



The Compassion Practice

(adapted from "*Resurfacing*" by Harry Palmer)

The purpose of this practice is to increase the amount of compassion in the world. This practice can be done anywhere that people congregate (airports, malls, parks, offices). It should be done on strangers and on people you may know, unobtrusively, from a distance. Try to do all five steps on the same person, then try it on another person. Note that this practice can be done by couples and families to increase understanding of each other; on old enemies that are still present in your memories; or on other life forms.

Daily Practice

Step 1: With attention on the person, silently repeat to yourself: *"Just like me, this person is seeking some happiness for his/her life."*

Step 2: With attention on the person, silently repeat to yourself: *"Just like me, this person is trying to avoid suffering in his/her life."*

Step 3: With attention on the person, silently repeat to yourself: *"Just like me, this person has known sadness, loneliness and despair."*

Step 4: With attention on the person, silently repeat to yourself: *"Just like me, this person is seeking to fulfill his/her needs."*

Step 5: With attention on the person, silently repeat to yourself: *"Just like me, this person is learning about life."*

Daily Reflection

At the end of the day, take 10 minutes to scan back through your day of practicing compassion and reflect on these questions in your journal, if you like:

- What was it like for you to practice sending compassion to others?
- What did you notice that you hadn't noticed before?
- What resistance did you experience? Where did you experience it in your body?
- How did you respond to your resistance?
- What impact did doing this practice have on your day?

Weekly Reflection

At the end of each week, take some time to scan back through your daily reflection and consider the following:

- What are you learning about compassion?
- What are you learning about yourself, your relationships and the world around you through doing this practice?
- How will you integrate this increased awareness and compassion into your life?