

What is Compassion Cultivation Training?

Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) is an eight-week program designed to develop the qualities of compassion, empathy, and kindness for oneself and others.

- CCT integrates scientific research on compassion, contemporary psychology, and traditional contemplative practices. It was developed at the Stanford University School of Medicine by a team of researchers, clinical psychologists, and contemplative scholars in the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education (CCARE).
- The CCT program uses instruction on the science of compassion and mindfulness, in-class interactions and exercises, daily meditation, and “real world” homework practices to strengthen a participant’s innate qualities of compassion, empathy, and mindfulness.
- The process of cultivating compassion involves a person training their own mind to develop specific skills in relating to themselves and others, as well as intentionally choosing compassionate thoughts and actions.
- Compassion training develops the strength to be with suffering, the courage to take compassionate actions, and the resilience to prevent compassion fatigue. These qualities support a wide range of goals including learning the ability to reduce damage and increase the value gained from the inevitable difficulties of life, improving the quality of personal relationships, and the desire to make a positive difference in the world.

The CCT program is designed to support anyone who wants to cultivate compassion for themselves and for others. This includes healthcare professionals, family and other caregivers, executives, educators, parents, therapists, public servants, and people in a wide range of professions and life contexts; including individuals who are facing a major personal challenge. CCT is designed to be secular and generic so it can be effective with any faith tradition or belief system. No previous meditation experience is necessary.