

## **Week 7 - Mindfulness and Compassion**

### *Lovingkindness Meditation & Walking Meditation*



If we could read the secret history of our enemies,  
we should find in each man's life sorrow and suffering  
enough to disarm all hostility.

- Henry W. Longfellow -

Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair,  
but manifestations of strength and resolution.

- Kahlil Gibran -

### **Survival of the Kindest**

*In 1871, eleven years before his death, Charles Darwin published what has been called his “greatest unread book,” *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*. His little-known discussion of sympathy in this book reveals a facet of Darwin’s thinking that is contrary to the competitive, ruthless, and selfish view of human nature that has been mistakenly attributed to the Darwinian perspective...*

*...Darwin’s thinking about compassion, altruism, and morality certainly reveals a different picture of this great thinker’s concerns than the one portrayed by those who focus on the catchphrase “the survival of the fittest” (in fact a quote from Spencer, not Darwin). Those unacquainted with his writings, and even some scientists, are unaware of Darwin’s commitment to the unity of mankind, his abolitionist convictions, and his intense interest in moral principles and human and animal welfare.*

- Paul Ekman, from [Survival of the Kindest](#) -

## Week 7 - Mindfulness and Compassion

### *Lovingkindness Meditation & Walking Meditation*

Up to this point in the course, compassion has played a subtle, but important role in our meditation practice. In fact, compassion, and especially self-compassion, may be the most important component of MBSR - it's the oil that makes the gears of mindfulness work. Without it, the practices are at best, dry, and at worst, harsh and counter-productive. At the heart of our lack of compassion for ourselves is the lie that many of us grew up with: in order to be successful, we must not only work hard, but we must be hard on ourselves.

In some mindfulness courses, the linkage between mindfulness and compassion is not very explicit, focusing almost exclusively on strengthening concentration and the ability to stay with present-moment experience. This has made the mindfulness movement vulnerable to the argument that, for instance, there could be such a thing as a "mindful" terrorist or a "mindful" bank robber.

Of course, something seems very wrong with this, since kindness and compassion are at the core of almost every meditative tradition. This week, we explore our natural tendency to connect and care about others, and consider the value and potential of being compassionate even beyond our closest relationships.

### Videos and Reading

The first video, **We Are Built To Be Kind**, by Dacher Keltner of U.C., Berkeley, provides evidence for the idea that we, as humans, have a deep-seated inclination to care for others. The article, **Survival of the Kindest**, indicates that even Darwin believed this. As natural as the capacity for compassion is, Matthieu Ricard, a Buddhist monk who has logged 50,000 hours of meditation practice and who also has a PhD in cellular genetics, makes the case for consciously supporting this capacity in the video, **Cultivating Altruism**.

We also explore the natural linkages there are with mindfulness and compassion in Shauna Shapiro's video, **How Mindfulness Cultivates Compassion**, and her article, **Does Mindfulness Make You Compassionate?**

In our culture, it can be argued that the person we are least kind to is ourselves. In the video, **Overcoming Objections to Self-Compassion**, and in the article, **The Five Myths of Self-Compassion**, Kristin Neff explores misconceptions about self-compassion, including the belief that motivation requires self-criticism, and the idea that being kinder to ourselves makes us complacent and less effective.

### Daily Practices

This week, we introduce two new meditations, the [Lovingkindness Meditation](#) and the [Walking Meditation](#). Choose one day to do the Lovingkindness Meditation and another to do the Walking Meditation, and on the remaining days you can choose any of the practices you've learned so far, including these two. The recorded guidance for the Walking Meditation is short, only 6 minutes, so on the day that you do this practice, continue on your own for the remaining 24 minutes of your 30 minutes of practice for that day. **NOTE:** *If you are unable to walk without pain, it's fine to do one of the other practices that you've learned so far in place of the walking meditation.*

For the **informal practice**, on any given day, you may choose any of the practices you've experienced so far (e.g., simple awareness, mindful eating, STOP, "Turning Toward"), including the Walking Meditation that you are learning this week. As before, enter each day's informal meditation on the practice sheet.

# Week 7 Materials

## Video List

- ☐ [We Are Built To Be Kind](#) - Dacher Keltner [4 min]
- ☐ [Cultivating Altruism](#) - Matthieu Ricard [18 min]
- ☐ [How Mindfulness Cultivates Compassion](#) - Shauna Shapiro [13 min]
- ☐ [Overcoming Objections to Self-Compassion](#) - Kristin Neff [12 min]
- ☐ [Radical Acceptance is a Prerequisite for change](#) - Tara Brach [2 min]

## Reading List

- ☐ [Survival of the Kindest](#) - Paul Ekman
- ☐ [Does Mindfulness Make You More Compassionate?](#) - Shauna Shapiro
- ☐ [The Five Myths of Self-Compassion](#) - Kristin Neff
- ☐ [Walking Meditation Instructions](#) - Tara Brach

## Practice Sheets

- ☐ [Formal Practice \[PDF\]](#) [or [WORD format](#)] - adding [Lovingkindness](#) & [Walking meditation](#)
- ☐ [Informal Practice \[PDF\]](#) [or [WORD format](#)] - **Walking, Simple Awareness, Mindful Eating, STOP, etc.**

*All of the guided practices can be found through the top menu*

## Supplementary materials related to this week's topic [optional]

- ["I'm On Your Side"](#) - video by Michael Franti [4 min]
- ["Self-Love" interview of Dave Potter](#) - video by Yurika Vu [46 min]
- [Be Kind. Always.](#) - video by Jamie Derrick [9 min]
- [Humankindness: A Hopeful History](#) - book by Rutger Bregman
- [Fierce Self-Compassion](#) - book by Kristin Neff
- [6 Amazing Ways Animals Show Compassion](#) - article by Chris Mooney
- [Self-Compassion](#) - Emma Seppala
- [Widening the Circles of Compassion](#) - video by Tara Brach [3 min]
- [Disarming Our Hearts](#) - video by Tara Brach [6 min]
- [Compassionate Ethics in Difficult Times](#) - video by the Dalai Lama [11 min]
- [Compassion and Mindfulness](#) - video by Jon Kabat-Zinn [5 min]
- [The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion](#) - book by Christopher Germer
- [First, Forgive Yourself](#) - interview of Tara Brach by Tej Rae
- [The Practice of Forgiveness](#) - article by Jack Kornfield
- [Universal Compassion](#) - video by Sylvia Boorstein and Sharon Salzberg [10 min]
- [Unconditional Love](#) - video by Tara Brach [29 min]
- [Mindfulness and Self-Compassion](#) - video by Kristin Neff [21 min]
- [Making Friends with Yourself](#) - article based on Pema Chodron's "4 Keys to Waking Up"
- [Lovingkindness - should we extend it to the jerks of our world?](#) - article by A. Olendzki

*Once you have done at least six days of practice (over a span of a week or more) and feel that you've gotten the essence of this "Week" through the videos and reading, you are ready to go to [Week 8](#). It's not necessary to read/view any of the Supplementary materials - these are totally optional.*

## Practice Log - Week 7

**FORMAL PRACTICE:** Choose one day to do the [Lovingkindness Meditation](#) and another to do the [Walking Meditation](#), and on the remaining days you can choose any of the practices you've learned so far, including these two. The recorded guidance for the Walking Meditation is short, only 6 minutes, so on the day that you do this practice, continue on your own for the remaining 24 minutes of your 30 minutes of practice for that day. As before, don't expect anything in particular. Just let your experience be your experience. **NOTE: If you are unable to walk without pain, it's fine to do one of the other practices that you've learned so far in place of the walking meditation.**

**INFORMAL PRACTICE:** At least once a day, consciously use one of the informal practices (Simple Awareness, Mindful Eating, STOP, "Turning Toward", or the Walking Meditation introduced this week), and make note of it on the **Informal Practice Log**.

| Date                            | Practice Comments (include which practice) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
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| 7th day & beyond<br>is optional |                                            |

# Informal Practice Log – Week 7

| What was the situation?<br>What process did you use?<br>(Simple Awareness, Mindful Eating,<br>STOP, "Turning Toward", Walking)                         | What was going on with you<br>when you thought to do the<br>process? (body, mind,<br>emotion)                                                                       | What did you notice<br>WHILE you were doing the<br>process? (body, mind,<br>emotion)                                                                                           | What did you notice AFTER<br>you did the process? (body,<br>mind, emotion, action)                                                        | What did you learn?                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>EXAMPLE</b><br><i>I was cleaning the garage and<br/>getting frustrated with how long it<br/>was taking and decided to use<br/>Simple Awareness.</i> | <i>I felt frustrated at how long it was<br/>taking, hurrying just to get<br/>through, thinking "I HATE doing<br/>this – I have so many other things<br/>to do!"</i> | <i>I started to pay attention to the<br/>one part I was working on: the pile<br/>of tools in the corner, colors,<br/>shapes, how it felt to be holding<br/>the saw handle.</i> | <i>I actually continued with the<br/>process for a while. I was much<br/>calmer, only focused on what I was<br/>doing at THAT moment.</i> | <i>It wasn't the job itself which was<br/>frustrating, but my thinking about<br/>all the other things I had to get<br/>done.</i> |
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| 7th day & beyond is optional                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                  |