

On the Journey

Exploring themes for deepening wisdom

2019 Nov

Compassion



Opening Words

“Let us gather that we might offer one another courage, strength, healing, hope, and a promise to persist in kindness, persevere in compassion, and prevail in a life that is for more than ourselves.”

—Gretchen Haley

Check In

Describe a time when you were shown compassion.

Last Month

Further reports on last month's “Awe” spiritual exercise?

Defining Moment

Compassion (n) Deep awareness of the suffering of another accompanied by the wish to relieve it. Origin: Middle English compassioun from Late Latin compassiō compassiōn- from compassus past participle of compati to sympathize Latin com- com- Latin patī to suffer ; see pē(i)- in Indo-European roots. (American Heritage Dictionary)



Quan Yin, Chinese goddess of compassion

Synonyms: pity, compassion, commiseration, condolence, sympathy

Pity implies tender or sometimes slightly contemptuous sorrow for one in misery or distress. (felt pity for the captives).

Compassion implies pity coupled with an urgent desire to aid or to spare. (treats the homeless with great compassion).

Commiseration suggests pity expressed outwardly in exclamations, tears, or words of comfort. (murmurs of commiseration filled the loser's headquarters).

Condolence applies chiefly to formal expression of grief to one who has suffered loss. (expressed their condolences to the widow).

Sympathy often suggests a tender concern but can also imply a power to enter into another's emotional experience of any sort. (went to my best friend for sympathy) (in sympathy with her desire to locate her natural parents). (Merriam-Webster Online)

Poems of Compassion

Kobayashi Issa (1813/1815/1824)

does the monkey understand
"morning cold"?
a little nod

summer kimono--
the rain kindly
washes it

when you hold him kindly
he poops on you...
baby sparrow

From Psalm 116 (KJV)

I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.
Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.
The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.
Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.
Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.
The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.
Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.
For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.
I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

Eating Sin

By Michael Sharkey (2007)

A man began to eat his order of fish, and the ghost of the fish arose and spoke. Forgive me, it said, please hear me. I died in despair, which is, as you know, the worst of the deadly sins. As I slowly suffocated in the alien air, I gave up hope of salvation, and so died without the consolation of religion. In your compassion and mercy, have a Mass said for me, and pray for my soul. With that, the ghost of the fish vanished, and the man, congratulating himself on possessing the carcass of such a remorseful creature, tucked in.

Sympathy

By Paul Laurence Dunbar (1899)

I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,
And the river flows like a stream of glass;
When the first bird sings and the first bud
opens,
And the faint perfume from its chalice steals—
I know what the caged bird feels!
I know why the caged bird beats his wing
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;
For he must fly back to his perch and cling
When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;
And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars
And they pulse again with a keener sting—
I know why he beats his wing!
I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
When his wing is bruised and his bosom
sore,—
When he beats his bars and he would be free;
It is not a carol of joy or glee,
But a prayer that he sends from his heart's
deep core,
But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings—
I know why the caged bird sings!

The Answer

By Sara Teasdale (1915)

When I go back to earth
And all my joyous body
Puts off the red and white
That once had been so proud,
If men should pass above
With false and feeble pity,
My dust will find a voice
To answer them aloud:
"Be still, I am content,
Take back your poor compassion—
Joy was a flame in me
Too steady to destroy.
Lithe as a bending reed
Loving the storm that sways her—
I found more joy in sorrow
Than you could find in joy."

Never give all the Heart

By William Butler Yeats (1904)

Never give all the heart, for love
Will hardly seem worth thinking of
To passionate women if it seem
Certain, and they never dream
That it fades out from kiss to kiss;
For everything that's lovely is
But a brief, dreamy, kind delight.
O never give the heart outright,
For they, for all smooth lips can say,
Have given their hearts up to the play.
And who could play it well enough
If deaf and dumb and blind with love?
He that made this knows all the cost,
For he gave all his heart and lost.

To a Poor Old Woman

By William Carlos Williams (1934)

 munching a plum on
the street a paper bag
of them in her hand

They taste good to her
They taste good
to her. They taste
good to her

You can see it by
the way she gives herself
to the one half
sucked out in her hand

Comforted
a solace of ripe plums
seeming to fill the air
They taste good to her

Carrefour

By Amy Lowell (1920)

O You,
Who came upon me once
Stretched under apple-trees just after bathing,
Why did you not strangle me before speaking
Rather than fill me with the wild white honey of your
words
And then leave me to the mercy
Of the forest bees.

The Answering Machine

By Linda Pastan (2000)

I call and hear your voice
on the answering machine
weeks after your death,
a fledgling ghost still longing
for human messages.

Shall I leave one, telling
how the fabric of our lives
has been ripped before
but that this sudden tear will not
be mended soon or easily?

In your emptying house, others
roll up rugs, pack books,
drink coffee at your antique table,
and listen to messages left
on a machine haunted

by the timbre of your voice,
more palpable than photographs
or fingerprints. On this first day
of this first fall without you,
ashamed and resisting

but compelled, I dial again
the number I know by heart,
thankful in a diminished world
for the accidental mercy of machines,
then listen and hang up.

Defeated

By Sophie Jewett (1910)

When the last fight is lost, the last sword broken;
The last call sounded, the last order spoken;
When from the field where braver hearts lie sleeping,
Faint, and athirst, and blinded, I come creeping,
With not one waving shred of palm to bring you,
With not one splendid battle-song to sing you,
O Love, in my dishonor and defeat,
Your measureless compassion will be sweet.

Why Bother?

By Sean Thomas Dougherty

Because right now, there is	someone
Out there with	
A wound	in the exact shape
	of your words.

Compassion Quotations

Here is a mystery: If sweeping through the door of my heart there moves continually a genuine love for you, it bypasses all your hate and all your indifference and gets through to you at your center. You are powerless to do anything about it. You may keep alive in devious ways the fires of your bitter heart, but they cannot get through to me.

Underneath the surface of all the tension, something else is at work. It is utterly impossible for you to keep another from loving you. —Howard Thurman

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion. —Dalai Lama

“A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feeling as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.” — Albert Einstein

“Never be afraid to raise your voice for honesty and truth and compassion against injustice and lying and greed. If people all over the world...would do this, it would change the earth.” — William Faulkner

“Simplicity, patience, compassion. These three are your greatest treasures. Simple in actions and thoughts, you return to the source of being. Patient with both friends and enemies, you accord with the way things are. Compassionate toward yourself, you reconcile all beings in the world.” — Lao Tzu

“The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, a sensitivity, and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen.” — Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

“My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style” — Maya Angelou

“All I ever wanted was to reach out and touch another human being not just with my hands but with my heart.” — Tahereh Mafi

“If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.” — Mother Teresa

“...for there is nothing heavier than compassion. Not even one's own pain weighs so heavy as the pain one feels with someone, for someone, a pain intensified by the imagination and prolonged by a hundred echoes.”

— Milan Kundera

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” — Leo Buscaglia

“Compassion hurts. When you feel connected to everything, you also feel responsible for everything. And you cannot turn away. Your destiny is bound with the destinies of others. You must either learn to carry the Universe or be crushed by it. You must grow strong enough to love the world, yet empty enough to sit down at the same table with its worst horrors.” — Andrew Boyd

“We must learn to regard people less in the light of what they do or omit to do, and more in the light of what they suffer.” — Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“Waking up this morning, I smile. Twenty-four brand new hours are before me. I vow to live fully in each moment and to look at all beings with eyes of compassion.” — Thich Nhat Hanh

“Self-absorption in all its forms kills empathy, let alone compassion. When we focus on ourselves, our world contracts as our problems and preoccupations loom large. But when we focus on others, our world expands. Our own problems drift to the periphery of the mind and so seem smaller, and we increase our capacity for connection - or compassionate action.” — Daniel Goleman

“Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity.” — Pema Chödrön

“Sarcasm and compassion are two of the qualities that make life on Earth tolerable.” — Nick Hornby

In my view, the best of humanity is in our exercise of empathy and compassion. It's when we challenge ourselves to walk in the shoes of someone whose pain or plight might seem so different than yours that it's almost incomprehensible. —Sarah McBride

Developing Compassion

Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama

(Excerpted from: www.dalailama.com/messages/compassion-and-human-values/compassion)

Some of my friends have told me that, while love and compassion are marvelous and good, they are not really very relevant. Our world, they say, is not a place where such beliefs have much influence or power. They claim that anger and hatred are so much a part of human nature that humanity will always be dominated by them. I do not agree.

We humans have existed in our present form for about a hundred-thousand years. I believe that if during this time the human mind had been primarily controlled by anger and hatred, our overall population would have decreased. But today, despite all our wars, we find that the human population is greater than ever. This clearly indicates to me that love and compassion predominate in the world. And this is why unpleasant events are news, compassionate activities are so much part of daily life that they are taken for granted and, therefore, largely ignored.

But of course it is also true that we all have an innate self-centeredness that inhibits our love for others. So, since we desire the true happiness that is brought about by only a calm mind, and since such peace of mind is brought about by only a compassionate attitude, how can we develop this? Obviously, it is not enough for us simply to think about how nice compassion is! We need to make a concerted effort to develop it; we must use all the events of our daily life to transform our thoughts and behavior.

First of all, we must be clear about what we mean by compassion. Many forms of compassionate feeling are mixed with desire and attachment. For instance, the love parents feel of their child is often strongly associated with their own emotional needs, so it is not fully compassionate. ... True compassion is not just an emotional response but a firm commitment founded on reason. Therefore, a truly compassionate attitude towards others does not change even if they behave negatively.

Of course, developing this kind of compassion is not at all easy! Whether people are beautiful and friendly or unattractive and disruptive, ultimately they are human beings, just like oneself. Like oneself, they want happiness and do not want suffering. Furthermore, their right to overcome suffering and be happy is equal to one's own. Now, when you recognize that all beings are equal in both their desire for happiness and their right to obtain it, you automatically feel empathy and closeness for them. Through accustoming your mind to this sense of universal altruism, you develop a feeling of responsibility for others: the wish to help them actively overcome their problems. Nor is this wish selective; it applies equally to all. As long as they are human beings experiencing pleasure and pain just as you do, there is no logical basis to discriminate between them or to alter your concern for them if they behave negatively.

Let me emphasize that it is within your power, given patience and time, to develop this kind of compassion. Of course, our self-centeredness, our distinctive attachment to the feeling of an independent, self-existent ego works fundamentally to inhibit our compassion. Indeed, true compassion can be experienced only when this type of self-grasping is eliminated. But this does not mean that we cannot start and make progress now.

The Science of Compassion

James R. Doty, MD

(Excerpted from: huffpost.com/entry/science-of-compassion_b_1578284)

Why, in a country that consumes 25% of the world's resources (the U.S.), is there an epidemic of loneliness, depression, and anxiety? Why do so many in the West who have all of their basic needs met still feel impoverished? While some politicians might answer, "It's the economy, stupid," Based on scientific evidence, a better answer is, "It's the lack compassion, stupid."

I recently attended the Templeton Prize ceremony at St. Paul's Cathedral in London and have been reflecting on the words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in conversation with Arianna Huffington: "If we say, oh, the practice of compassion is something holy, nobody will listen. If we say, warm-heartedness really reduces your blood pressure, your anxiety, your stress and improves your health, then people pay attention." As director of the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education (CCARE) at Stanford University (one of the two organizations recognized in the Templeton Prize press release), I would agree with the Dalai Lama.

What exactly is compassion? Compassion is the recognition of another's suffering and a desire to alleviate that suffering. Often brushed off as a hippy dippy religious term irrelevant in modern society, rigorous empirical data supports the view of all major world religions: compassion is good.

Our poverty in the West is not that of the wallet but rather that of social connectedness. In this modern world where oftentimes both parents work, we are spending less time as a family. People are living farther away from extended families and perhaps more disconnected than ever before as suggested by Robert Putnam in *Bowling Alone*. Putnam observes that we thrive under conditions of social connection but that trust and levels of community engagement are on the decline. Loneliness is on the rise and is one of the leading reasons people seek counseling.

One particularly telling survey showed that 25% of Americans have no one that they feel close enough with to share a problem. That means that one in four people that you meet has no one to talk to and it is affecting their health. Steve Cole from UCLA, a social neuro-genetics scientist, has shown that loneliness leads to a less healthy immune stress profile at the level of the gene — their gene expression makes them more vulnerable to inflammatory processes which have been shown to have negative effects on health. Research by expert well-being psychologists Ed Diener and Martin Seligman indicates that social connectedness is a predictor of longer life, faster recovery from disease, higher levels of happiness and well-being, and a greater sense of purpose and meaning. One large-scale study showed that lack of social connectedness predicts vulnerability to disease and death above and beyond traditional risk factors such as smoking, blood pressure, obesity and lack of physical activity.

While many pay attention to their diet and go to the gym regularly to improve their health, they don't think of social connectedness this way. Just like physical fitness, compassion can be cultivated and maintained. Chuck Raison and colleagues at Emory University have demonstrated that a regular compassion meditation practice reduces negative neuroendocrine, inflammatory and behavioral responses to psychosocial stress. Exercising compassion not only strengthens one's compassion but

brings countless benefits to oneself and others. In fact, Jonathan Haidt at the University of Virginia and others have shown that, not only are we the recipient of compassion's benefits but others are inspired when they see compassionate actions and in turn become more likely to help others in a positive feedback loop.

As human beings, we will inevitably encounter suffering at some point in our lives. However, we also have evolved very specific social mechanisms to relieve that pain: altruism and compassion. It is not just receiving compassion that relieves our pain. Stephanie Brown, professor at SUNY Stony Brook University and the University of Michigan, has shown that the act of experiencing compassion and helping others actually leads to tremendous mental and physical well-being for us as well. While survival of the fittest may lead to short-term gain, research clearly shows it is survival of the kindest that leads to the long-term survival of a species. It is our ability to stand together as a group, to support each other, to help each other, to communicate for mutual understanding, and to cooperate, that has taken our species this far. Compassion is an instinct. Recent research shows that even animals such as rats and monkeys will go through tremendous effort and cost to help out another of its species who is suffering. We human beings are even more instinctually compassionate; our brains are wired for compassion.

Compassion Resilience

Rev. Sarah Richards (Excerpt)

It's tough to maintain a healthy mind-body-emotion balance—they do call it the life of the mind after all. Maybe that mind-heart imbalance is why there is such a thing as compassion fatigue, a term that came into use about twenty-five years ago. In the medical field, it is also called secondary traumatic stress disorder, and is found among health care workers, lawyers, caregivers, and anyone who regularly works with people who have experienced serious trauma and violence. These folks can themselves develop symptoms of depression, stress, and trauma that require medical treatment as well as social support and improved self-care.

But the more popular use of the term has been applied to public response to news media coverage of issues like immigration, homelessness, racism, and war. According to Susan Moeller, a journalist scholar who has researched this topic extensively, compassion fatigue among consumers of news stories of disasters, wars, and suffering is triggered by feelings of hopelessness—it seems there's nothing that can be done about it, and they—we—shut it out. The more complex the situation is, the more helpless and hopeless people feel. Moeller contrasted the American public's response to news coverage of the Rwandan genocide with a later cholera outbreak in refugee camps there. Many more people responded to the latter disaster because they felt they could make a difference; in this case, by sending money for health care and supplies.

When people feel manipulated by media coverage, they are also less likely to have compassion for people in need. Moeller says, "You have to know a subject well before you can care about it, whether "it" is golf or a war in Sierra Leone. If you get skewed information, not enough information, or information that is too offensive, you are unlikely to care about the topic." Another media analysis

finds, “the deteriorating state of international news coverage does not help improve compassion fatigue. When news media move from one international crisis to another, aiming for the most graphic and extreme story angles, the audience may watch but “disconnect.” ”

Okay, so that was some information about compassion fatigue to satisfy our minds—but don’t we already have our own experiences, our own feelings of numbness, detachment, cynical defensiveness, maybe even depression and stress from watching the news, being activists, caregivers or just living in this world?

Our three questions in this context might be when we have those feelings, what can we do to rekindle the fire of compassion? What can we do to prevent compassion fatigue in ourselves? How can we help others to develop compassion resilience? I think we “know” the answers, but we’re not living them. We are challenged to be mindful about how we are feeling, and intentional in what we are doing.

For example, there are basic self-care practices that are very important: exercise, eat and sleep well. These we know about, and our challenge is to make time to do them regularly. We can be intentional about our consumption of news—not hide ourselves away, but dig in to inform ourselves about the context and history of a subject, discern the “hype” from the humanity. To do that, and remain compassionate, we need to be able to make that head-heart balance.

So, what about strengthening our spiritual reserves? There are lots of different practices to do that as well, from meditation and chanting, to mindfulness and prayer.

Whatever our faith tradition, this deep recognition of connection, which moves us to action, is an antidote to the feelings of helplessness and hopelessness that are the hallmarks of compassion fatigue. 19th Century Unitarian minister and author Edward Everett Hale put it this way: “I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”

This affirmation reassures us—I can do something. The journalist Susan Moeller writes that the opposite of compassion fatigue is civic engagement. Finding the something that can be done, and doing it—and keep doing it—individually and/or together in a group, a faith community, an interfaith alliance, a local organization, an international movement—serves to keep our hearts open. Actually, forging new relationships, especially across differences of age, gender, race, class—relationships that remind us of the truth of connection with all people, those social bonds create another layer of



“The Bath” by Mary Cassatt

compassion resilience. We are doing that right now, and throughout all the 11 Days for Compassion, and really, when you think about it, we have the opportunity to practice it daily.

So, answers to our questions of how to heal and prevent compassion fatigue, and how to help others develop compassion resilience include self-care, spiritual practice, actions for positive change in the world, joining with others in all of those activities. These are ways we can keep our hearts open and live hopefully and helpfully. We already know all of this! Our challenge and our joy, is to make it our way of life through intention, awareness, and love.

Feeding Ourselves and Each Other

Liz James

(Source: uua.org/braverwiser/feeding-ourselves-and-each-other)

“Everyone is trying to accomplish something big, not realizing that life is made up of little things.” —Frank A. Clark

I’m not sure those townspeople were being selfish, in the stone soup story.

You probably remember how it goes: when the old woman came into the village and asked for ingredients to make food, everyone said they had nothing. She began boiling a pot of water with a stone in it, and she said, “Oh, I wish I had a little salt”... and someone came forward, shyly, with a tiny bit tucked away in a pocket.

Then she wondered out loud if she could find a few root vegetables—and another person had that. Someone else had a few spoonfuls of rice, and so on, until a glorious soup was made.



Artist unknown. Source: <https://foodbankscanada.ca>

We’re taught that this tale is about tricking a meal out of selfish people, but I don’t really think that’s what happened. I mean, if someone asked me if I had a meal to share with them, and I only had a half teaspoon of salt or a few old vegetables that are always at the back of my fridge, I would say I couldn’t help. I wouldn’t be lying when I said I had nothing to give.

I’d just be wrong.

When we say that there’s nothing we can do, we’re not lying. That phone call we might make, that five dollars we might donate, that quick email of encouragement we might send: these things feel so small that we think that they’re the same as having nothing to offer.

The stone soup story isn’t about selfish people. It’s about people who thought they were powerless. It’s about people learning they had something to offer that would feed themselves and each other.

Compassion for All Generations

Use these resources to engage in cross-generational conversations about Compassion.



In the Car

Songs:

- “If There Was No You” – Brandi Carlisle
- “Candle in the Wind” – Elton John
- “Kill Em with Kindness” – Selena Gomez
- “All You Need Is Love” – The Beatles

Podcasts:

- Invisibilia – “Flip the Script”
- This American Life – “Are We There Yet”
- NPR’s TED Radio Hour – “The Act of Listening”
- NPR’s TED Radio Hour – “Just a Little Nicer”
- Reply All – “The Reversal”

Watching a Movie

- Won’t You Be My Neighbor (documentary)
- Charlotte’s Web (G)
- Inside Out (PG)
- The Karate Kid (PG)
- Remember the Titans (PG)
- Up (PG)
- As Good as It Gets (PG-13)
- Patch Adams (PG13)
- The Pursuit of Happyness (PG13)
- The War (PG13)

Exploring the Internet

- KidWorldCitizen.org/videos-about-empathy-for-kids/ (18 videos on empathy & compassion)
- www.CompassionGames.org
- PsychologyToday.com: “The Platinum Rule”
- TEDTalk: James Forbes: Compassion at the Dinner Table
- TEDTalk: Jon Moolalem: How the Teddy Bear Taught us Compassion
- TEDTalk: Rabbi Jackie Tabick: The Balancing Act of Compassion

At the Dinner Table

Table Blessing:

We give our thanks for this food
And for everything that’s good.
For rest and food and loving care,
And all that makes the day so fair.
Help us to do the thing we should
To be to others kind and good,
In all we do, in all we say,
To grow more loving every day.

Rebecca J. Weston, adapted

Conversation Starter:

Compassion and empathy can help us extend the Golden Rule (treat others as you would like to be treated) to the **Platinum Rule** (treat others the way they would like to be treated).

Other Questions to Consider

When might a friend need compassion? What might you say or do to show compassion?
What makes showing compassion to a friend sometimes easy and other times difficult?

When might you need compassion?

Can you think of a time when someone showed you compassion? What did they do? What did that feel like?

What might you do to show compassion to yourself? What makes showing compassion to yourself sometimes easy and other times difficult?

Is compassion something we can ask for or do we just hope others will offer it if they think we need it?

Our Spiritual Exercise

Option A: Noticing Compassion

Observe yourself for a day, or a week, and notice when you feel compassion – and when you don’t. Make note of what the circumstances were, what the feeling was like, what happened in that moment. Ask yourself: What makes it easy to feel compassion? What makes it difficult?

Option B: Thirty Days of Loving Kindness

Sister Joan Chittister encourages us to “Try saying this silently to everyone and everything you see for thirty days and see what happens to your soul: **‘I wish you happiness now and whatever will bring happiness to you in the future.’**”

Your Question

Don’t treat these questions like “homework” or a list that needs to be covered in its entirety. Instead, simply pick the one question that “hooks” you most and let it lead you where you need to go. Which question is calling to you? Which one contains “your work”?

1. What does compassion mean to you?
2. What were you taught about compassion growing up? What place did it have in your family? Who deserved compassion and who didn’t? What early notions about compassion do you want to leave behind? Reclaim? How might you show compassion for your younger self?
3. How is the balance between the compassion you feel for others and the compassion you feel for yourself? What might be causing you to be unbalanced in one direction or the other?
4. Why is it easy sometimes to feel compassion, and other times difficult?
5. Why is compassion needed in the world?
6. How do you understand the connection between compassion and generosity? How might scarcity play a part in the ways we show – or deny – compassion?
7. How are you called to compassion right now? What calls you? And how might you act on that call to compassion?
8. Do you ever feel worn down by compassion fatigue? What are some remedies that have worked or might work for you?
9. Visit CharterForCompassion.org and read the Charter. Would you sign it? Why or why not? Do you think it’s useful? Will it change anything?
10. What does compassion look like on a larger scale? Compassion between groups of people, compassion on a systems level, compassion towards future generations or the earth?
11. As always, if none of the above questions connect with you, identify your own.

Check Out

What do you take with you from this time together?

Closing Words

Compassion, keep calling us night and day to risk faithfully beyond what is prudent, safe, or easy in order to answer another's cries for help

. —Rev. Naomi King



On the Journey is produced by the Unitarian Universalist congregations of Westchester County, New York for use in small groups. Each month (ten months a year) explores a different theological or spiritual theme.

Editor: Rev. Kimberley Debus. Email: sabbaticalmin@cucwp.org

Next issue: 2019 Dec, Grace

