

3_18_26 Talk*

*This is an automatically generated transcript, so there are errors.

Rick Hanson: [00:00:00] So before we go further into my talk that I've developed here, I'd like to speak to a comment that came in and a question from Elaine a little bit earlier on during the break in which Elaine writes, how do you actually disengage and let go? How often I need to focus or concentrate on something first to then be able to let go. Great question. So we're really talking about letting go of this so there's more of that in the mind, right? So there you are, stuck in traffic, trying to get somewhere, maybe late. You're stuck in the traffic and you realize, hey, I'm stuck in traffic. There's nothing I could do about it. Why add insult to injury? Why pour salt in the etc. Why not? Let go of this frustrated sense of helplessness and move from this to that. So one way obviously would be to start with that as Elaine is getting at it.

[00:01:07] Sometimes it really helps to concentrate on something else first, such as putting on some music on the radio, looking out the window, admiring the clouds, thinking about a pleasant memory or anticipating something nice. You move to that And when you're moving to that, a lot of meditative training is about letting go of this and resting increasingly in that. So that the mind over time becomes, as the Buddha put it a long time ago, malleable and wieldy. That's kind of an old school common translation. Malleable means that we can actually mold it and change the mind overtime. And wieldy means we can use it well to, for the sake of others and for ourselves. As we train again and again, moving away from this, this distracting train of thought, and moving it back to that, which is, let's say, the sensations of breathing, we become more and more capable of moving attention here and there with a lot of underlying neural correlates, increasingly revealed in MRI studies and so on, based on actual changes in the physical structures and certainly in the processes, including the relationships among the networks in your brain over the course of mindfulness and contemplative training. That's good stuff.

[00:02:29] So it helps to then when you do that, to pick at that, that is relatively attractive or engaging or appealing, that it kind of naturally draws your attention into it and it becomes what's called a basin of attraction in complex systems theory. So you just sort of rest in it. Now it maybe in the beginning, that the breath is just too boring. It's not very attractive. It's very appealing. It is not very juicy. So instead, you could focus on things like your kindness and love for other people or gratitude or a nice global feeling of peacefulness in your body, increasingly tranquil in body and mind, perhaps. Or you can stay with something like the breath. So we train increasingly in shifting attention to that. Very good. How about letting go of this? You know, the other side of the equation. And that's where it's helpful to have experiences of letting go one thing or another. For example, you can make a contracted fist, imagine that you're holding on to something and then let it go. What's that feel like?

[00:03:44] To let it in terms of the physical sensations. Similar forms of letting-go I have to do with exhaling. Which engages the parasympathetic branch of the nervous system while slowing the heart rate. Ah, the body lets go, progressive relaxation, training in what Herbert Benson and others developed as the relaxation response. To know what that's like, the bodily sense of letting go. We can also let go of various thoughts. We can start with a thought that's not good for us and others, such as something like, oh, I'm such a ding-a-ling, no one will ever like me. Consider what could be rebuttals to that thought. This is classic cognitive therapy, listing let's say three or more believable rebuttles to a thought that is burdensome for you, a belief of some kind, and more and more letting it go. Sometimes, typically that comes slowly as you gradually shift out of one point of view,

which you're letting go of, into another point of you, great, and then sometimes it comes quite quickly. As it did for me in my, I think, early 20s, when I realized to that growing up, I had been a nerd, but not a wimp. And you can know what it feels like to let go emotionally, to kind of dial down, release, you know, that initial surge of crankiness about this or that, letting go of anxieties and replacing them as you release them with feelings, let's say, of calm strength. Caring for others or being cared about yourself, you know, letting go of certain feelings of various kinds. And then with practice increasingly, you actually become more and more able to let go of the sense of self. Whoa, let go of possessiveness. Let go of identification with this or that. And you may find and you probably will find that as you let go of the sense of self. You actually have more room to support yourself as a person. That's pretty good, right? And you may find as well that supporting yourself as a person, that you have rights and needs that have standing, just like the rights and needs of others, other persons have standing too. That enables you to increasingly, increasingly let go of a contracted, embodied sense of me, myself and I, my precious and all the rest of that. So these are nice ways to practice and letting go.

[00:06:29] I like this quotation. From Ajahn Chah, great Thai Buddhist teacher, bless his memory, he wrote, or he said, and he was quoted as saying, if you let go a little, you'll have a little peacefulness. If you let a lot, you will have a lot of peacefulness, if you'll let go completely, you'll be completely peaceful. I believe one of his instructions for meditation, Ajahn Chah's, was aware and letting go. Aware and letting Go. It's a nice way to meditate. Now, to let go in the present can be really scary. Ah, what will be there if I let go? Will anything be there? That's why it's really important to show yourself up with the ongoing felt recognition of what's actually true, that you are being continuously lived by everything, supported by everything. You know, until your final breath. You know, beats of the heart. You are being lived by reality. Reality is the givingness in the present is making us continuously, which is a way of shoring yourself up in your comfort. You know we're letting go continuously to feel shored up by the present even as it changes into the next thing. And that's a broad general principle by the way about the importance of resourcing ourselves. Or practices that might seem initially scary.

[00:08:20] So now I'd like to explore with you, part two of the three-part exploration in compassion that is really suited to meet the needs of the day, which is to say, compassion that is not simply tender and very focused on the immediacy of people's issues and focused on us. Rather than that, or in addition to that, which is totally appropriate when it's appropriate, and also a more expansive vision of compassion that is more inclusive, passionate, and engaged. Last week, I spoke about compassion that is more exclusive and different practices we can do to expand the empathic field of us, even if we disagree with them and oppose them and are standing up for ourselves. And today... I'd like to explore with you what Dr. Kristin Neff has called fierce compassion. And Dr. Paul Gilbert has referred to as wise and courageous compassion, or I'll kind of summarize as passionate compassion here.

[00:09:30] So to do this, I'm gonna do something I had never done before, I think in this Wednesday meditation and the years we've been doing it until last week when I'm going to share some PowerPoint slides. So this is from a slide set from a talk that I gave at a conference in Puerto Rico. At the end of February last month, co-sponsored by the Global Compassion Coalition and also the University of Puerto Rico. So here come some slides, which I'm going to share with you. I'm gonna move through the slides and then bring it back to the group as a whole. And especially, I'm to be interested in questions. And, you know, I have a particular interest in yes, but, or what about questions, because that's really where a lot of the juicy action is. So, compassion that is more expansive, grounded in

factors of wisdom, courage, and passion. Move to relieve suffering in others as well as move to relief suffering in ourselves. That's the essence of compassion, you know, brought down to earth. Sometimes, you know, you gotta be firm. No, I don't want to date you anymore. No. I just don't agree with you, Uncle Bob, about global warming. Sometimes you need to be assertive. Sometimes you need to say to somebody, actually, no, I'm not okay with all that. And I'm going to be firm about it. Sometimes, in fact, we need to be intense. It's okay to be intent, right? Being intent, per se, is not anti-Buddhism.

[00:11:12] There are quotations from the Buddha in the record of his early teachings in which he starts out, oh, foolish man, right. That's a little intense, called out by the Buddha in front of a bunch of other people. Sometimes we need to be direct, unapologetic, not beating around the bush, not using euphemisms, loud and compromising, even fiery, especially in the beginning, morally confident, morally confident not tipping into the pitfalls of, you know, righteousness about our views or scorning and hostile and, you know, toward others, but no, morally Confident like hello Taking money from children is not good. Hello, blocking people who have the right to vote from voting, that's not good either. Dumping 100 million tons a day of CO2 into the atmosphere. Nope, not good, not a good at all, right? And sometimes we need to be willing for others to be uncomfortable. Interesting, you know Ajahn Chah again said that there are two kinds of suffering the suffering that leads to Less suffering and the suffering the leads to more suffering and if you're not willing to have more of the former You will surely have more at the latter and That's broadly true Sometimes with other people sometimes for the sake of the greater good and sometimes For the sake, of your own good because you have standing as well there needs to be a willingness for others to be uncomfortable. Obviously, drawing on all three of the fundamental pillars of Buddhism, Sila, Samadhi, and Panya, translated, potentially as virtue, concentration, mental training, and wisdom, on terms of virtue, as well as training yourself in self-regulation and in wisdom that can see clearly and with wise perspectives. You know, grounded in that the willingness to be for others to be uncomfortable needs to be needs to happen when you're inside the lines, right?

[00:13:21] When you're living according to virtue, that said, if you're living according to virtue and they don't want to hear it and you need to say it, you need to say, even if they're going to be uncomfortable, this is sometimes really necessary. Obviously, there are pitfalls in people who just go way too far, you know? They just like blast everything out and then they look around the room and go. Did I say something wrong? What? Are you against free speech? We don't want to do that. But for everybody who's like that, and especially in gatherings of 400 plus people such as here who tend to be interested in the inner life, tend to oriented toward the good of others, I think a lot of folks are just tilted way too far toward a contracted, overly tamed, overly domesticated. You know, version of themselves that squeezes out really important, authentic and legitimate forms of self-expression that are grounded in compassion and reducing suffering. If we're going to expand our expressions of compassion, though, we need to be wise. We need to courageous and we need to have room for our own vitality and our own intensity.

[00:14:54] And you might want to pause for a moment here to bring it down to earth and think about some people you've got difficulty with, including yourself. Whoa! Think about applying compassionate action to yourself. In ways that are wise, courageous, and even passionate. Both standing up for yourself, reminding yourself that you have needs and rights too, based on wisdom, courage, and passion, and sometimes taking yourself in hand and addressing certain things that, you know, maybe you're doing that are harmful for yourself or have been just kicking those cans down the road year after year after years. A little example for myself, I'm genetically kind of lucky in a relatively robust body that said,

having spent 50 years hunched over a keyboard or leaning forward as a therapist, I've got some postural issues that are creating neck pain. I learned yesterday, thank you, physical therapist, and okay, I need to take myself in hand and do about 10 minutes a day of stretching. I'm okay, I'm all set up, I don't need any advice. I'm good, I am good to go, thank you. But yeah, I got to take myself in hand to do that because it's not my natural tendency. And that's a fairly small example. We need to do this, including with ourselves.

[00:16:22] But of course, this is not about becoming hostile toward other people or mean toward yourself. This is not vengeance. This is about cruelty. This is using the mask of fierce compassion to cloak our vengeful, aggrieved, payback fantasies. Gotta be careful about that. Gotta be carefull about that Now this is where the theory of the two ponies comes up. You may have heard me talk about this before. The mind is complex. The brain is extraordinarily complex. Motivations are typically multiple. We often have different voices, different occurrence running through our mind stream. Totally normal. Now let's suppose that there's a part of you, oh, that really wants to make them pay for what they did to you. That's one of the ponies. Running down the highway, running down the road.

[00:17:20] On the other hand, there's another pony inside you that knows that you have rights, knows that were indeed wronged, knows that it's really good for you to stand up for yourself and you have the right to do it, and knows that frankly, probably for the greater good, it's important for that other person to hear you, or at least other people to hear you speaking truth to power. That pony is going down the same highway right just because there is some problematic pony normal but you know a little problematic pony on the path does not mean you should not go down the path as long as there is the proper pony the wise pony the virtuous pony going down that path as well really important general point a lot of times people invalidate themselves because there's a problematic pony in the motivational mix. Meanwhile, though, there could well be a wise pony that's also going down that road. There's a lot of work on this about finding that place where we allow ourselves as appropriate to be firm, passionate, fiery, forceful, assertive, consequential with other people without tipping into the seductions. Of vengeance, cruelty, and so forth. And you can see some of the people listed here, all of whom I've learned a lot from. When we operate in this way, one of the real clues, the North Stars, that lets you know, you know like the tone that tells you on the beam, on the beam, on the beam, is there's a quality often of dignity, gravity, seriousness, moral weight, and humility.

[00:19:12] Often a sense that you, there's a kind of virtuous moral communication moving through you, that you're the messenger of, you're the conduit for. Think about people who are exemplars for you. Could be someone who, you know, is certainly not famous, that's been for you an exemplar of a kind of moral weight, a sort of calm, a calm twinkle that still can be really, really serious. I think about people, Greta Thunberg, Malala, Nelson Mandela and others, not dysregulated, but certainly not afflicted with ranker or malice. Or think of Thich Nhat Hanh and Martin Luther King, Jr. I just love this photograph. Taken, I believe, in the 1960s. Thich Nhat Hanh had come to America as a peace activist and Buddhist monk from Vietnam. He's sitting here with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In a press conference. I believe they're both in their 30s at the time. And you can just feel, to me at least, what I see in their faces is fatigue, a full, compassionate recognition of terrible injustices that create vast, vast systems of suffering. And yet there's no hate in their faces. They're serious business. I would not want to ask a stupid question in that kind of press conference with the moral weight in the room there in the front of the room. And yet, you know, they're not lived by hate.

[00:20:59] You might think for yourself on this proverb. It's one of my favorite from the Buddha Dharma. It goes, one is not wise simply because they can recite the scriptures. One is truly wise, who is peaceable, friendly and fearless. I really like that combination. So let's take a moment, if it's okay, and kind of feel your way in to this way of being yourself. Imagine another person that you're in conflict with, perhaps he was wrong to you or you're dealing with. What is it like to rest in this place for yourself of compassion for them and for you, while also being morally serious? Forthright. About what's needed for justice here to reduce suffering.

[00:22:28] If you're thinking about perhaps another person, you could be aware of the ways that they're there for me, that you're a little drawn into, yeah, you know, punishment. And letting them go as you rest in a sense of gravity and seriousness and healthy entitlement. You're entitled to speak your truth. What's this feel like?

[00:23:11] You know, whatever you were able to do there, on demand as it were, is good enough, letting it go. And then being aware of something in yourself. Is hurting, or tired, or worried, frustrated, burdened, you know, fed up, maybe had enough. And what would it look like to be fiercely compassionate toward yourself? Really getting on your own side, maybe with some wise guidance for yourself too. Not harsh, not mean, loving.

[00:23:57] So again, take some moments here, seeing if you can get a sense of what would it be like to bring fierce compassion to yourself.

[00:24:21] One way into this that might work for you, and it's one that is really helping me lately, is to be in touch with what could be called a duty of care. We have duties to others that we just take on. We're committed to our friend. We have a sense of responsibility for a family member. We're gonna come through for them. Maybe a duty or care to the planet. We don't dump our litter in the streets. We pick it up. Maybe even picking up somebody else's, too. Duty of care and then imagine that sense of duty of care applied to yourself in the future, who you are becoming. Arguably we have the greatest duty of care to that future tomorrow, or next year. Because we have the greatest power over that person, ourselves, in the future. So you might think about self-compassion in the framework of duty of care to yourself, including, in this case particularly, who you are becoming. Based on a duty of care to yourself. What would you compassionately encourage yourself to let go of? And also compassionately encourage yourself to. In your mind and in your life.

[00:26:37] So now I'm gonna step out of the slideshow and step into tracking the chat stream and responding to what's emerging there. And in all this, I really invite you to stay on topic. Stay on topic of, you know, how can you expand your own expression of compassion toward others, including on behalf of others? And also, how can expand? The expression of your compassion to yourself, including guiding who you are becoming, grounded in a duty of care for who you're becoming. So friend brings up, nine minutes past the hour, it's hard to rest in compassion when the other is a mean, aggressive bully.

[00:27:28] So, huge important context here. No one is ordering you to be compassionate. You don't want to be compassionate? Don't be compassionate. That said, what is compassion? Number one, it's empathy for suffering. Number two, it involves a benevolent response rather than a malevolent response. We respond with goodwill rather than ill will. We wish them well. We would wish their suffering to be reduced, which gets at the motivational aspect of compassion too. Now, you're right. When someone is a mean bully, when they've done terrible things to us, when they have done things inside our company,

when they mistreated us, when they done terrible to other people, it's very understandable and very human to not have compassion for them. You don't have to have compassion.

[00:28:22] On the other hand, be careful about using edge cases about compassion for, and I'll just name like an extreme edge case here. Hopefully that term is not, the word is not too triggering. If it is, I apologize that I just dropped it in there without a lot of warning. Just because there's an edge to your range of compassion does not mean that you should not be compassionate in the range that you have room for.

[00:28:54] So it's very helpful to start with much simpler cases that are a little challenging for you and build out from there. Why would you do that? Key question, why would you that? Including perhaps going all the way out to that mean bully, that mean aggressive bully. Notice what the difference is inside yourself. When compassion is present in yourself, particularly with its qualities of kindness and caringness, benevolence, a lovingness in you that's kind of more unconditional, not conditioned on others, when you're rested more in that, what does it feel like? It probably feels better. You're less upset with that mean, aggressive bully when you can find compassion for them. You're a less upset. With that annoying in-law or that person who let you down, well, you can look over there and completely stay with what you see and second, your values, which include, which lead to then your judgments, you know, your moral judgments, if you will. You're staying with all that and you're staying with your plans and you are staying with how you're gonna support yourself while if you want to, including qualities of compassion for them. It's totally up to you.

[00:30:21] Now, what's interesting is that I think if compassion is understood to be only soft, only sweet, only, oh, that's such an owie, let me kiss your booboos and make it go away, which is beautiful. But if compassion is reduced to only that, it's really hard to imagine having compassion for those who are challenging. So because they're like, well, either I'm compassionate and tender and kissing their booboos, or I'm going to war with them, either or. That's why this more expanded view of compassion is so helpful. It is good for us because it helps us become less contracted and caught up in ourselves, which creates often problems with others. And it, you know, helps create a better world. So the point being, if you include in your more expansive view of compassionate, empathy for people who are mean, aggressive bullies. Which takes more into account of all the dynamics, not excusing them, but as you have more empathy for them, you have understanding of them. You have more sense of the multiple complicated factors leading them to be a total jerk. You have more understanding about that. That's good for you. And you're making more room for yourself as I'm talking about here, for you to express yourself in a really blunt way as appropriate. Disqualifying yourself and undermining your standing and your credibility by being dragged into, you know, over the top communications. You know, it's, it has a lot of moral weight to be firm and critical and assertive with someone who's really wronging you and others while still holding them in your heart.

[00:32:22] And that's the opportunity to explore that combination. If you don't want to do it, don't do it. Really, it's okay. Practice and start with those who are much easier for you and gradually build from there. This is a big topic, right? How to, you know, have fierce compassion for edge case, extremely difficult people. And maybe the truth is for a while we don't. There's this lovely quotation, it's gonna come to me who said it, but basically it's kind of like a guidance for oneself. You know, may I love all beings? I'm paraphrasing, may I love all things. If I can't love all beings May I love some beings. If I can't be loving, at least may I do no harm. If I cannot stop myself from doing harm, may I as little harm as possible. So it's on a range there.

[00:33:12] So Elaine, 15 minutes past the hour, asked a great question. She writes, how does teach me to care and not to care fit here? And she refers to T.S. Eliot. This is a quotation that I'm very fond of, you may now. Comes from his poem Ash Wednesday from the poet T.S. Eliot, teach us to care and not to care. It's kind of a prayer. Teach us to and not care, teach us sit still. So that's actually really wonderful because here we have the equanimity and compassion coming together. To care is this expanded version of compassion. To care enough to want to speak your truth to someone who's challenging. To care to really even though that other person will not budge and you don't expect them to budge, to care enough to be on record and to care that others can see you going on record as well. And on the other hand, not to care in the healthy sense of deep equanimity, recognizing that the universe is vast, time is vast. Things are unfolding as they are. And in the deepest ground of all. There is unconditioned vastness, stillness. You're rested in that no matter what happens. Now, that can be a work in progress, including for me. Put the two together. And it's really interesting. I'm really glad you brought this up, Elaine. I can certainly say for myself, when I'm more in touch with the not-to-care side, I'm much more willing to say it and let it go. And they do what they do, but I said it. I didn't mince words. I made the point. If they didn't hear me, I was communicating for myself, primarily for myself not to change what's happening in the black box of others. That's also very useful with mean aggressive bullies because often we get caught up in trying to make them see what they did or admit it. Or, you know, frankly, I find people really preoccupied. What does Trump really think? I don't care in some sense. I'm much more oriented around and the action that's within my field of control, influencing what a leader thinks or what your ex thinks or frankly what your adult children think, that's beyond my control, right? And that is extremely freeing, right, so that we're in this sweet spot where we're disengaging from being preoccupied with influencing what's happening inside their mind and caring what's happened inside their minds. You know, put 10%, 20% of your attention on efforts to get things to shift inside their mindset. But sometimes realizing that is so hopeless.

[00:36:10] You know, I think about the first Terminator movie, sorry to geek out here, where the fellow from the future says to the main woman character, that Terminator, that robot is just gonna keep coming. It doesn't care. Sometimes we realize other people are sort of like cruise missiles. They're just launched. They're gonna keep doing their thing. If we make our communications contingent on what they do, we're in deep trouble. So that opens up a lot of space, in which we say it anyway, for our own sake, and maybe for the sake of others who are listening, or for the sake of our future self, or future beings, in which, you know, net-triple-net, I'm really glad I said it. Looking back, yeah, it wasn't perfect. Looking back it was kind of awkward. Looking back yeah, I was a little over the top there. And still, Nat, triple Nat. Even though they didn't budge, they denied the validity forever of what I was actually saying. I'm so glad I actually said it. That's the space that Elaine is opening up here, which is wonderful. John asks, how do I see self-compassion practice and loving-kindness practice to be similar or different? They're similar in that they're both rooted in a kind of pro-social or lovingness, a caringness for sure. Technically, compassion is a response to suffering. Kindness does not presuppose suffering, so it kind of has a broader field. Kindness also has often a sort of more of a friendliness aspect, more of an upbeat quality. Compassion tends toward, you know, it's rooted in the mother-infant caregiving system in our evolving primate history. So it has more of a quality of, you know, oh, you that's really true, even though I'm kind of expanding it here. That's sort of the difference. And it's, I think, helpful to appreciate that in real life, compassion and kindness often sort of blur together.

[00:38:10] On the other hand, if you're seeking to develop trait compassion and trait kindness. And trait self-compassion, it's helpful to kind of know how they overlap but are different. And that way you can train in them with greater attentiveness, okay? Megan makes the point to activate fierce compassion for others and ourselves. And I think knowing what it's like to have courage in which often there's a feeling of fear and we are given over to a wholesome purpose. That's a working definition of courage. In the presence of fear given over to a wholesome purpose and acting accordingly and persisting. Knowing what that's like. It's also really helpful to be accurate and realistic in your estimates of the risks. Often we overestimate the risks of speaking from the heart with other people.

[00:39:23] On the other hand, I think it's also really important. I want to say this very clearly from my personal experience as a long-time therapist and my personal experiences as a longtime son, brother, husband, and father, and relative, that once you say it. And much as sometimes, probably if you're like me, you change on a dime based on how somebody treats you or what somebody says to you. You permanently shift in some way in the relationship. Other people can permanently shift as well based on what you say. I'm not saying this to alarm you, but name one I'm sure you recognize is true. So then you're weighing risks. What are the risks of communicating compared to the risks of not communicating? What are opportunities, in effect, in not communicating or communicating? And then you make your choice. Once you've made your choice, then courage can come into play to help yourself go forward. And I think there are particular examples in which you're in a not good situation. Your choice is to communicate the truth as you recognize it. And fully or not, that's your choice. If you do not communicate it, things will not get better. If you DO communicate it things will NOT get worse because they're already pretty bad, but you will feel a lot better. You will know you said it. And the saying of it may empower you to get out of that situation if you can or to do things actively to actually change it for the better.

[00:41:21] So Thea writes, 17 minutes past the hour, I have an ideal of two meditation periods and two exercise sessions, but I don't keep to it. Things do come up, which must be done, and I do waste time. So I'd like to improve, knowing I'd feel much better if I'd keep to, at least some days. Yeah, and so then the question becomes, with this more passionate form of self-compassion, Thea and others, what would it look like to really implement your duty of care to yourself? I find for myself, frankly, that 90% attraction, 10% or less aversion. What I mean is that one way to motivate ourselves is to really fixate on what will go wrong if we don't walk a higher road, if we, let's say, exercise or meditate, noni, noni noni. Hey, that kind of motivation works for a little while, maybe, maybe, but it's costly and we tend to burn out much better. To be drawn to the better future. Sophia and others, you could really imagine, oh, how will I feel if I meditate twice a day? How will I feel if I exercise twice a day and make sure that's actually realistic to do. Like make it easy for yourself and imagine and anticipate the rewards that you're attracted to. And that's much more effective motivationally and a much more skillful expression of that kind of self-compassion.

[00:42:48] Someone asked me privately, Can I speak to the term idiot compassion? Is that when someone continues to allow someone else to use them? I think the term was coined, I believe, by Chogyam Trungpa, maybe, idiot compassion, as being so caught up in caring for others and being so absorbed in their suffering that we let them do, if you will, dare I use the term weaponize their suffering, as a claim upon us that's unjust. And that harms us over time, and keeps them stuck in their own suffering. We can call that idiot compassion. Yeah, now on the other hand, sometimes we have duties of care to other people in which

they are using us to give them rides, or to prepare meals, or to support them financially. That per se does not mean that our compassion is idiotic. And that's where I think wisdom comes in, where we see the bigger picture, We're moved by compassion for them. For others that we might be able to help more if we start withdrawing resources from them. We expand our view to include our own needs as well, right, that we also have compassion for and then we make complex choices in a complex world, to be sure. But we're not doing it from an idiotic place.

[00:44:12] Somebody asked, how can self compassion lead me to letting go of my issues of sorrow and regrets? Well, for one, I would encourage bringing the caringness of compassion. The benevolence, the kindness, the lovingness, the respect, the sense of justice, to that what within you, which is experiencing sorrow. Just direct contact. You're bringing the emotion of compassion into contact with the emotion of sorrow or the emotion of regret or remorse, let's say, directly. That right there is very powerful, right? It's emotional, it's intimate, it's real. Wise, expansive self-compassion with regard to sorrow and regret can recognize when you've grieved enough, you've regretted enough, there's no more value in it for you. You're not suppressing grief, you're not suppressing regret, you're not denying your own responsibility, let's say, in the matter, and you're recognizing there's, no more, value in being preoccupied with all that you're letting yourself turn a corner. You're giving yourself permission to turn a corner. You're in fact encouraging yourself out of compassion for the whole of yourself to turn the corner away from parts of yourself that are still in emotional memory, layers deep down, still, you know, rested in pain. You're not denying the pain. You're not suppressing it, but you're not preoccupied with it. You're ruminating about it. You're, not letting it draw you back in with this gravitational force. Because you've moved through it, you're ready to move on and turn that corner.

[00:46:09] So those would be the two ways in which I think that self-compassion can be very helpful with residues that seem intractable of old sorrow, old regrets, and old remorse, come into contact with it emotionally. Explore if you've done enough to feel it and to repair and make amends and learn your lessons as best you can. And when you feel like it's enough, like you would with a friend, say, I forgive you, or you are allowed to turn a corner. We're moving in, whatever works for you. You're moving into absolution. It's all right. It's all right, you're not denying the Every time you think of it, you may wince. You're encouraging your attention to no longer be captured by that material.

[00:47:03] Finishing with, where were you Michael, there we go. One of the things I have struggled with is how to create an integrated outcome with a parent who has unquestionably been the source of my unnecessary pain and suffering that has impacted my life while trying to practice empathy and forgiveness at the same time. Very complicated, you know. Let's say with a parents or someone else who's really wronged you. And you have a relationship with. So it's really important to decide, what do you want to do here? What are your ethics or morals about other people? And what are your duties to yourself? Your kindness, your compassion, your support for yourself. What would be, what do you want to? So let's suppose that as Michael seems to have here, decide that you do want to have empathy for them. And you do want to shift into the release of forgiveness with them.

[00:48:00] So a couple of things here. I encourage you to look at the chapter on generosity in my book, resilient, coauthored with our son forest and explore the section in it that is about the giving of forgiving, forgiving others and forgiving yourself. I have a kind of a procedure there that's very effective. I think it has five steps. Check me here. One is telling

the truth about the whole picture. Their part, your part, everybody's part. You know, you don't need to spend years telling the true with, you don't need to write a PhD about it, but basically what happened, right? Including its complexity. Second, what are the relevant values? What are the values against which the facts are measured? Leading to judgments, value-based judgments. There's no escape from value-based judgments. The only question is whether they're grounded in an accurate truth-telling and whether or not, you know, they're wise in terms of your own values. So how bad was it really? Maybe it was only that bad. Maybe it's really that bad, you come to terms with that. Okay.

[00:49:13] And then in terms of forgiving others, can you recognize whatever they've done to make amends? And also, can you have compassion for them? Can you recognize the ways in which all that they did to you was the result of 10,000 causes upstream of them? So you're recognizing both their moral culpability and you're recognize the very, very big picture. You know, the parenting they had as a child. The cultural, biological, political, economic, historical forces on them, not using any of this as a spiritual bypass to deny what happened, but to locate it in a much bigger picture. Third step. And then fourth step is to decide if you want to move into level one forgiveness, which I call disentangled forgiveness, where you're still mad about it, you know, you're Still seeking punishment. Maybe you still don't want anything to do with them, maybe, but you no longer want to be preoccupied with it all. And then you increasingly move into release. To let it go. I don't want to carry that around. Shame on you that you did it. Shame on me for obsessing about it ever since letting it go and then level two forgiveness is a full pardon where you just go, you know, bless you, love you, I give you a full pardon. I completely let it go. And maybe I'm even prepared, you know, to open into a whole new relationship with you.

[00:51:01] So I recommend you check out that chapter. There's a lot in it about forgiveness and especially self-forgiveness. And you can apply that sequence to yourself too. And in all that, there may be well a place for the expanded expressions that we've been exploring here. That are more passionate of compassion, in which you say both, I love you and I'm really pissed off at you. I'm, really mad at you because you hurt me badly. I recognize you didn't know any better. And wow, did you impact me? You know, you find ways maybe to tell a complex truth and to do it grounded in know, what's arising within you in which you're communicating for yourself. You're making an offering in your communication, regardless of what that person does with it. You know, you may find yourself there.