

# compassionate activism

## **Healing from Toxic Whiteness** **Transcript for Practice Session 3 - November 10, 2016**

Sandra Kim: Hey, everyone. Today is November 10th and this is the 3rd practice session for Healing From Toxic Whiteness. I'm sure everybody here on this call knows that Trump was elected by the United States as President. A lot has been coming up for folks during this period. I had planned to talk about how to restore external justice, showing the step-by-step process for that, because ever since we had talked about how to restore internal justice with compassion in the last two sessions. We are going to be doing that. I think that's going to be particularly useful as people are having conversations about what happened with the elections with different people, particularly for folks who know people who have voted for Trump.

I first want to spend some time sharing about how to bring the compassion activism framework, the approach, to what happened and the feelings that are coming up for people. When yesterday or Tuesday night happened for a lot of folks, it really shook up a lot of people's worlds. We've been talking about how we all need something to ground ourselves in and that white supremacy, systemic oppression, is something that we have been taught to ground ourselves in. It's a way of understanding the world. It's a way of knowing our place in it, of what we should be doing, should not be doing. What is right? What is wrong? It informs of us how things are supposed to happen. As you've been learning, white supremacy is based on lies, as is patriarchy, as is every other form of systemic oppression, because there's no one truth. There's no one way of doing something. There's no actual right or wrong. It's just what is the impact of what is happening and is it an impact that we want to have?

What happens is that when you start getting present to white supremacy, its existence and how pervasive and normalized it is in our world it really shakes up your understanding of what's happening, of why things are happening and so for a lot of white folks who come into this realization later in life, because you had your entire life where you thought things were okay racially. All of a sudden you start seeing things more and more so it become very dis concerning. It becomes discombobulated. It become very anxiety producing. I think that happened again with the Trump election. I

think that's why so many people, there's been such feelings coming up from fear, anxiety, grief, pain, worry and for other folks who voted for trump Trump it wasn't like that. They had entirely different experience than we did. I think and what came up for a lot of folks is that this country, we say we have many different values and one of them is equality. One of them is that we welcome people. As we know, it's part of what's happening in our country and it's partly obviously what's not happening in this country. Our country is grounded and was founded on white supremacy and patriarchy.

I think for a lot of folks it wasn't as explicitly clear as how much the country actually wants that to continue. It wasn't to bring it back to an even greater degree. It really shook up people's understanding of what United States is like and who is here. Particularly folks who had family and friends who voted for Trump. I think there's a lot of shock for folks who didn't realize how strongly sentiments actually ran. Having talking to Trump supporters who insist that they're not racist or sexist and that Trump is not racist or sexist. Despite what is said. That's part of how white supremacy and how patriarchy has taught us to deny, it confuse us to actually definition of racism and sexism. I think that's why people are so shaken. People are so incredibly shaken because the way ... They had woken up on Tuesday morning thinking there country was a certain way and by that night time we realized it was something very different.

I would actually say that there's actually still more of us who can see racism and sexism in Trump than not because actually the popular vote did go for Hillary Clinton, it's just that I don't think we realize electoral collage would mess that all up apparently. I say this because for a lot of folks who realize that the country actually is quite different than we thought, we lost that grounding. We lost that grounding in what we thought this country actually stood for. What I think we've been seeing since yesterday is the outpouring of protests, the people sharing more love with each other, affirming more of each other. Also, checking in with each other. Those values of resistance to a system that could oppression, that resistance to dehumanizing that value of affirming the humanity of people no matter where they come from, no matter what they look like. That is still something that is here and we are still doing it. We are still doing it. Individually and more collectively.

For folks who have been really shaken by what happened with the elections, there's a grounding that we need to have in order to face a level of serenity that Trump and his presidency will bring. We can't base it, even that the politics will be as usual. At least with Hillary Clinton for whatever people may think about her politics, she's a professional politician. She would operate in a very certain way. With Trump, we have no idea how he's going to operate. That causes a lot of anxiety, a lot of fear, rightfully so. At the same time, if we move from a place of fear and anxiety as we've been talking about, we're not going to be accessing our power. We're not going to be coming from a place that we can hold our own wholeness and hold the wholeness of other folks. What I invite you to do is actually think about what else you can ground yourself in. What else

you can ground yourself in that you know to be true. That you know whole heartedly to be true and that you can be a touchstone for you as you navigate the next four years, and particularly the next couple months as we are starting to understand what is this new reality going to look like.

I'll share a little bit of my own story for folks just so you get a sense of what I'm talking about. On Tuesday night I processed with some friends of mine and I got to actually back to my typical place of my desire to protect my people. That's my MO, that's how I operate, I've very orientated to protecting my people. Then I woke up the next morning, Wednesday morning, yesterday, and that was gone. That actually wasn't there. There was a lot of other feelings coming up from me but that was not one of them. That was my grounding typically and I lost that grounding because I realized that how would I know how to protect my people if I don't even know what's coming? I can't. I don't know. I don't know what's going to happen. I have no idea. My grounding no longer made sense anymore. When you learn about white supremacy and how pervasive, you're grounding in those lies that the world is a certain way and it's okay that way, you get shaken up. It no longer makes sense. That grounding no longer makes sense.

The same thing happened for me. My grounding no longer made sense for me. I spent the whole day sitting in that, having that swirl of feelings, still checking my people I love, checking with you all in the Facebook group, doing stuff for Everyday Feminism stands around us and by the end of the day when I came to, after I kept sitting in I kept grieving, like we talked about last practice session, I made sure I had a lot of space to grieve. Most of the Everyday Feminist staff took the day off because there was so much. No one was really functional. It was important for them to take that time to grieve and do whatever they need to do. Take care of themselves. Where I got to after I was talking with a friend of mine was that I needed a new grounding that gave me a level of certainty that I needed to face this level of uncertainty in the future. The only thing I could think of at that time was the sun will rise tomorrow. The sun will rise tomorrow. It will rise everyday.

That's what I'm not grounding myself in. That may seem random. Unless you're a nature person you know that nature is actually often time very restorative. It's kind of steady Eddie. The sun is always there. Even when you don't see it or feel it, the sun is still there. I spent today just sitting sun doing my work and that helped me ground in something that I could whole heartedly to be true as I face this really uncertain future. Nature, the sun, women may not be what it is for you. A lot of times it's a value. It's a value, honor for me for example, has been grounding for me, a touchstone. Honor meaning that you do what's right not what's easy. Just because it's easy, you do what's right. Even when it's hard. That's what honor means for me. Other people may have compassion, that you care. Other people, and maybe if you're spiritual or religious, maybe it's God, the Universe, the Spirit, what connects all of us.

It can be a lot of different things, but the point is that we need a new grounding. For a lot of folks that's not a conversation that you've thought about before. I want to open up the space to have that here. I'm going to have folks, I'm going to take some questions just in case what I've been saying is not clear. If you have any questions you can share them in chat box or you can, if you're on the phone you can do \*6 to unmute and you can share it. Once I answer a couple questions if there are any then we'll go into break up rooms and people can discuss, just want to share what's been coming up for them and then what might be a touchstone, what might be a grounding for them that they can really lean on to navigate this turbulent uncertain future.

Josette: Is my mic working?

Sandra Kim: Yes I can hear you.

Josette: Okay, great. Zoom just gave me a message that it wasn't working. While we're waiting for questions to come in, I did see an over asking question in the check ins that people wrote. It kind of boils down to how to be caring and compassionate towards people who are really happy about white supremacy or who are happy about Trump or who are ignorant. There was a lot of that coming up so I wanted to ask that.

Sandra Kim: Yeah. We'll get to that. We're going to definitely talk about that today. The reason why I don't want to answer that question right now is because having that conversation from a place of pain and fear is not going to go very well. You're just going to be really resistant to what is going on with them. You're going to make them wrong for how they're experiencing the world right now and I want you all to be grounded in something first before you engage in that conversation. It could be as simple as breathing. Especially if you have a mediation practice, breathing can be very grounding. That's why we always start out our mindfulness exercises to get in touch with our internal reality with breathing. Feeling the breath come in and out of our body, like the sun, it is always there. You can always count on your breath being there and feeling that in your body. Maybe it could even be your heartbeat, just something to really help you reconnect to yourself.

It seems like there's not really questions. Maybe I was incredibly clear. Hopefully that was the case. Like I said, the question is just I want folks to share what's coming up for you. What can you ground yourself in as you navigate what is coming up for you and the uncertain future that we face.

Josette: We didn't get a question but we did get a comment that I thought was really nice. It goes, "I am grounded in that I dare to care because of how I am a participant in a community that looks out for each other."

Sandra Kim: Yeah. You're committed. You're committed and that can definitely be the grounding for you. If you have something that you're grounded in, I dare to care, or something else you can share then what difference does that make for you or what is possible for you now that you have that grounding?

Josette: We got another comment that came in that goes, "Grieve first. Share with others who are grieving and then figure out what is in my power to do so, not to get lost in despair."

Sandra Kim: Yeah. Compassion activism, we just kinda compassion activism basically, restated, that process that I've been showing you that we've been working through is definitely another grounding that you can do. Compassion activism provides the space that will hold the space for you, actually. You don't have to rely on yourself, you can actually just rely on the model. That's always available. Like I said, we have many different groundings at any given point. We tap into that at each moment that we're faced with a difficult situation. Usually they're coping strategies that have some limited and sometimes toxic, harmful impact. Other times they are based in values and their oneness.

We're going to do the breakout rooms. Like I said, if you are not with somebody please continue to answer the questions by yourself and if you're on the phone do \*6 so you can unmute yourself. Don't worry. I will repeat this again because people still need to remember, if you're by yourself it's okay.

Josette: Also, if you don't want to participate that's okay as well. Just exit out because you will go into a breakout room, but you can exit out and come back, you can via chat let your partner know, or if you're on the phone just speak and say, "Hey, I'm not feeling up to it." Or whatever. Just sit there in silence, we'll even come back to the main room where folks will be hanging out. It's entirely optional.

Sandra Kim: Everything's always invitational here. So it felt like there was a fair amount of people who are still in the main room with me, so if you have problems with you wanted to join, try downloading the zoom download and I'm going to put that link back up again.

Josette: For the transcript, that's [zoom.us/download](https://zoom.us/download).

Sandra Kim: As per usual I want to be sharing the whiteboard. Folks, just kind of share what came up for you. Josette, you want to talk about how to use that whiteboard?

Josette: Yes. So what you got to do is go into full screen mode. Once you are there you will see a green box that says you are viewing Sandra Kim's screen. To the right of that is a black box that says options. If you click on that the last option is annotate and

that should bring up a whole bar with different options. We ask that folks who are doing the whiteboard, leave one to four words for the board and anything longer please put it in the chat otherwise other folks won't be able to have space.

Sandra Kim: If you could also share what your grounding is so it's both noted what came up for you and also if you did explore some possible groundings, doesn't have to be definitively the one you want right now, but just kind of if you've explored it in the conversation what came up for you.

Josette: Some answers that are coming in state, "I find my grounding in nature so what you said totally made sense to me. I find I can reach out to others until I hear or see well both sides are to blame and then I lose my peace." "Grounding in friends and family. Running on adrenaline, can't sleep. Friends and family help keep me grounded. Grounding myself in the knowledge that there are people in the world that I love who give me a sense of safety. Grounding in love. Meditation. The power of nature. Community. Making space for those around me. Nature. Relationships. Values. Exercise. Gratitude. Relief with a companion. Grounding in each other. Resilience. In my work and my colleagues. Grief for the loss of progress we thought we were making. Still holding my anger. Grief for myself and for others targeted by systemic and institutional oppression. The importance of expressing love to my entire community. Sharing with others. Community. Grief." Those are a lot of the ones that are coming in. "What you said about do what's right, not what's easy. Understand what's happened. At work some of us held each other in a circle and that was helpful. Connection and movement."

Sandra Kim: Yeah, so what came up it seems like for a lot of folks is community, which makes sense. This work really needs to be done in community because violations and violence happens community instead of trust, love, all of that feeling, all of that also happens in community and in really grounding yourself in that love. I often say that we take a lot of hits out there in the world and we need to come back home. We need to come back home to where we are held, to where we are loved so we can heal. So we can get stronger. So that when we go back out there we're more equipped to be the people that we want to be in the world. I think it's really important, a lot of us, we make the battlefield our home. This is actually something that I've been working on personally speaking. We often make the battlefield our home. Then that burns us out because you keep taking hits over and over again with no respite, no time to heal, no time to process, no time to get stronger, no time to be held. We will burn out and they will win.

Ignoring our own needs, not paying attention to our feelings, that's actually what we've learned from systemic oppression, actually. We don't get to matter. We don't get to matter. We don't get to exist. We don't get to take up space. This is actually thinking about what does it mean to take yourself off that battlefield and have our home be something different. It may not be a home, and I don't mean, especially for folks who's real life homes wasn't a safe space, wasn't a loving space, what I'm saying is a home that

you create for yourself that will hold you as you do this work so you always have somewhere to take refuge in and where you can come back to ask you go out onto the battlefield and you take those hits.

Is there anything else that you want to share, Josette, from the chat?

Josette: We have someone here today who's doubly in grief. I don't want to air their business everywhere but just that losing a loved one at the same time as this process and having to go through that double grief period. I don't know if you ... yeah, that's the sense that I got.

Sandra Kim: Once again, having something that could hold you in this process. The more that we are faced with, the more we need to be held. Having that, knowing what those could be and being able to ask for it. That's really important. Having a mixture, I think community is really great and everybody's also dealing with a lot of stuff at the same time so having a strong network of different people is important. Also having things that come internally from yourself whether it's some sort of practice, some sort of grounding in your body or nature. Those things will always be there. Those things will always be there.

Now that we've kind of worked through that a little bit I wanted to move on.

Josette: Did you save it? The whiteboard.

Sandra Kim: No. I'll do that next time. Given, where was I, okay, I want to move on and talk about the next steps. We've been talking about how compassion is actually first and foremost for yourself. When you're in a place where you can't hold space for every other person and having their reality be their experiences and that's true for them, that just means that you have some pain, some fear for yourself coming up that is crowding out the other persons experiences. That's neither right nor wrong, good or bad, it just means that you are not in a place to gauge with that other person. If you do engage with that person it's going to be in a way that wants to make them wrong and wants to deny their reality. You can do that if you want to. That's what a lot of folks do. I'm not even saying that you cannot do that. I'm just saying it's going to have an impact and it's not probably going to be the impact that you want. People don't like to be dehumanized. That's what this means when we engage in a toxic swirl when we deny people their reality, their experiences and we make them wrong inherently as a person.

Like I said, in those moments you really need to bring it back to yourself before you can bring it back to the other person. Engaging in the practices that we've been talking about of noticing when you're in pain. Notice when you're in pain. That can often show up in many different ways. Notice when you're in pain and that may show up first as anger, as frustration, as fear, as sadness, and where is that coming from? Notice when you're

resisting what's happening and you want to make yourself or someone else wrong and really acknowledge that there are mental realities happening at the same time. When we're in that place of toxic swirl it's we're doing this thing where we like, this is our reality and this is somebody else's reality and we're trying to put our reality onto them and they're usually trying to put their reality onto us and we're not acknowledging that there's actually your internal reality, the other persons internal reality and then external reality which is what happened. If I recorded it it would be the words that were said, the actions that were taken and more vaguely the energies that were exchanged which is actually most how we communicate is through energy.

The thing about energy is that it's imprecise and it's unseen, but it's very felt. How we interpret what our filters say about it depends on what's in our filter. How open we are to actually noticing what's coming up and when we're in pain we're afraid, we're angry, it's very hard. That's what fills up our filter so it's very hard to receive. Just kind of acknowledging that what you're thinking about the other person may or may not be true. It's probably going to be incomplete, almost I can promise you 100% incomplete. You're not a mind reader, you're not in their shoes. Just acknowledging that you don't really know. You have some speculations and probably some of those are going to be accurate. Some of them are not going to be accurate and there's going to be some stuff that you've never thought of before.

Really kind of remembering that having humble curiosity is important to this process, both for yourself and for the other person. Now that we kind of distinguished the different realities, getting back in touch with your own reality. Just to summarize, this is where we talk about the physical sensations and this helps us redirect from the external, from trying to focus all out there and what happened and the other person, what's going on with them and focusing on our own body re-grounds us in ourselves. Which is really the only thing that we have is ourselves, our own experience. Everything is constantly being filtered through our sense, through our past, our personalities, our traumas. It's always being filtered.

Josette says, "Acknowledged." I spelled it wrong again and it's there. It happens. Sorry. I'm just really bad at spelling the word acknowledge. Basically, where was I? When we come back to our bodies we get re-grounded in ourselves and that's what helps us shift away from the toxic swirl of make believe. Then when we keep acknowledging, we can ask the pain, it will often times shift from anger, frustration, fear, down into pain. Some of you may not have experienced that yet. You may be stuck because what's been coming up a lot for this group is that you're angry at yourself for having the pain in the first place. We've been working about that anger, that frustration with yourself. Just grieving with that and being with that. Once you can move through that pain you can acknowledge how you haven't been taking care of yourself and that pain and how that's been impacting. That's when you can actually start to talk about taking care of it because you actually have something concrete.



I want to pause here because that was just kind of a quick overview. It was just a quick overview of the process. I want to take a minute to actually walk people through that. Trying to have a conversation with somebody who supports Trump without having done this work you're going to often times come at them from that toxic swirl. I want to reground people here. I want folks to get comfortable and close your eyes. Just take a couple deep breaths. Why don't you breathe in and out. Breathe in and out. Breathe in and out. Just know that you can always return to here. This is always here for you. This can be your ground if nothing else. I want you to think about what it means to have been raised in a racist society and how we've all been taught these messages. We've all been taught these lies about what's racist and what's not. I'm sure some thoughts might be coming up for you, maybe not, maybe true. Maybe not true. If they don't resonate with you, you can fill in with what is coming up with you. You don't know what you don't know. You don't want to cause harm and you don't know what would cause harm. You're starting to recognize how racism has happened around you and by you and you didn't know it.

Now you're noticing that it is racist. You're very angry with yourself for not having noticed it before. You're ashamed. I just want you to sit with us. Just notice it's coming up for you. Where you're feeling it in your body, I want you to put your hand wherever it's strongest in your body. This relationship that you have with the fact that you have internalized a lot of racism. You never realized it until perhaps recently. Just notice what is it like here? What sensations are coming up for you? If it has a shape in your body, what shape would it have? How big is it? If it's an image, what image is it? It's moving. I want you to breathe into it. Breathe into the sensation and give it a name. If you could name it as a feeling, what feeling would it be? Maybe anger. Maybe frustration. Shame. Fear. Breathing in, breathing ins repeat "You are here." Breathing out, "And that hurts." Breathe in. You're here. Breathe out. And that hurts. Breathe in. You're here. Breathe out. And that hurts. Just breathe in, breathe out and notice what's coming up for you.

I want you to breathe in. You're here. Breathe out. And I don't know what to do. Breathe in. You're here. Breathe out. I don't know what to do. Breathe in. You're here. Breathe out. I don't know what to do. Just notice what's coming up for you. Notice if anythings shifting. Maybe it's the same. Breathe in. I don't know what to do and I don't want to be here. Breathe in. I don't know what to do. Breathe out. I don't want to be here. Breathe in. I don't know what to do. Breathe out. I don't want to be here. Just kind of notice what's happening. Breathe in. This is happening. Breathe out. And that's okay. Breathe in. This is happening. Breathe out. And that's okay. Breathe in. This is happening. Breathe out. And that's okay. There's no right or wrong it's just what's coming up. Now I want you to ask it, "Do you have a message for me?" Maybe it tells you something, maybe not. Can you ask it, "Is there something that I can do for you? Is there something you need from me?" Maybe it didn't say anything. If it didn't you can say, "I'm here if you ever want to share."

Just kind of notice what's coming up for you. I want you to say thank you to the wisdom it shared with you, to letting you be there with it. Take a couple deep breathes in and out, in and out, in and out. Just start moving around. Open your eyes. Come back to here. I'm going to open up another whiteboard. We can save it. Look at that. My first save. Okay. If folks could just share what came up for them, both on the whiteboard as well as in the group chat.

Josette: Don't forget, we ask that shorter ones be on the whiteboard and longer responses be in the chat.

Sandra Kim: As we're waiting for people to share I just wanted to mention that this is a layer. This is a very layered process. There are multiple realities happening at the same time and it's just peeling back each layer by layer. This is an onion of pain and we do many things to protect ourselves from that pain. The point is not to run away from the ways that we protect ourselves, but to really turn to it and witness what is going on, acknowledge it and let it lead you. If you're feeling a lot of shame and anger towards yourself for having not realized racism when it was happening, including when you've done it, or when you've intentionally maybe done it as well at some point in time. Ignorance causes suffering. Not understanding the impact of what we do causes suffering. This is why we focus on really getting in touch with what is coming up for us, what is coming up for the other person. To understand the impact of our actions so that we can align our intention with our impact.

If you are angry with yourself it's important to remember that whiteness is not inherent to you. Toxic whiteness is not inherent to you as white person. It was something that was done to you. White supremacy was done to you as it was done to people of color. It's not people of colors fault that they have to endure racism. It is also not your fault that you have white privilege. We all have a responsibility about what are we going to do now that we have been put into a situation where racism is rampant. The question is not whether or not we have racist beliefs, it's what are we going to do about it and understanding that if you want to be mad at somebody, be mad at white supremacy. I believe in going hard on the system and going soft on the person. We're all on a journey. We're all healing.

Josette: I'm going to share some of the answers that have come in. We have, The message I was given was speak kind to yourself, love yourself. I felt sadness. It told me that it needed to give me space to cry. Self compassion is so important here. Be kind and know I am doing the best I know how. Tension released. Protective cactus on the outside. Child. Harmed child on the inside. It's not your fault. We have a very pretty flower in the corner. Young child drowning.

Sandra Kim: [crosstalk 00:47:38]

Josette: Yeah. It's really nice. Young child drowning in tidal wave of oppressive messages. Shame and self compassion. With shame circled by someone else I believe. We have fear. I should have noticed sooner. I can't read the other one. A moment of peace. Privilege is maybe a defense like arrogance. It said take space for yourself and it's okay to need things. Tension. Wanting to have compassion for everyone but having a hard time having compassion for those who voted for Trump. Ending with so many tears. It started as fear and moved into really deep sadness. Also, physical aspect shaking shoulders and lips. I felt fear and saw myself as a child who was unsure of what was real and what to ground myself in. Also, fear of committing violence without understanding how.

The feeling in my chest said be honest, admit mistakes, be accountable. Furious at my failures when I try to get it right it gets worse. I need to let something free. Message was channel the anger you have about white supremacy into love and action. I felt profound gloom and sadness. The color of dark soggy gray/black in response to racism and election outcomes. Tension released as I was compassionate to myself and letting go. The message I heard was feeling what you need to feel in order to move towards stepping up and taking action. Get involved. Slow down. Be present. I said I needed to break down some barriers between myself and it because pretending it wasn't there isn't working. After the fury I just cried and felt devastated. It's hard to love myself when I cause so much pain to others as part of white supremacy. I think that's everybody.

Sandra Kim: Okay.

Josette: Don't forget to save.

Sandra Kim: I will go back and do that next time. I get distracted. I forgot what I was going to say. When I was processing last night, when I was grieving I felt almost like transmuting the pain in the world and this country. There are two things that I was doing. One I said for the people who have already been in touch with this pain and this was just flaring it and triggering it and making it more, I said to give me the rawness of that pain. That I would take it in and I would release it. [inaudible 00:50:56] for folks who were feeling the pain, there was many people who were feeling pain for the first time so deeply, maybe it's a pain that they're aware of but not really explored and I think it's particularly true for white folks. I said to feel the pain more deeply. I actually went into that place where I was holding, I was going deeper into that pain and I was asking others to join me to feel that pain. We're not going to stop. We're not going to stop, we're not engaged in the work to fight white supremacy unless we have motivation, unless it's painful enough for us to actually do something that will change white supremacy in this country.

I would actually get us a change how we show up, how we behave, how motivated we are to look at ourselves and how do we manifest racism. Pain is designed to get us to stop doing something that is harmful. We know that to be true for physical stuff. We don't do that around emotional stuff because like I said, white supremacy, systemic oppression has told us there's one way of acting in the world. When we feel pain around that, it told us to cut it off to repress it. Just know that. Know that what you're going through, as you can see, you're not the only one. I'd say probably everybody in this course is going through what you're going through. This self flagellation, this anger for yourself and having privilege and not having known that you're causing harm, to having your existence actually and what you represent, not necessarily you as an individual, but what you can do nothing but exist and that can be very painful reminder for people of color. That we have been taught that we don't belong here and that you do.

That's a situation that you were put into. You didn't ask for that. Just remember that the system is perfect. Ways that you're feeling right now is the way it was designed to make you feel so you would stick with white supremacy. I want you to get this because this is where Trump supporters are also afraid to go into. They're afraid to acknowledge that what Trump was saying was racist and sexist and all sorts of other oppressive, problematic stuff. Then they would have to look at themselves. I read an article about somebody who is very adamant that this country needs to be predominantly white folks and we need to make sure that people of color don't keep coming in. It was very, very clear about that and had friends who are people of color who they cared about and liked as individuals. Saw nothing in contradiction with the two. We've been taught that racism looks like the KKK trying to kill somebody. Even when that happens like with Dylan Roof, the media doesn't even want to acknowledge that was actually racism.

That's what we think about. We think about explicit hatred for individuals. If you happen to know somebody who's a person of color and you're friends with them, you don't see them as being different from you, but you see other folks over there who act really differently than you and it makes you feel different. It makes you feel like you don't belong. It makes you feel like you don't understand what's happening in the world. It's easier to rely on white supremacy to be like well they're wrong. They're the bad ones. I'm trying. As hard as it's been for you to engage in this journey of realizing what it means, it's really hard for them too. That's why they refuse to. This is why to the degree that you can't be with yourself in the fact that white supremacy was done to you and you cannot see that, you won't be able to help them either. If you're not in a place where you can have that conversation because you're not there with yourself yet, all that means is that you need to be with your own people. I don't mean skin folk. I mean with your own people who are in the same place as you. Like this community here who is still dealing with this part of the pain.

They're going to be there. Trump supporters are still going to be there. You don't have to have a conversation with them right now. What's done was done. We've got time to talk

to them. You need to take care of yourself. Like I said, create this home. This community can be one of your home bases. Say you actually want to have a conversation and you're not sure if you can. One of the things that we really want to be mindful of is how you're relating to them. These, I'm not going to read all of this out loud to you because you all can read it, but it's the same thing. One on one side you have toxic swirl on the left, on the right you have mindfulness. These are two ways of relating to the other person and their reality. One of the things that we've been talking about, toxic swirl, is you know it's happening when you want to resist what your experience is, what your reality is. It's the same when you want to resist their reality and you think they should have known better and you assume that you know what it's all about. Before you even check in with them you've already made them wrong inherently as a racist, as a sexist person, as a xenophobe. You've already determined who they are without even actually inquiring. You don't really care to inquire even.

That's where a lot of folks are at right now. There's not even a right or wrong to being in toxic swirl. If you come at somebody where you're making them wrong inherently and you don't care about what they're going through that's actually oppressive. It's what systemic oppression has taught us to do, dehumanize. It's to dehumanize the other person. I ask you to think twice about that impact. Think twice about what are you creating in the world when you actually deny somebody their experiences. You make the wrong inherently as a person. Instead I want you to humanize them and be like, "There's a reason why everybody feels the way they do." I think we've done a terrible job in this country. The media, the progressives generally in really understanding what's going on with a lot of Trump supporters. This is actually, it's probably also because they often seem to not exactly know why. Sometimes they do, sometimes they don't. Asking them questions seems to be baffling a bit.

When we do this and we hold this space for them, you are in a very unique positioning as a white person, especially if they're family and friends. If I were to go to them and ask them questions they'd already assume that I have an agenda. They'd already assume that they can't be honest with me. It's possible I'm skillful enough for them to actually unpack and that has happened actually. Most folks aren't necessarily as skillful as me in those conversations. That's why I'm teaching. You have the relationship, there's a certain amount of trust that is there. We can really get into their world and really get into it 100%. When we do that, when we're being mindful and as I've been talking about with you, when you're mindful of your own, you're getting in touch with your own internal reality, you let go of the toxic swirl 100% and you're 100% in your body. What you want to do is actually get 100% into their reality. That's going to be hard if you haven't dealt with your own pain that comes up around them having their own experiences because they trigger you and your own experiences of having believed in racist beliefs. You're still figuring out what's racist and what's not.

Your self rejection is showing up as a rejection of them. You can't be with yourself, you also can't be with another folk. The thing is, when you've actually gone through that process yourself, here's the thing, you can share your own experience of how you went from not realizing something was racist and harmful to realizing that it was and that pain that came with it and how you are still you. You are still somebody who's learning, who's on this journey and they can be as well. Remember, systemic oppression, racism has taught them you're either a good person and not racist or you're a bad person and racist. They don't want to be a bad person. They want to be a good person. There's no good or bad, right or wrong. It's just that you did something and it had an impact. What was that impact and why did you do it? Where did you learn that from? That it wasn't you. Remember, white supremacy was something that was put on you. White supremacy is what you were fed. Of course it's what came out of you.

Don't blame it on the messenger. Don't get mad at the messenger. Look at who actually was responsible for it and who's winning from it. Who's gaining from us believing in these lies? Remembering that racism is this tool for economic exploitation for the ruling elite. There's always a ruling elite in every country, in every situation, in every community. There's always a ruling elite. We don't use those terms necessarily but that's true. They're the ones who have the concentration of power and resources and there's not a lot of them actually. They don't want us to come together. They don't want us to realize that we've been brainwashed and conned, too.

If you feel like you not talking to people yet is actually ... You have to talk to people right now, you have to talk to white folks right now, before you've taken care of yourself what you're going to do is simply model the dehumanization process because that's the energy you're going to bring because you don't care about them. That's why I'm asking you to do it first with yourself. Be in community with other people who are in the same place with you so you can do that healing work and help each other affirm you and for yourself from the toxic swirl. Blaming, judging, shaming, making yourself wrong, resisting the fact that you have internalized these things. When you can love yourself, be compassionate with yourself then you can do that with somebody else and then you're creating something fundamentally different in the world.

I want to take a second to reflect. I want you to think about what are the toxic swirl ways that you often do with other people in this context? What is the impact on you and the other person? If instead you approach them with the mindfulness, really letting whatever arise arise and just being with it and exploring it with curiosity what else might be possible? What might be different? Let me put these questions in there. Mind you, I don't expect you to be here. I need to start noticing, when you start noticing that's their first practice. When you start noticing that's when you can take that pause to breathe and to reground yourself. Whether if that's just in your breath or your values or sense of community. Whatever that may be you can take that moment to reground yourself and think how do I want to relate to this person? First you got to notice that you're doing it.

It's got to be painful. You got to realize what the impact is on you and the other person or else you're not going to give it up.

I just want to acknowledge that often times when we stick to something it's because we don't know of another way. This is another way that you can do. You didn't have another option before you were taught that. You have a different way now. Compassion activism. I'm going to have you go into breakout rooms and we're going to be talking for about 10 minutes. Somebody asked for the behaviors to be pasted into the thing.

Josette: I was thinking a happy medium might be if we go back to the screen and everyone takes a screenshot of it since there's just so much text it wouldn't ... It's formatted in a particular kind of way, it probably wouldn't look great in the chat. It'll be all discombobulated so if we could go back to that shot then everybody can take a screenshot of it.

Sandra Kim: I put one ...

Josette: Oh, okay. Is it the summary version?

Sandra Kim: Yeah. I put the summary version in there. I think your idea is also good so I want to do that. Folks want to do a screenshot of that? If you don't know how to do it it's in the chat box, which is a summary version of the toxic swirl. I'm going to break out of this. I'm going to recreate it.

Josette: For folks not on the phone I just want to really quickly read just a couple of options for them to talk about. There's judge, shame, police, punish and dismiss the other person as well as deny, minimize what they're feeling and focusing on what they should be feeling. That's kind of the thing we're talking about. I know not everyone on the phone has access to chat.

Sandra Kim: Go ahead and put people to two to three in each room just to make it so people aren't alone. We'll see how this goes. You got ten minutes, we're coming back at 26. Okay, we're all here. Let me open up the whiteboard. What happened? Okay, sorry.

Josette: Sandra, can you maybe put your phone on silent? Don't forget to make me a host again.

Sandra Kim: Okay. If people want to share what was coming up for you and as well, people are writing things down. Somebody mentioned that getting into another person's reality when they're a narcissist or controlling or abusive, I would also add that that's dangerous. I want to clarify that when we witness, when we bear witness, when we acknowledge another person's reality that doesn't mean that we're agreeing with it. That doesn't mean that we think it's the objective truth or the whole truth or that it's

going to deny the experience of another person. If we were getting into another person's internal reality and they were controlling, abusive, toxic, a narcissist and we let their truth override our reality then that would obviously be very problematic. They also would have great difficulty in being emotionally honest about what's coming up for them. Abusive people rarely think that they're abusive. When you invite other people to unpack what is going on for them, why this is coming up through them, they may not tell you the truth. They may not unpack it. They may say some stuff that's not real for them. It's really important to understand that you are coming to this conversation actually because you have something to say. You have something that you're inviting the other person to do.

How they respond to you is entirely up to them. I talked about previously, we always co-create our situations. There's how we show up that's what we do and then there's what happens to us, how the situation is, how somebody responds to us. We don't control what that person's going to do right then and there. The most we can do is ask and invite. We can choose how we're going to relate to them and this is the part of the conversation that I'm focusing on for this session. How are you relating to them? That you do have control over.

It's important to understand that we're not going into this conversation to actually try to control them and make them agree with us. We're not trying to make them do anything. We're not even here to necessarily be compassionate to them. Compassionate, when I say we have these compassionate conversations with them it's actually for our own pain. We're actually taking care of our own pain when having these conversations. With the other person we're just being curious. We happen to feel compassion, cool. That's useful. If we happen to have empathy, cool. That's even more useful. Really, the minimum is curiosity. The minimum is humble curiosity about their experiences. We're having this conversation because we need to take care of our own pain, to take care of our own selves, to be the people we want to be in the world.

Josette, you want to share?

Josette: Yes. Some of the answers that are coming in are, in terms of what came up for them is when to engage, when to protect self, satisfying exchange in all it's contradictions, we are all desperate to be heard and understood, dismissive/listening, we all want to matter, how to not become judgmental when invite and they say no many times over, I meet the best people in these breakouts. This is a great group of people. When talking with people we are in relationships with, what do we do if they are not willing to make space for our internal reality?

Sandra Kim: I want to pause and just answer that question. What happens is that I presented to you this notion that we have multiple realities happening at the same time. Also, it's very hard to hold space for other person's reality when they're in pain. You can



invite them and if they're in a lot of pain that they're not taking care of then they may not be in a place to hear your own story. Listen for their story. Usually whoever is the most emotionally charged should go first. If you're both emotionally charged you need to take care of yourself then. You got something coming up for you. If they say no, you invite them and they say no, you can ask, "Oh, okay. That's fine that you don't want to have this conversation (remember it's invitational.). You can say yes, no counteroffer. And I'm curious as to why you say no. What's happening that you don't want to have this conversation with me? Is there something you're concerned about?"

Like I say, it's not about trying to force somebody to do something, including talk to you about what's going on with them. You're not trying to force them to agree with you. That would be using coercion. Once again, that's not what we're trying to replicate here. You're being invitational and you're just going deeper with wherever they are. Just like you are going deeper with yourself, you're just going deeper with wherever they are. That's it. Josette?

Josette: Everyone wants to be seen and heard. If I'm not willing to see or hear someone else why would they want to do the same for me? A question from me and my partner: What can we do to invite someone (I. E. a Trump supporter) into this conversation when the other person wants to lecture nonstop in ways that feel aggressive and dismissive? It's clear that we need to take care of ourselves before trying to take care of others who are racist or taken in by the Trump talk. I like the idea to invite and if they say no to ask, "Why? Do you have some concern?" This is more of a question, I would love some concrete examples of kinds of questions to ask when we are hoping to help someone unpack their reality. I don't think I've ever been curious. Mostly I just want people to go away. Will have to think about how to gently stretch myself as someone who tends to be introverted and socially anxious. Important practice humble curiosity towards another person with opposing views. I think I got everyone. I'm double checking. Yeah, I think that's it.

Sandra Kim: We obviously only got to part of the process. We're focusing on the first part of getting in touch with ourselves and how we showing up in these conversations so we can notice when it's not appropriate for us to have a conversation with somebody else. We talked a little bit more about how to have that conversation in more general terms. I'm going to include in the PowerPoint, there's a lot we didn't cover that's actually much more concrete step by step that walks you through it, which we're going to be talking about next weeks session. I feel like the grounding in this more emotional gestalt sense was really important to do before we moved into the step by step. I also know that some folks, the step by step directions process is actually what helps them get the emotional possibility this might be true, too. I just wanted to acknowledge that. We only have 90 minutes, so there's only so much I can cover in 90 minutes.

You will have it in the PowerPoint to refer to. If you keep remembering to come to them with humble curiosity and just help them dig deep and ask questions. "Oh, so what are you noticing? What's coming up? Why do you think that might be happening for you? Where did you learn that?" It's simply unpacking. It's simply trying to understand what's going on with them. It's not really a different conversation that you might have with somebody that you love and care about, about something that you already feel compassion for. It's really not.

Like I say, if I find myself unable to do that and if you find yourself in a place where you don't care about the other person all that means is that it may not be the best time to talk to them. Maybe it's a time to touch base with yourself. I want to ... We're over by a little bit and I want us just to have one main takeaway. Save it. Clear. If there's one thing you want to remember, want to make sure you remember from this one session if nothing else, what would it be?

As people are typing I just want to also acknowledge that the fifth practice is compassion noncooperation. That compassion is still back to yourself. If it's somebody that keeps saying no to you, they're saying no. You can stop asking them. You can stop inviting them. You can do that by wishing for their own healing. They have a pain they're suffering in a way that's preventing you from being connected to them. That's all that is. You can lovingly disengage with that person. Loving to yourself first and foremost and maybe you just want to protect and shield and step away from them. That's fine too. If you can wish for their best that's good too, which is different from disengaging from somebody and condemning them. We'll talk more about that later or you can look back at the training sessions that we had when we talked about the fifth practice which is the last one. Josette, you want to share a bit what's coming up?

Josette:       Yep. We have self compassion is key. Humble curiosity/being invitational. I'm not ready to continue a convo yet and that's okay. I have a roadmap to get there. Talking to other whites before I'm ready will cause me to perpetuate oppressive tactics. Remember not to dehumanize the other privileged person while disagreeing. I think I'm still stuck. I need to cry a ton out.

Sandra Kim:   That's great [crosstalk 01:22:08], do it.

Josette:       To give myself time to notice, react maybe in grief understand practice humble curiosity, not lecture. It all starts with my relationship to myself. Patience. Hard on the system soft on the person. Pain exists as a warning to stop doing something. Don't blame the messenger. Systemic oppression teaches us to dehumanize. We have to do the emotional work to stop doing so. Gentle curiosity. Permission to not do it all while doing what you can. Big old heart. What do you need for me? Do you have a message for me? When I see another as less human I will be scared to join them as I will

be in danger. How to care. Hard on the system, soft on the person. Those are the ones that came in.

Sandra Kim: Great. I just want to say how much I appreciate how everyone's showing up in this program and really opening yourself up to the pain that's inside. Obviously that's hard and hopefully with these tools and being in this community will make it a little bit easier. Can't make it easy, I can make it a little bit easier. Give you a roadmap. Give you support. Really, the Facebook group has been having some really great conversations with people exploring and supporting each other in really affirming ways. Just remember, harmony we've been talk through systemic oppression that harmony is created through conformity. We're trying something different. We're trying to create harmony by being really [inaudible 01:24:10] inclusive to create space for people who are different who we disagree with. We can disagree without making them wrong.

Just want to leave you with that and if you have any questions about how to get to the Facebook group it is on the website. As also, Josette can send you an email with directions.

Josette: I already did. Yes. They all got it last week.

Sandra Kim: Thank you.

Josette: Check your email.

Sandra Kim: Please be careful about all the emails you send to Josette, she gets quite a few.

Josette: I was like, "Oh no." There's going to be 800,000 emails tomorrow. Thank you all so much. It was such a pleasure being here with you. Take care. Bye everyone.

Sandra Kim: Bye bye.