

COMPASSION + LONELINESS

How do you offer compassion to another human being when you are feeling overwhelmed, scared and angry? To allow ourselves to be compassionate to others we must be ready to see, hear, feel and respond to what others are experiencing. This means seeing people as human beings with their own strengths and weaknesses. If we always see others through a judgmental or dismissive lens we get a very distorted view of reality.

As we navigate through the next few weeks and months, we will be confronted with decisions about ourselves and our families which may lead to feelings of anxiety and introduce questions about personal security and safety. When we reach out to those in our community, we realize that everyone is feeling the same way. We encourage you to search for a sympathetic response that is generous, positive and filled with hope.

It is also important to practice self-compassion when we feel frustrated, angry and negative towards ourselves. What can we do to self soothe these harsh, judgmental thoughts?

1. Take a self-compassion break by connecting to others that you have a positive relationship with; being mindful of the present moment and know that you are safe and not alone
2. Close your eyes, breath deeply and visualize a pleasant scene, person or situation that you have already experienced and know that you will have the opportunity to connect again
3. Practice gratitude by allowing yourself to take in all that is beautiful or interesting
4. Be kind to yourself physically and find a comfortable sitting/lying position and allow yourself to stay there for as long as necessary

If you are experiencing loneliness, or know someone who is, it is important to reach out so that you can connect with another human being. This simple action alone reminds us of our value and of our purpose in life. Listening by actively focusing on what messages you are receiving both verbally and non-verbally is important when so much of our time is spent multi-tasking. What can you do to limit this difficult emotion?

1. Proactively strengthen social connections; spend at least 10-15 minutes each day talking to or writing to someone you love
2. Focus on the quality of the time that is spent with others either by phone, video or social media and eliminate distractions
3. See yourself as a valuable person regardless of the confusion or hardship you are living with
4. Extend compassion to yourself and others
5. Love yourself, trust your choices and listen with an open heart

“OUR TASK MUST BE TO FREE OURSELVES...BY WIDENING OUR CIRCLE OF COMPASSION TO EMBRACE ALL LIVING CREATURES AND THE WHOLE OF NATURE AND ITS BEAUTY”

Albert Einstein