

## UNIT 4

# Have Compassion

Do you ever wish there was more you could do to help others? Are you ever harder on yourself than anyone else? During these unusual times, do you find yourself feeling overwhelmed by all the upsetting and unpredictable news?

You may find it difficult at times to navigate these realities. You may have friends or family members who have experienced financial hardship, lost their jobs, or become seriously ill. You also may be more exposed to racialized violence and microaggressions, or experience the volatility of social and political issues being polarized.



It's normal to experience moments of disconnection, numbness, depletion, discouragement, or frustration.

**Compassion tools can help in these difficult moments, offering ways to take care of yourself and your community.**

## We Offer Two "Have Compassion" Tools to Help

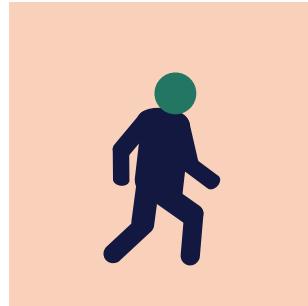
Compassion involves a connection to others and a caring for those others. It is both the feeling of respect or concern and a motivation to help another. Practicing compassion does not mean you take on someone else's pain, but instead you are willing to bear witness and aspire to alleviate it.



**Practicing compassion not only benefits others, it also can have positive benefits for the wellness of the individual practicing it.**



Compassion can be directed inward towards yourself and outward toward friends, family members, strangers, and even people with whom you have conflict or negative feelings. The "Have Compassion" tools offered here are based in research and the experiences of students.





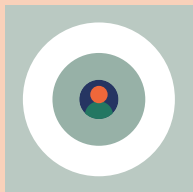
## TOOL 2

## Extend Compassion

When you or someone else is having a hard time, practicing compassion involves noticing, feeling care or concern, expressing a wish for wellness, and showing a readiness to help. Having compassion for yourself and others can just happen naturally without effort, and it is something that you practice, just as you might with any skill you want to cultivate or strengthen.



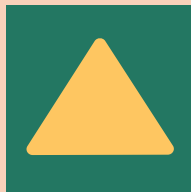
Choose **at least one** Extend Compassion activity from the list below to do this week.



### 1. Extend Compassion to Yourself

Notice when you are having a hard time, remind yourself that everyone has hard times, you are not alone. Pause and ask yourself: "What would I say to a friend in a similar situation?" Share the same kindness with yourself. Pull out Tool 3, Get Connected, and identify one person on your map you can reach out to for support.

Set an intention for yourself each morning or before you go to bed. This intention can be simple, "Today I intend to be patient with myself during my test."



### 2. Extend Compassion to Others

Pick one person from the Connection Map from Unit 3 who has experienced pain or struggled recently. Picture that person in your mind and imagine you are sending that person kindness and care while silently saying the following phrases:

**May you be happy.**

**May you be free from suffering.**

**May you experience joy.**

When you are first doing this, it may feel a little strange to say these phrases so try out different ones and see which ones feel natural to you.

Pick someone in your circle of family and friends who may be ill or struggling with a life challenge.

With that person in mind, listen and practice with the recording from Professor Gayley in the Lecture section of Canvas.

This is a guided compassion practice that allows you to extend your care and concern to them.

How might one of these practices support you this semester?