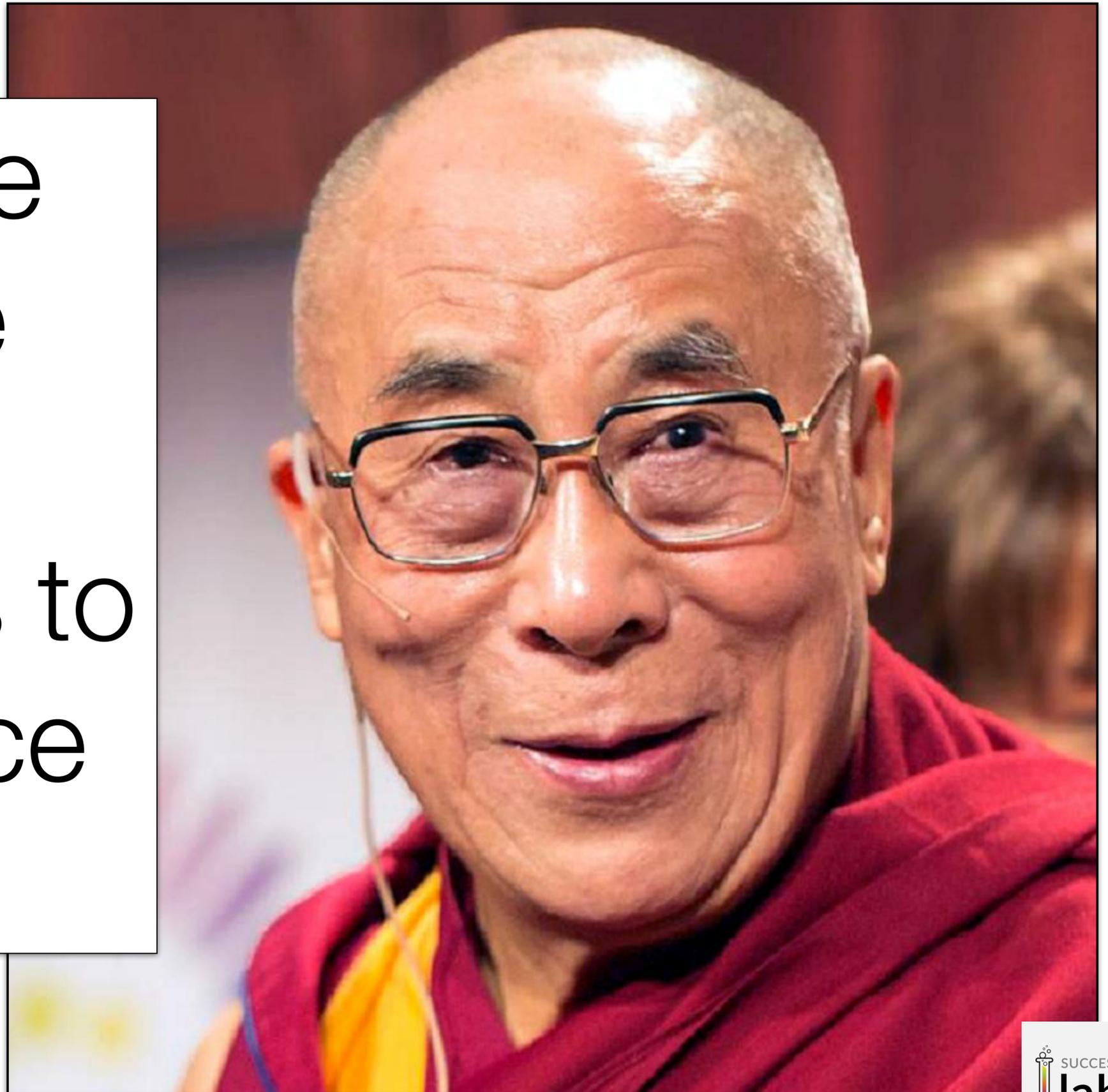


COMPASSION



If you want to be
happy, practice
compassion.
If you want others to
be happy, practice
compassion.



Compassion:

To suffer together.

Latin:

Com (*with*)

Pati (*suffer*)

Compassion

Compassion is caring for another person's struggles or problems and wanting to take action to lessen their pain.

The key is 'wanting to take action' because true compassion is more than just a feeling.

3 Requirements For Compassion

1. That the troubles that evoke our feelings are serious
2. That the sufferers' troubles not be self-inflicted - that they be the result of an unjust fate
3. We must be able to picture ourselves in the same predicament

As such, compassion is not an automatic response to another's plight; it is a response that occurs only when the situation is perceived as **serious**, unjust and *relatable*.

~ Eric Cassel

Compassion

Compassion can be painful to feel because it requires empathy for others, but it is also necessary because it evokes positive action.



Compassion Is NOT:

~~Being 'nice',~~

~~Displaying empathy,~~

~~Being sympathetic,~~

Compassion REQUIRES:

Awareness

Distress tolerance

Courage

Intention

Strength

Persistence

Compassion

To be **compassionate**...

(and to especially show compassion to yourself)

...we need skills that stop us falling into self defeating patterns such as shame, self criticism and judgement.

Compassion consumes enormous amounts of energy.

Research:

Buddhist monks meditated on child slavery for an hour.

They reported feeling exhausted and burnt out.

They were then asked to extend compassion to the same group of children.

They reported feeling energised, enthused and alive.

Compassion is a caring motivation that **requires immense courage** and an important set of inter-related motivations and skills.

Compassion

Sensitivity Having a precise and sensitive awareness of suffering.

Sympathy Allowing ourselves to feel moved.

Empathy Having an ability to understand what is going on from different perspectives.

Tolerance Ability to cope with distress.

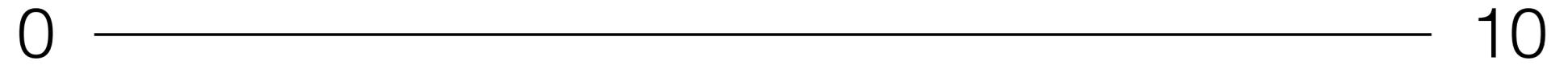
Acceptance Awareness of distress without adding to it.

Exercise

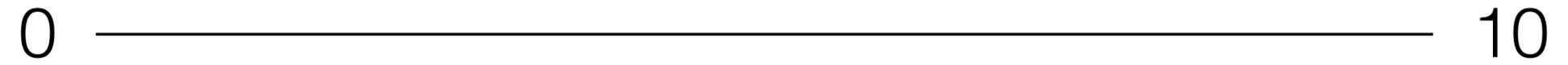
Very Little

Very High

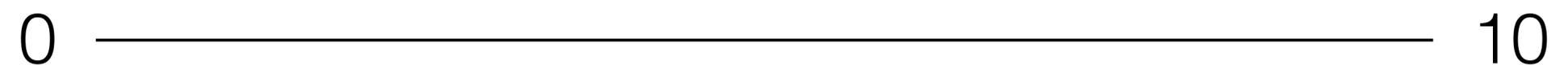
Sensitivity



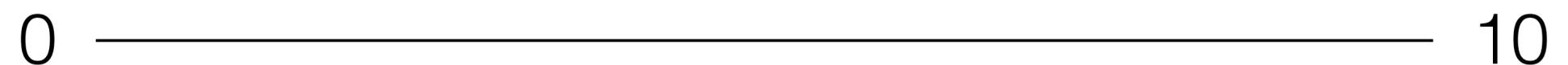
Sympathy



Empathy



Tolerance



Acceptance



3 “Hold-Backs”

RESISTANCE TO GIVING COMPASSION

Most likely the fear of losing something, others becoming dependant on us or lack of capacity to cope with additional responsibility.

RESISTANCE TO RECEIVING COMPASSION

Most likely the fear of trust being abused, being let down or abandoned when most in need.

RESISTANCE TO GIVING COMPASSION TO OURSELVES

Most likely insensitivity to our own needs, or fear that we will become weak, or that we don't deserve it, or will become overcome by our negative feelings.

6 Practices To Increase Compassion

Morning Ritual

Listening

Empathise

Acts Of Kindness

Be Present

Accept

Practice #1: Morning Ritual

Today I am fortunate to have woken up, I am alive, I have a precious human life, I am not going to waste it. I am going to use all my energies to develop myself, to expand my heart out to others, to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all beings, I am going to have kind thoughts towards others, I am not going to get angry or think badly about others, I am going to benefit others as much as I can.

~ Dalai Lama

Practice #2: Listening

To be compassionate means to not just hear, but to listen to others.

Making it a point to look someone in their eyes and provide feedback throughout the conversation shows active listening, a tremendous skill to have and one that can show compassion.

Practice #3: Empathise

To empathise with someone does not necessarily mean to sympathise with them.

It's not quite as simple as "taking to heart" someone else's circumstances.

To empathise means to make the conscious attempt to trade places with the person (or people) in order to gain perspective.

Often, we can show true compassion by just being empathetic.

Practice #4: Acts Of Kindness

Practice doing something small each and every day to make someone else's life better.

These acts of kindness don't require anything besides a willingness to act for the benefit of someone else.

Practice #4: Acts Of Kindness

If a daily practice is made of showing kindness, it will eventually become something that is done without much thought and effort.

In fact, the satisfaction created by demonstrating these acts of kindness will encourage us to do so more often.

Practice #5: Be Present

Try being fully present with everyone you encounter.

Avoid looking at your phone, multitasking, or paying attention to anyone other than the one you're with.

Make eye contact.

Practice #5: Be Present

Notice body language.

See if you can really feel what the other might be thinking beneath the words.

When you are truly present, your presence has a tendency to be experienced as compassion.

Practice #6: Accept

Stop being judgmental towards others.
Instead of finding flaws in others, find something good in them.

Instead of criticising their shortcomings, find out how you can help them.

Compassion is not about judging other people and putting them down, but it's about helping them and lifting them up.

Becoming A More Compassionate Parent

- Avoiding labelling children (i.e., “the smart one,” “the athlete,” etc).
- Be sensitive to your child’s developmental stage.
- Practice regular, open communication.
- Provide affection and emotional warmth.
- Empathise with your child’s feelings.
- Empower autonomy in order to support creativity, empowerment...
- Teach respect for other living creatures.
- Practice positive discipline, (warm and democratic) and never violent.
- Guide your child by role modelling kind and compassionate behaviour.
- Show optimism and help your child to believe in themselves and the future.
- Provide unconditional love.

Assignments

1	What was your lowest score in the self test? Commit to working on that skill.
2	Select someone to be more compassionate towards for the next month.
3	Figure out how to show more compassion to yourself for the next month.