***Introduction to Boundless Compassion***

*Quotes and Notes*

***The Way It Is***

There’s a thread you follow. It goes among  
things that change. But it doesn’t change.  
People wonder about what you are pursuing.  
You have to explain about the thread.  
But it is hard for others to see.  
While you hold it you can’t get lost.  
Tragedies happen; people get hurt  
or die; and you suffer and get old.  
Nothing you do can stop time’s unfolding.  
You don’t ever let go of the thread.

by William Safford

*Broken, wounded, violent, damaged, divisive – these are some descriptions given to our current global situation. Our world desperately needs the noble, essential quality of compassion to be activated – and will not heal without it. Depending on how we respond, we can increase or decrease the amount of anguish in our world. Only with compassion at the core of humanity’s lived experience will we be able to approach one another with true respect and dwell in peacefulness. –* Joyce Rupp

*Suffering is a condition of life, whereas compassion is a way of life.*

*[Compassion is] being sensitive to the suffering of self and others with a deep commitment to prevent or relive it. –* Paul Gilbert

*Compassion is not a psychosomatic state or emotion but an understanding*. *[It is] rooted in the classroom of our lives and hearts and in a genuine investigation of our own relationship to pain and suffering.* – Christina Feldman

*Compassion is a way of life that requires inner awareness. It is an inside out-movement* – Joyce Rupp

*You can’t stand in the midst of the world and struggle for change unless, at the same time, you are standing in your own space and looking for change within.*

*–* Howard Thurman

Joyce’s 3 “Steps of Compassion”

* Awareness
* Attitude
* Action

Joyce’s 4 “Seeds of Compassion”

* Non-judgment
* Non-violence
* Forgiveness
* Mindfulness

***Non-judgment***

*Compassion can never coexist with judgment because judgment creates distance and distinction, which prevents us from really being with the other. – Henri Nouwen*

***Non-violence***

*Non violence means avoiding injury to anything on earth, in thought word, or deed.*

*–* Mohandas Gandhi

*Our brains are wired for both cruelty and compassion … Our capacity to be a cause for suffering and our capacity to end suffering live side by side within us.*

*– Christina Feldman*

*You cannot solve any problem in the same state of awareness in which it was created. –* Albert Einstein

*Pain originates in the body, suffering happens in the mind*. – Barbara Brown Taylor

*The words your mind thinks become the house your heart lives in. –* Ann Voskamp

***Forgiveness***

Forgiveness is not:

* Forgetting
* Excusing
* Accepting
* Denying
* Or numbing yourself to pain.

*Forgiveness is letting go. Letting go means that you do not cling to memories and feelings. –* Rabbi Rami Shapiro

***Mindfulness***

*How we focus our attention is the key to promoting integrative changes in the brain.*

*–* Daniel Siegel

Kindness, gentleness, warmth and compassion are like vitamins for our minds.

– Paul Gilbert

*What we repeatedly think shapes our world. Out of compassion, substitute healthy thoughts for unhealthy ones. –* Jack Kornfield

*To grow into the person that your deepest longing desires is a great blessing.*

*If you can find a creative harmony between your soul and your life,*

*you will have found something infinitely precious. …*

*If you can awaken the eternal beauty and light of your soul,*

*then you will bring light wherever you go.*

*The gift of life is given to us for ourselves and also to bring peace, courage and compassion to others.*

*–* John O’Donohue

*The more we know ourselves, the more compassionate we can be.* – Joyce Rupp

Self compassion is not:

* Self centered
* Self pity
* Self gratification
* Self esteem (based on comparing ourselves to others)

Paul Gilbert gives the following common reasons for a lack of self compassion:

* Taught to always put others first
* Childhood messages
* Western culture messages
* Fear of pride
* Indicates weakness
* Past failures and mistakes
* Being too easy on ourselves might limit growth
* Inability to receive

*Self compassion is accepting our true self now matter how beautiful it is.*

Joyce reminds us to:

* Listen deeply and clearly to the self
* Approach the self with non-judgment
* Know the self well
* Let go of perfectionism (Brene Brown – worthy guilt)
* Learn to forgive self
* Reconnect to our common humanity

*Vulnerability connects us and acknowledges our shared experience of reality*.

– Joyce Rupp

Brene Brown tells us to let go of

* Shame
* Scarcity
* Exhaustion as a status symbol
* Anxiety as a lifestyle
* Self doubt and supposed to be’s
* Being cool and always in control (use TV commercial about doctor being just okay)

Impediments to living a compassionate life:

* Compassion fatigue
* Burnout
* Empathetic distress too much news and the need to disconnect

*We accompany others in their pain but don’t take on their pain.* – Rabbi Rami Shapiro

*I saw the river over which every soul must pass to reach the kingdom of heaven, and the name of that river was suffering… and I saw the boat which carries souls across the river and the name of that boat was love.**–* John of the Cross

*I never look at the masses as my responsibility. I look at the individual. I can only love one person at a time. I can only feed one person at a time. The whole work is only a drop in the ocean, but if I didn’t put that drop in the ocean, the ocean would be one drop less. It’s the same for you.* – Mother Teresa

*There is not always a solution to suffering, but always a response to suffering*.

– Christina Feldman

*Developing the nectar of compassion in our own heart is the only effective spiritual response to hatred and violence.* – Thich Nhat Hanh

*Physical degradation of the natural world is also the degradation of the interior world of the human.* – Thomas Berry

*We are not lacking in the dynamic forces needed to create the future. We live immersed in a sea of [compassionate] energy beyond all comprehension. But this energy, in an ultimate sense, is ours not by domination but by invocation*. – Thomas Berry

*Nothing exists independently… The closer scientists look, the more they discover how dependent on, and finally indivisible from, everything is with everything else.*

– Lynne McTaggart

*It is my conviction that we can and must participate consciously in strengthening the morphogenic field of new consciousness that has emerged. The new field is here; it is already filled with energy; and when we become aware and attend to it, it lures us in with its power. Our past experiences have prepared us for its coming, and our conscious participation strengthens its energy. It is a morphogenic field rooted in and characterized by love – what we may call a Field of Compassion*. – Judy Cannato

*Compassion changes everything. Compassion heals. Compassion mends the broken and restores what has been lost. Compassion draws together those who have been estranged or never even dreamed they were connected. Compassion pulls us out of ourselves and into the heart of another, placing us on holy ground where we instinctively take our shoes off and walk in reverence. Compassion springs out of vulnerability and triumphs in unity.* – Judy Cannato



*I’ll carry your hope for you*. – Joyce Rupp

*Remember, compassion carries hope.*

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