CULTIVATING COMPASSION Online Course Syllabus



Sanford Program for the Advancement of Compassion and Empathy

COURSE PURPOSE

Cultivating our existing compassion for ourselves and others empowers us to make a meaningful difference that improves our health, happiness, relationships, work, and society when we are faced with the suffering of others. Acting compassionately is contagious; therefore, our acts of compassion benefit not only those we are in direct contact with, but also can start a chain reaction.

In this course, we will take an interactive approach to:

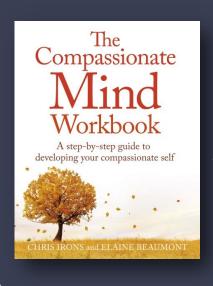
- understanding the nature and benefits of compassion
- practicing ways to cultivate compassion
- continue acting compassionate even in challenging situations



Mindful engagement in this course prepares students to:

- Define the components of compassion
 - Identify differences and similarities between compassion and related concepts such as empathy, sympathy, and kindness
 - Describe the nature and development of compassion
 - Gain experience with practices that increase compassion for ourselves
 and others
 - Explore benefits of compassion for individuals, relationships, and society
 - Examine how to sustain compassion in challenging situations
 - Act in compassionate ways in your everyday life

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK



Irons, C. & Beaumont, E. (2017). The compassionate mind workbook: A step-by-step guide to developing your compassionate self. London, England: Robinson.



Compassion/Mindfulness Journal (30% of course grade)

You will keep a journal in which you will write about acts of compassion and your experience with mindfulness practices. Intentionally making an effort to notice and practice the flows of compassion by integrating them into our everyday lives can assist us in cultivating our compassion. Similarly, incorporating mindfulness practices into our daily routine can strengthen our ability to live mindfully and to act compassionately.

Discussions (40% of course grade)

To give students an opportunity to interact with one another and share experiences and ideas related to our course materials, the class will be divided into small groups for the purposes of online discussion. Weekly discussion topics will be assigned so you and your group members can share viewpoints. For each discussion topic, there will be three separate posts: an Initial Response post, a Peer Response post, and a Concluding Thoughts post.

Final Discussion—Intentional Act of Compassion

In our Final Discussion, students will be sharing and discussing their Intentional Act of Compassion. For this assignment, you will identify suffering that you feel motivated to act compassionately to try to alleviate. Your intentional act of compassion will differ from most or all of the compassion acts that you write about in your compassion/mindfulness journal because it will require some level of planning rather than being spontaneous. You will prepare a PowerPoint presentation discussing your Intentional Acts of Compassion that you will share with your groupmates.

Knowledge Checks (30% of course grade)

Throughout the course, you will complete knowledge checks to demonstrate your mastery of the main ideas presented in class lectures, activities, readings, and videos. The knowledge checks will be composed of multiple-choice questions.

CULTIVATING COMPASSION CLASS SCHEDULE

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Module	Торіс	Readings	Graded Coursework
1	We have tricky brains We are shaped by our experiences Understanding our emotions Understanding how and why our difficulties arise	Intro & Ch. 1 Ch. 2 Ch. 3 Ch. 4 Videos	Discussion 1 Knowledge Check 1
2	What is compassion? The flows of compassion Why compassion can be difficult	Ch. 5 Ch. 5 Ch. 6 Videos	Journal 1 Discussion 2 Knowledge Check 2
3	Attention and mindfulness Cultivating the soothing system I Cultivating the soothing system II Building the drive system	Ch. 8 Ch. 9 Ch. 10 Ch. 11 Videos	Journal 2 Discussion 3 Knowledge Check 3
4	Developing our compassionate self Developing our compassionate other Developing our compassionate team	Ch. 12 Ch. 13 Ch. 14 Videos	Journal 3 Discussion 4 Knowledge Check 4
5	Compassion for others Experiencing compassion from others Self-compassion Observing compassion Benefits of compassion	Ch. 15 Ch. 16 Ch. 17 Additional Reading Videos	Journal 4 Discussion 5 Knowledge Check 5
6	Compassionate attention Compassionate thinking Compassionate engagement of emotion Compassionate behavior	Ch. 18 Ch. 19 Ch. 20 Ch. 21 Ch. 22 Videos	Journal 5 Discussion 6 Knowledge Check 6
7	Compassion fatigue Understanding & building compassion to our multiple selves Bringing our compassionate mind to shame and criticism How to manage fears, blocks, resistance to compassion Sustaining our compassionate mind	Ch. 23 Ch. 24 Ch. 25 Ch. 26 Videos	Journal 6 Discussion 7 Knowledge Check 7

CALENDAR

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