

Course Charter for Compassion

Taken and modified from:

Stanford Charter for Compassion

<http://compassionatestanford.weebly.com/charter-for-compassion.html>

The Charter for Compassion

<http://charterforcompassion.org>

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical, and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the center of our world and put another there, and to honor the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity, and respect.

It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others—even our enemies—is a denial of our common humanity. We in this class acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately to some degree.

We therefore pledge to do all that we can, knowing we'll fail on occasion, to restore compassion to the center of our lives (at least in this course and during this quarter) and attempt to engage with our colleagues in this course with compassion. This means we will work to think first of others, their benefit, their well being, and their learning, knowing that others are compassionately working for our benefit. We will strive to see our interdependence and interconnectedness, and labor for one another.

The following specific actions and behaviors we pledge to do in order to encourage and adopt a compassionate stance toward our colleagues in this class:

Listening

- Actively Listen to everyone's opinions patiently (Don't interrupt people)
- Be approachable and calm
- When someone is speaking, give them your full attention
- Be humble in the face of criticism, even if you don't agree

Respecting

- Be opened-minded and respectful to everyone and their ideas
- Try to understand others backgrounds and logics that may be different from yours
- Allow each other the space to think and breathe but not quite enough to be left inherently alone and forced into silence
- Give honest and constructive criticism when reviewing other students' papers
- Speak in a way you want to be spoken to
- Never let someone's opinion go unacknowledged

Bonding

- Have a potluck and "break bread" to create a bond with classmates
- Treat others the way you want to be treated