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The Compassion Exercise

Honesty with one's self leads to compassion for others.

Objective: To Increase the amount of compassion in the world.

Expected Results: Increase in understanding and a personal sense of peace.

Instructions: This exercise can be done anywhere that people congregate (airports, events, beaches, etc.). It should be done on strangers, unobtrusively and from some distance. Try to do all five steps on the same person.

Steps:

1. With your attention on the person, repeat to yourself:
"Just like me, this person is seeking some happiness for (his or her) life."
2. With your attention on the person, repeat to yourself:
"Just like me, this person is trying to avoid suffering in (his or her) life."
3. With your attention on the person, repeat to yourself:
"Just like me, this person has known sadness, loneliness and despair."
4. With your attention on the person, repeat to yourself:
"Just like me, this person is seeking to fill (his or her) needs."
5. With your attention on the person, repeat to yourself:
"Just like me, this person is learning about life."

Variations of The Compassion Exercise:
To be done by couples and family members to increase understanding of each other.
To be done on old enemies and antagonists still present in your memories.
To be done on other life forms.