarily know each other, but that those conversations be respectful and consensual. That's the vision I'm committed to. That's part of the reason why I do this work.

If I was resisting the current reality, the fact that I was just harassed on the street, I could just be like, "He should've known better. He shouldn't have done that. I can't believe this is happening again. How come I didn't say anything? Why didn't I do something differently?" I could judge, blame myself, judge, blame them. I could do all these things. Well, what

happened happened. It happened. It's unacceptable, but it happened. If instead I was like, "Hey, this guy said something to me," okay, what do I want to say now? Do I want to say anything? There's an actual shift that happens when we say, "Oh yeah, that happened. What do I want to do now?" Whereas if we get caught up in the resistance of current reality, we pour all our time into what I call Make Believe, and when you pour all your time into Make Believe, how are you going to change current reality? You can't, because you're literally not paying attention to current reality.

I say that when we do this work in community in every moment, so we are trauma violations. Brokenness happens in community. That's where we learn. It happens in our relationships to other people. I believe that we need to heal. We need to come together. We belong in community, and that we do it in every moment. I saw this thing on Facebook, somebody saying they had been told that you have to love yourself before you can ever love anybody else. They're like, "Oh my God, it's going to take me forever to get to a point where I love myself. I have so much internalized self-rejection." Didn't use those exact words, internalized self-rejection, but that's what they were referring to.

I'm not saying that. I'm not saying that you have to be healed 100% before you can engage in this model. What I'm saying is that ... People think that 24/7, 365 days of the year. That's not true. Saying it's in this moment. This moment's all you got anyway. In this moment, you can create this. I gave you a simple example of the weather. I gave you a simple example of being harassed on the street. This is not my entire life. This is one single moment. What you're going for is to create this model, practice this model in more moments. How do those moments feel a little bit longer? A little more frequent, but a little bit more people each and every time.

It's really about practicing it, and it's not going to come easily in the beginning, and it's not going to happen as often in the beginning. That's okay. It's a skill. It's a practice. This is why it's a 3 month program, because I don't expect you to get it in these first 2 days. As you keep practicing it, it's going to reach a point where it becomes habit much of the time. There's always going to be something. You're going to have the tools to know how to deal with it. For me, for example, like I said, I live this. Does that mean that I'm always happy? Always peaceful? Always feel connected to everybody?

That's not true. They're not every single moment of my life. Do I have far fewer emotionally charged situations than the vast majority of people I know? Yes, definitely. Very, very definitely. Do they happen every now and then? Yeah, but I have the support to engage in it in a way that feels aligned with my values. If I can't do it on my own, I'm struggling to do it on my own, I know I have friends. I have co-workers. Josette helps me out.

Especially around work stress. I have a life coach, and so I know where to turn to if I need a little bit more support to practice this. I need to practice it a lot less. It just comes naturally. It just is the way I am in the world a lot of times.

It's really about in this moment, who am I being? What is the world that I'm creating through what values am I coming from? I think for a lot of folks I was talking about, folks are coming more from a place of pain and fear and trauma. Fear-driven self-protection strategies are not usually very loving, actually. They're usually quite lashing out, either toward ourselves or toward other people. They end up feeling a lot very coercive, actually, to ourselves and to other people. We're not trying to do that. That's not something we're trying to create.

I say all this, and I don't expect you to understand everything that I said, because this is really, really something you're going to get as we do it. I just want to get you a sense of the direction that we're going in. I know you all are going to ask me a lot of questions about "How do you make this happen?" That's what the five practices are for. If people have questions, not in terms of how to get there, but in terms of just clarifying what the model consists of, not the how, but what it consists of, I'll take those now. Anybody have anything? Josette?

Josette: Crystal, no, you did not miss the five practices. We're going to get into that. We just were taking questions right now on the model and any sort of conceptual questions around that. We have a question to repeat the question.

Sandra Kim: Okay. This is the model. This is the end goal, what I want you to be creating from after learning the five practices. The five practices are about how you're going to get to be able to do this. I don't want to talk about how we make this happen, but I just want to make sure that this was clear for everybody. This model, 100% committed to a vision while being 100% acknowledging or current reality while being in community, in every moment. Anybody have questions?

Josette: Yeah. We had a question ... A few questions. One, can you say more about the longing in the community?

Sandra Kim: Violations, trauma, happens because there was a break in a relationship. That's what we learned it from. Babies believe they're important. Babies make their feelings and needs known. As we grow up, we get told that our feelings, our needs, our reality are not important, and that happens oftentimes unfortunately from our caregivers, our parents, our family members, teachers, adults who they themselves are dealing with the trauma of their lives, and so they are playing that upon us. That's why we need to restore. We need to heal that pain, and there's a lot of work that

we need to do about teach in terms of healing that pain within ourselves, and but it's also doing that with the support of community.

Like I said, I know who I can turn to if I need some more additional support, even though I'm well skilled in this. Sometimes when things are so normalized, I need some additional support too. This is what I'm trying to create here through Everyday Feminism, the Facebook group, the Q&A sessions, with me, obviously, and so ... Then not just for our own healing, but modeling this for other folks. When we heal ourselves, when the pain is systemic oppression, we model that for other people in our community, so they can learn to do it themselves. There's a tipping point that I'm going for in our society. The way you get a tipping point is really just more and more and more people doing the same thing. Doing this work in community, in relationships first and foremost with ourselves, but also with other folks, that's what I mean ... That's why it's important that this work is done in community.

Josette: Great. We had another question from [Achman 00:45:08], who asked, "Can you talk a little bit more about how we can identify a vision to commit to?"

Sandra Kim: The vision to commit to is really, what do you want to be different? When you have an emotionally charged situation, because you want it to be different from the way it is right now. You want them to not have, as in that example, just dismissed the fact that somebody ... That people were talking over a woman of color in that situation, and pointing that out was called ruining the night. You want that to be acknowledged, the impact of that. Why? Because there are a lot of racialized dynamics that are very problematic in terms of who takes up space. Who takes up space in a conversation, who is acknowledged as having something worthy of being listened to? Worthy of saying something.

These are all everyday manifestations of these notions that some people are better than others. Look at why you're upset with the situation. Underneath that are values of a world that you want to see. You want to see a world that acknowledges the inherent self-worth of everybody, that creates space for everybody to be included. Where we get to all take up space, because we're here, we're human, we're people. We want that to be done with respect and consensually. That's how you can identify what vision you want to commit to.

Josette: Great. We had another question from someone with username "iPad" and they ask, "Do you mean we disengage from our reality? That we choose not to feel and not accept our current reality?"

Sandra Kim: Yeah. Most of the time, we disengage from our reality, and I'm going to get more into that in a second. Because there are three realities, actually. It's

a little complicated, but yes, most of the time, we are not in the present moment. Because we're not in the present moment, we can't do shit about what's going on right now. Like I said, if we spent all our time thinking about "Oh, it should be different than the way it is right now," and we put all our time and energy into that Make Believe World, then how are you going to make change in reality if all you do is focus on Make Believe? This practice, what I'm going to be teaching you, this is why the pivotal practice of this is mindfulness. Everything hinges on mindfulness. If you know anything about mindfulness, it's about really being in touch with the present moment, and that's what this is about. Only when we're in touch with the present moment can we actually do something about it.

I'm going to stop there with questions and we'll move on. This is the five practices. And it's actually updated it as I was preparing for this training, based on somewhat the feedback and things I was watching people struggle with and have greater clarity around when I used different languages from the online seminar that I did. If you're a part of the online seminar, you'll notice a little bit different. I'm going to give you an example as I'm walking you through this. I mentioned earlier about how street harassment. Street harassment is a constant thing in my life, and so, starting out from when I was 14 years old, looking like I was 10, 11 years old, and had a lot of men approach me all the time. Especially in Barnes & Noble. That was a big hot spot for folks looking for very young girls, and I think my race had a big part to do with it as well.

I had a big history of this, starting from when I was young. I noticed a few years ago, when I used to live in DC. I moved for a couple years, and when I used to live in DC, I noticed that I would feel myself hardening up. Feel myself hardening up when I was outside, preparing for the street harassment that I knew would probably come. That had a real impact on me. It made me not want to be where I was. My reaction, too, when something would happen, when somebody would do something to me, was I would want to pistol whip them. I actually did not fear for my own safety. I actually feared for the safety of other people.

Fear for the safety of other people, actually, because I did not want to be violent or anything. That was my reaction, and that was growing. This is where I noticed toxicity. I decided to take a moment, pull back, and reflect. Reflect and think beyond the initial reaction, through having what I call humble curiosity. Then I looked at it and I sat with what was going on. I could see that yes, obviously, I preferred these words to not be said to me. I also knew that my reaction to it, I wasn't reacting just to that single person's incident. It was a whole lot from my past building up. It was that pattern of having it happen since I was 14 and an impact on me when I was younger, and not quite sure how to respond to that.

It was also, we know, if I did talk about it, how I'd get blamed for it. I'd be asked "What were you wearing?" I was like, I was 14. I was wearing jeans. What do you think I was wearing? I started to acknowledge different realities. There was more. There was the current reality that was happening, and there was something different that I was experiencing that was based on much more than just the incident right in front of me, what I call external reality. So I sat with it. I brought mindfulness to my emotional reality, my internal reality. I brought mindfulness to it, and I sat with the feeling. I just let it arise and come up what came up.

I got present to the fact that underneath the anger, there was a pain. There was a pain around me feeling like I wasn't doing what I wanted to do around these issues. At that time, I had moved away from doing direct service work and I was working at capacity building. I was not doing the actual work on the ground. I was supporting other people who were supporting other people working on the ground. I was a couple of layers removed, and I wasn't happy there. It did not feel right to me. It wasn't right for me. The pain that was behind all that anger was actually around. Not even then, it was around me, what I was doing, and the way I wasn't listening to myself and what was really true for me, what my calling was.

This is where compassion and self-accountability comes into play, where I had to look, what am I not doing that's honoring my feelings and needs? Then I took care of it. I decided that I was going to shift jobs. There were lots of different reasons why I decided to shift my job, but that was actually one of them. That's when you engage in passionate truth telling, both for yourself and for two other people. You do it to relieve your own pain and suffering, actually.

In that situation, I did not engage with the other person in [inaudible 00:53:28], but I also do that sometimes as well nowadays, when I get somebody approach me who I don't know and I don't care to talk to at that moment. Somebody comes at me with a standard, "Oh, you're the first Chinese girl I've ever been interested in. Ever been attracted to." I'm like, "Well, you still haven't been attracted to a Chinese girl because I'm not Chinese. I'm Korean." "What's the difference?" "They're different countries."

The conversation doesn't last very long because he knows that this is not going very well for him. There's an ability where I'm coming from a place where I've taken care of myself, I'm taking care of that pain, where I can actually engage with other people in those similar situations in a way that's not taxing to me. Before, it would have been very frustrating to me. It would've taken an emotional toll on me to actually try to educate somebody as to why focusing on my race, asking where I'm from, thinking

that's a great way to flirt with me, why that's actually incredibly problematic and racist. Thinking I'm exotic is not actually a positive thing.

Before I'd done this work, that would have taken a lot of toll for me. It would be emotionally charged for me. Now, because I'm taking care of myself and my needs and I honor my needs and I listen to them, I can be a choice. I can choose when, if I'm going to engage with somebody else when they do something. Actually now, I actually have a lot of fun. I kind of want to see what happens when people approach me. That's when I can engage, sometimes, in shared envisioning.

Another example, standard way of approaching me is "Are you Chinese or Japanese?" Then I start talking with them about why that's not useful. That's not a very healthful, successful, effective way of approaching somebody, especially an Asian woman. I noticed at one point that I had a whole group of guys standing there observing this. There were probably 5 of them, and so I turned, so that I could see all my audience, and I started going back and forth, and I start educating. I'm like, "Look, I'm trying to help you out here. This is not effective. What you are doing, this doesn't work. It's not going to work." I tell why.

It's like, you got to come original. You got to say something that makes you stand out. Don't do this thing, because not only is it racist and sexist, it's just like everybody else. I can see that he wants to be engaging with me and relate to me, and he's picking up the only thing he can see, which is my race, and I'm like, "That's not helpful." Relate to me as a human being. I actually had a whole group of dudes, of like 6 dudes, listening. The dude I was talking to, he got a little embarrassed, I think. He walked off. But I had the rest of the dudes just rolling with laughter because they got this. I was engaging within playfulness because I was being playful, because that's how I expel. I was not dealing with the fact that I wasn't listening to myself. I had already taken care of my needs at that point, so I felt like I sounded naturally cool in these situations again. I could be a choice about what I wanted to do.

Does that mean I needed to engage with that person? I didn't have to, but I felt like it, actually. There are times when I don't choose to engage with the other person because, for whatever reason, I'm not in a place where that's a priority, so I can choose to not, and do what I call compassion non-cooperation. I disengage with them, because I need to take care of myself. If I was to engage with that person, that would be me dragging myself through making that happen, and that's problematic.

Me forcing myself to do something is forcing myself, is being controlling and, frankly, abusive to myself. We would not have somebody try to force me to do something and not call that abusive and controlling. We would call that abusive and controlling, but we so often do that to ourselves. We

whip ourselves. We make ourselves. We drag ourselves. Out of compassion for myself, I choose not to cooperate. Choose to disengage. Choose to not be with that situation, and that is my right to do so that I can take care of myself and whatever it is I need. So that my capacity is different on another day.

That's just the one example of what could be different when you engage in the five practices of Compassionate Activism. I've noticed that it is 1:00, so I really want us to get us going on the first practice. See, the first practice is noticing toxicity and having humble curiosity around it. Noticing toxicity is the first and foremost thing to do, because it is not conscious. When we walk around in this world, when we move around in this world, we are just working off of autopilot most of the time. We are just doing what we normally do. It's all habitual, for the most part. When that happens, then it's unconscious. When things are unconscious for us, it drives us. It has us doing things that we don't necessarily agree with, just because that's what we've learned. We internalize it, and that can show up either through, because they have unconscious privilege, or because we have internalized oppression. Or maybe we're aware of it, but we're not aware of how to do things differently, so we don't know what to do. We're not even aware that we're doing stuff.

It's really important to start paying attention when toxicity shows up. When we notice when toxicity shows up, then we can make a choice. We bring into consciousness, we can make a choice about whether or not we want it and how we want to treat it. How do we want to relate to it? What do we choose to do now that we're aware that we're in an emotionally charged situation? That takes practice. That definitely takes practice, because when our ire's up or when our blood pressure's up and chemicals are flowing, adrenaline's going, our ego's been triggered, we feel defensive, we feel angry, we feel frustrated, we feel stressed, we go, "Aahh." It is hard to take a moment, pause, breathe a little bit, but that's what I'm going to be teaching you. Just know that it's hard, it takes practice, it's a skill, it's a muscle you're going to build up, and it's something you can do.

By toxicity, I mean things that are harmful for you. It's very, very, very broad. Broad definition, toxicity. How do we notice when toxicity has come up? I got training in a coaching program by CTI, and I was taught to see people as naturally creative, resourceful, and whole. This is actually a very, very profound way of perceiving people and ourselves. If we see people, perceive them as being naturally creative, resourceful, and whole. As a coach, I was trained to hold people like that in moments when they do not. That is incredibly powerful. I believe that to be true, because I know when I coach people, it doesn't take me that long to get them there. I just need to keep speaking to them as if they're naturally creative, resourceful, and whole.

When we aren't coming from that place, it's usually because we feel stuck, powerless, helpless, voiceless. We feel like we don't know what to do. We're stuck between a hard place and a rock. Damned if we do, damned if we don't. Can't let it go, we can't respond. It's just stuck. That's probably the one of the key things to remember. When you're stuck. Because if we're naturally creative, resourceful, and whole, there's lots of ways to respond to stuff. But if you feel like that's not true for you right in that moment, it's because there's some toxicity there. If you feel powerless, you don't see a way to change the situation. Nothing can be done. Feel helpless. There may be something that we can see will change it, but we don't have the ability to do it ourselves. We don't have freedom. We don't have choice.

If we are voiceless, we feel like we can't just say what we feel. We feel like our self-expression is being diminished, muted. Or it's pointless to say something. Might as well silence ourselves first before they silence us, because they're going to silence us anyways. This comes from something. This comes from the way that we've been treated growing up. It comes from how media treats people who look like us. How society and how our institutions treat people who look like us.

I want to make it really clear that we all have a mixture of privilege and marginalizations. I would also say that people who have all the different identity privileges in the world, those are boxes too. Those are boxes about who you need to be in order to be worthy of being in that box and worthy of being "better" than all these other folks who are marginalized. There's a lack of diversity in authentic ways of expressing yourself. I think this is true for everybody in different ways and different degrees. I feel like people who have more privilege have materially, materialistically, circumstantially benefited, of course. Emotionally, it's been a very deadening experience to have privilege. There's a reason why patriarchy says that boys don't cry. There's also a reason why, in this country, men have the highest rate of suicide and are the primary perpetrators of violence. It's either taking that pain that they have been taught to not feel and it's wrong if they feel, and they lash it outwards or they lash it inwards. There's a reason why this happens.

Just noticing toxicity. Just noticing toxicity when it comes up, and the ways that it comes up. When we feel stuck, powerless, helpless, or voiceless, we don't like feeling this way. So what we do is we try to skip over that feeling and we just go into trying to run away from it by distracting ourselves. We resist what's happening in the current moment that's making us feel this way. We demand that it be different, so what just happened happened. Instead of acknowledging what happened happened, we say, "Oh, you need to be different. You should have been different." Shoulding is a big thing you got to watch out for. Anytime you

should anything, "You should've been different, you should've known better, shouldn't have done this," it did happen. They didn't know any better. If they knew better, they wouldn't have done it.

Or you try to minimize it. Try to deny it. "It wasn't so bad. It wasn't so bad, well, like, that wasn't really racist. You're just making it up. You're making a big deal out of it." These are things that we tell ourselves and we tell other people. We also make the other person wrong as a human being. Sometimes we actually do it to ourselves, but oftentimes we do it to other people. I'll make a note and add that, "Make other people or ourselves wrong as a human being." We engage in judging them, shaming them, policing them, saying if they had been different, done something different, then that bad thing wouldn't have happened to them. Or we blame ourselves. Well, if we had just been different, if I wasn't such a blah, whatever that may be. May be X. Then this wouldn't have happened to me.

This is how we resist what's happening, because we're actually trying to run away from the fact that we feel some sort of pain. We feel some sort of helplessness. We have some sort of fear. We're trying to run away from it. Like I said, when we try to run away from it, I get that. It's toxic. It's scary. You stay in Make Believe World where you want reality to be different from what it is. Can't do shit about actual reality. Because you're not dealing with it.

I want to take a moment now, and I want folks to think about what are the ways that toxicity shows up in your initial reaction? This is a situation that you've thought about earlier in the session. Think having this framework of what toxicity is and thinking about how are the ways that the toxicity shows up are related to feeling stuck, powerless, helpless, or voiceless. I'm trying to get you to see that your initial reaction is simply that. It's your initial reaction to a situation. Underneath it is something much deeper.

You know this. It's just some words that somebody said to you, but it set off this whole thing for you, but what's underneath that whole thing? I'm going to put in the chat box what the questions are.

Josette: We also had a quick question come in regarding the part you just discussed. Is now a good time to pose that question?

Sandra Kim: Yeah. Let's ask that question, because I want people all to be reflecting, so I'm going to leave this up here so people can better understand what I mean by how it shows up in your initial reaction, because this is the first step and y'all are probably a little confused right now about that. What's the question?

Josette: Diana asked, "It makes sense that people are often reacting from pain or their behaviors stem from pain, but how do you honor yourself in abusive situations? If we have too much compassion, then we end up hurting ourselves and staying in toxic situations. How do you make sense of this?"

Sandra Kim: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Right. Before I answer that question, if folks could answer the reflection questions I've put in the chat box in the chat box as I'm talking, that'd be really great. Ah, flu. Thank you. thank you for giving me a cough for this training.

The question is compassion. I feel like people are very focused on the other person. When people talk about compassion, compassion is used in lots of ways, unfortunately, I think, that is actually perpetuating systemic oppression. Remember, status quo's systemic oppression. You've got to be kind of suspect of how people promote things. Compassion is one of those things. Compassion, they say, when something is happening, so somebody's being abusive to me, for example. People sometimes might push me to have compassion for where they're coming from and why they're doing what they're doing. That's actually ... One is not compassionate toward that other person. Because if we actually care and love this other person, we want them to be happy and be their true selves, which is not to be abusive.

Who we are, in the deep, deep sense of it, it loving. We're naturally whole people who want to be one with others, and that's through loving. We're happiest when we're loving. Being compassionate to somebody, compassion, people say as an excuse to let people off the hook, and be like, "Oh, they're struggling." True, they're struggling. That does not give them the right to lash out, to act out. Compassion is actually about when you are in the presence of pain, being moved to do something to relieve that pain and suffering. Being compassionate in that situation, one first and foremost that I'm going to be talking about is that we have a responsibility to ourselves, so the person we need to be bringing a compassion lens to is ourselves, first and foremost, because we are the only ones who can take care of ourselves.

We are not responsible for the well being of other people. We can support other people, but we are not responsible for them because we do not have power over other people. We do not control them. We have the power with ourselves to choose what we do, and so that's why we are responsible for our own being. What happens is that we bring compassion to ourselves first by noticing what is our pain? Surviving abuse, my pain from that abuse is what I need to focus on, shift my focus to. Not the other person. Shift my focus to myself and my pain from the abuse. When I am present to the pain in my abuse, compassion will naturally arise.

You can't force somebody to feel compassion. People try to do that. If you could force people to feel things, we would have learned how to do that and learned how to be happy all the time. We can't force people to feel things all the time. We can shift our focus, and then feelings may arise. I shift the focus to pain. There may be feelings of compassion that arise. There also may be things interfering with that. Toxic messaging to tell me that I'm to blame. It's my responsibility for the other person's well being. I should probably have just done something differently. If I had not done that thing, they would not have been mad at me. It's my fault. I need to learn how to just suck it up. Silence myself.

These are all things that I mentioned. We need to learn how to let that go and just be in touch with that pain, which I'm going to teach you how to do, and then we'll be moved to have compassion, which if I'm with somebody who's abusive, then the compassionate thing, the way to relieve my pain and suffering, is to disengage with that person. Get support to help me disengage if I feel like I'm not in a situation or position to do so. It would not actually be to remain in a situation with somebody who's being abusive to me, which is not ... Even if you want to move and apply a compassionate lens to the other person who's being abusive, it's not being compassionate to them either.

What it's doing, that approach is enabling them to continue to be abusive to me, which is not relieving their suffering right now. It's nothing to do with relieving the pain that is driving their abusive behavior, because I do believe there is pain, always, behind somebody who is being abusive and controlling. That's called another subject, which I won't go into right now, but because it's allowing them to be distracted and to lash out, as opposed to actually dealing with their pain. That's not going to be compassionate. I wanted to stop for that moment. It gets complex, but it'll make more sense as I keep going on. I'm throwing a lot at you.

Reflection time. I want to repeat some of the things that people said. What are the ways that toxicity shows up? How is that related to feeling stuck, powerless, helpless, and voiceless? Y'all wrote a lot. Thank you. It's great. Being silence, shutting down, shoulding, blaming, shutting off, just pretend to the mansplainer or whomever, powerless, self-policing, getting angry and myself reacting or at them for being dumb, ignorant, etc., caught up wanting to hurt them back like they hurt me, telling myself, that I don't know what I'm talking about, stop policing, giving in, flushed face, racing heart, sweat, shakiness, retreating inwards, lot of shoulding, judging, comes from a place of feeling stuck, powerless, because I don't have control over what they say, and the day I can make sure they change their mind, I'm being too emotional, so it shuts them down instead of making a point, shutting down, trying to figure out what I did wrong, so lots and lots and lots of this.

This is critical. This is critical that y'all get when it's happening, because it's only when you notice when it's happening can you make a choice to do something different. When people are really struggling, I just say, "Notice. Just notice for a week. I don't want you to do anything but notice." This is a muscle you're building up. It's a skill. It's a practice. The first step is just noticing. There's no right or wrong to this. Let me go back. I just want to say there's no right or wrong to this.

I know people who beat themselves up for beating themselves up. That feel guilty for the fact that they feel guilty as they do this work. Especially folks, when you have a lot of understanding and you've learned a lot about different healing practices and whatnot, and you feel like you "should know better," you "should be better than you are," or feminists who believe that just because they're feminists, they shouldn't have body image issues or shouldn't be struggling with eating disorders or shouldn't be whatever it may be. There are folks who think ... They beat themselves up for beating themselves up and they feel guilty for feeling guilty, and this is a lot of resistance.

It's not helpful. There's no right or wrong to this. The fact that you feel anxious, you feel scared, you've internalized, you're self-policing ... There is no right or wrong to this. It's the impact that's having on you. Is that the impact that you want to have? What I'm going to be teaching you is that you can have feelings. You have feelings. There's not wrong or right to having feelings. You feel you want to do something. There's no right or wrong to that. It's like the weather. It just comes and it goes. It does what it does. What you choose to do about it is completely your responsibility. These are two entirely separate things. What you're feeling and you being able to acknowledge that as not being right or wrong, but being also able to take responsibility for your actions, which you do have responsibility over.

I know folks who don't want to get in touch with their anger, because they are afraid that if they get angry, that they're going to lash out at somebody. They think if they did get in touch, they have to lash out at somebody. They don't know what else to do, because that's what they want to do when they're angry. No, those are two entirely different things. I can feel anger. I do feel anger. Hell, I wish more people would feel angry at injustice. That's the goal. That's what I'm trying to do with Everyday Feminism. Trying to spread knowledge about everyday manifestations of systemic oppression. It's fucking up everybody's lives. I'm trying to get people to be riled up and angry about this stuff so they do something about it.

Anger is an appropriate response to injustice, to violations, to violence. This is harmful. Stop. Acknowledging that anger is very different from what

do we do with it. I can react. I can act. I could silence myself, my anger. I could express it by making them wrong and personally attacking other people. Demonizing, villainizing other people. I can look at where is this coming from. What do we need to do to change this situation, the system, so it's not being so harmful. There's lots of ways that we can do with our anger.

We need to really separate out those two, of feelings and our actions. Feelings are what they are. They're like the weather. There's no right or wrong. We have a responsibility for our actions, and we need to pay attention to the impact that it has. If it's causing harm, if it's beneficial. Oftentimes it's mixed. Such is life. Just want to state that. I'm going to get going on these slides.

Now that we've just got in touch a little bit about toxicity, it's hard separating these things out for us. Now that we've noticed that there's toxicity happening, what do we do about it? I say we get curious, but with humility. We're often in these situations ... Thinking about your situation, we often assume that we know everything based on that initial reaction. Somebody comes at me on the street, says some shit to me, in my mind I have a whole story why. About why, why they thought it was okay, how they shouldn't, what I was supposed to be doing, what I didn't do, what I did do. I have all these things that I believe to be true. It makes it so charged for me.

The thing is, those are just speculations, particularly about the other person. Particularly about the other person. We don't know this other person. We don't know why they did what they did. Our speculations may be true. Not saying they're not, because the status quo is systemic oppression, so a lot of these dynamics, particularly when it comes to microaggressions and institutionalized oppression, our guesses are often true. They're not always true and they're not usually the full truth of the matter too, because they're oftentimes just surface truth too. Things are complex. You'll find this out as we continue to do this work. There are layers to this.

I'm not saying our speculations aren't true. I'm just saying they're not the whole truth and they're not always true. The problem comes when we treat them as the truth and the only truth. If I look at somebody ... This is actually an example that somebody gave during one of the sessions in the online seminar. She's a teacher, and there is a child there, and she's an art teacher, and the child was coloring. This is a classroom that's predominantly black kids. The child, who's a black boy, was coloring, and raised his head and said, "Is it racist if I color the person brown?" Apparently, this is a common questions this child asks. She, the teacher ... It was an emotionally charged situation for her, particularly as a white

woman. To be in this situation. To have this conversation with a whole bunch of kids. I think that's what it's about. I think that's what she shared.

She remembered this practice of having humble curiosity. Instead of assuming why he was asking the question and thinking "There's no positive outcome left for this," and just getting stuck there because she couldn't see a way out, and instead of treating that initial reaction as the truth, she was like, "Well, why do you think so? Why do you think that might be?" Or maybe "Do you think that is true?" Something like that, she asked. Can't remember exactly. Something along those lines. The kid sat there, reflected for a second, and was like, "Huh, I guess not. Okay," and went back to coloring.

When we believe that our speculations are true ... She believed there was no way this conversation could go well, positive for everybody. She didn't know what could be done and like, "Oh my God, this is happening again." This child's causing problems again. The child's just asking a question. That's it. Instead of treating speculations as truths, she got curious. The child asked the question. She didn't understand why the child asked that question. Ask the child. "Why'd you ask that question? What do you think?" I'm paraphrasing. I don't think it went 100% like that, but that's the gist of it.

I want to take a minute, if there are any questions around this, but we're going to be doing reflections. Any one of you have clarity about having some questions to clarify what I just described? Nope? Good, because it's almost 1:30.

Josette: Yeah, I didn't see any clarification questions.

Sandra Kim: Okay. Reflection time. What gets in the way of you acknowledging that you might not know everything about the situation already? Unless we're conscious of what's happening with us, we can't make a choice. I need you to get conscious about what is driving you that makes you feel like you know everything? That your speculations are truths? I'm not saying that they aren't true. I'm just saying we don't know yet, and they may not be the whole truth on the matter, because things are more complex.

What's getting in the way of you acknowledging that you might not know everything? And what's getting in the way of you being curious and digging deeper into the other person's perspective and your own experience, because the initial reaction is simply that. If something's emotionally charged, it's because it's got layers to it. It's got a history to it. If it's just this one situation right in front of you and that was it, and you could just be with this one situation, you could just ask the question. "Why would you say that?" Or, "Huh," or, "That kind of hurt me. Why'd you think that was

okay to do?" "I think that's kind of messed up, though. Why do you think that was normal?"

If it was just the situation at hand and we didn't have an emotional charge coming from our own history, then it could be as simple as that. What is getting in the way of you acknowledging this? Acknowledging that you may not know everything everything, and what's getting in the way of you being curious about the other person? I'm going to put this in the chat box, and I want folks to do that, to start typing. I'm going to create a whiteboard.

Josette: If folks have long text that they want to do on the whiteboard, that's better suited for the chat, because otherwise it goes over other people's [inaudible 01:27:27] read it. The whiteboard makes more sense for 4 or 5 words, handwritten or typed, one word answers or something like that. Anything longer than 5 words I would say probably should go in the chat.

Sandra Kim: I want to repeat, there's no right or wrong to this. I don't want you to beat yourself up for how you react. You react because that's the way you react. There's a reason why you react that way. You're doing your best. It's just your best is perhaps not what you want. Perhaps not having an impact that you want. That's all.

What people are sharing is PTSD, fear of exposure, people not listening to me. What gets in my way is the thought of losing my voice perspective, losing touch with my own pain, letting yourself become part of the perspective of the abuser, the person repeatedly having seen the same type of outburst. I might be hurt, taken advantage further, self-protection. Feeling ashamed that a situation like that could happen to me, not wanting to identify with other people's experiences, worry about opening myself up to further hurt by acknowledging my vulnerabilities and my lack of complete knowledge, not wanting to put somebody off, if I don't raise a counterpoint of any kind, the other person will end up feeling that they're in the right. Anybody observing would think that person was right.

Impulsivity, passion, ignorance, previous experience, hardening up, speaking up, again, speaking up is already a challenge so backing down feels like a defeat, a certain kind of pride, self-defense mechanism, conditioned to not upset other people, not sound incredible, fear of past experience, vulnerability, so yeah. There is reasons. This is why I say there's no right or wrong to you feeling this way. You feel this way because you have plenty and plenty of reasons to feel this way, to be reacting this way. This makes sense given what y'all been going through and what you've been taught.

Like I said, systemic oppression is pervasive. It is the status quo. What does system oppression teach you? It teaches you there's only one truth, and we need to bludgeon other people into believing it and silence people

who try to say otherwise. That's what we replicated. Even when we're standing up to systemic oppression, manifestations of it, we often find ourselves trying to bludgeon the other person with our anti-oppression analysis, and silencing them or feeling that we need to be silenced ourselves if we don't want to bludgeon the other person, or you don't want to experience having to deal with both people going at it, especially with somebody we care about. Our families, our partners, our close friends, co-workers, our bosses. Someone who's got actual power over us.

That makes sense because we don't know any other way. It's a struggle. It's a real struggle, and it often doesn't work out very well for anybody. This is what I mean. We're all doing the best that we can, and our best isn't necessarily beneficial. Sometimes it's harmful to us and to other people. The point is not to blame, judge, and shame, and make people wrong for it, it's just to be like well, here's what else we can do. Here's another way. I'm going to support you in doing that, and that's what this program here is for

I want to close out this first session, give ourselves a break. I want folks to think about what their key takeaway from this session is. There's only one thing that you remember from this session. Please share it. I'm going to ... That ... Chat box. If there's only one thing that you want to remember, because the thing is, I've been talking for 90 minutes. Y'all are not going to remember everything. It's okay. That's why we record things and we transcribe them. I want you to write down one thing for yourself and keep track of it. For each session, I want you to ... What is the key takeaway? The key insight that you have gained, either about yourself or about the model that you find really useful. I want you to type it in the chat box.

Some things that people are saying is that ... Let me go to it. Change is possible; compassion to yourself first, not the other person; feelings are feelings, there are no right or wrong, and you are responsible for your actions; being compassionate does not mean allowing abuse; we are naturally whole; want to wonder about what are the things that prevent me from seeing the whole situation or believing my first impression; consider having courage to engage; your assumptions may or not be true, challenge one's assumptions - I would say inquire into one's assumptions; never judge a book by its cover, every initial reaction you have is a deeper meaning and a deeper underlying message and issue behind it; that it's emotionally deadening to have privilege; use humility and curiosity about the other person involved ...

I want to actually go back to the emotionally deadening to have privilege. I want to unpack that for one quick second because I think that's really important to understand. That's because the reason why patriarchy and white supremacy requires folks to cut their sons off from their feelings is

because you cannot be in touch with your feelings and not be moved by the sight of pain. When you are being oppressive, when you are engaging in exploitative, abusive, controlling behavior and you're watching it happen around you, you cannot be present to what is going on and to the pain that's happening and allow it to continue. You will naturally be moved to be compassionate to the pain and do something about it.

That's why patriarchy really is heavily focused on men not having feelings, and then making women wrong for having feelings because they're hysterical, they're too emotional. They're really into it. It is a really important place to explore, because I don't think that's something that most people understand is that it's actually very traumatizing to have privilege because it's cutting yourself off from your own feelings. It's all two ends of the same stick. You cut off the ability to see pain in other people, then you also cut off your ability to see pain in yourself. Like I said, that's why we have ... The highest rate of suicide is for men in this country.

People talk about using humility and curiosity about the other person involved; treating speculation as truth; we struggle to create something new; everything starts with being present; look at what stops me from hearing the other person's perspective without assuming I know already what they need; forcing ourselves to do things can mean doing violence to ourselves; we think it's our responsibility to step in all the time, but one of the most powerful things is that forcing ourselves to engage is abusive to ourselves and that's not right, that's harmful; to see others as creative, resourceful, and whole is the best way to interact with new people; there's so much I can't even. Yay. Systemic oppression causes disconnect, which causes pain.

There's more, and you can read them in chatroom, but I want to give you all a break. Just make sure to write it down for yourself, and if there's anything else you want to write down from that list, please go ahead and do so. We will be sharing. We will be copying and sharing the chat box so you can see it, but it's long and big, so you may just want to write down anything that stands out to you right now. The next session is going to be starting in 20 minutes. At 2pm Eastern, 11am Pacific. Please convert that if you do not live in those time zones, and we will be discussing the second practice.

Take these moments. Do bathroom break, lunch break. Percolate on what I've been talking about, and please, please set your alarm to 5 minutes before. That way, you can make sure to show up on time because I will be starting 2 minutes into it, but really, we want to maximize how much time we get. I really want to honor the folks who do take responsibility for their actions and show up on time. There's lots of goodness in this left. Don't be late. Bye, folks.