

Week 6 Lesson 12: Integration

Bringing Ferocious Compassion to all the parts of your life.

Now is the moment to get out all your lessons and your journal. Go back and through it all. Fill in where you have left places blank. Write down your experiences and what you notice.

Remember that Ferocious Compassion is not something that you “complete” in 5 weeks. The value in these lessons and practices is that they continue to be available to you for always. You can always return to releasing something from your life that is not giving you joy. You can go back and welcome in love or open up your heart to experiencing a different emotion. These practices are for life. And the more you return to them, the more you will love your life!

There are a couple more Ferocious Compassion practices below for you to continue this deep inner work. And I leave you with my Loving Kindness Blessing. Let it be a light that shines onto all that you are bringing forth through your commitment to Ferocious Compassion!

My Loving Kindness Blessing

Dear heart,

Daily life often takes enormous amounts of energy.

If I could wish one thing for you it would be that you cut yourself some serious Loving Kindness slack.

Life is fleeting, we need to practice savoring it more than we do.

But it is just that, a practice. Life, love and meaning.

In everything, just practice.

Sometimes our ego steps in and tries to take over. The ego is not a bad thing. We need it to do important things in life. It's just that we need to tame that ego beast. We need to let the ego know when the soul needs rest.

You can lighten up and still have a full life I promise.

In fact when you practice getting off your own back on a regular basis, you'll discover the joy in it and want to do it more.

You will have time to smell the flowers.

You will be able to look into the eyes of a loved one and let it be all there is.

Loving Kindness is what carries us like a boat gently sailing across the sea. Through it we're able to glimpse how we can turn wisdom into joy.

It's so much deeper than we imagine. Growing Loving Kindness increases well-being, happiness, energy and empathy. It transforms the mundane to the magical. It is your heart of gold.

May it be so for you, dear heart.

May you know Loving Kindness each day for yourself.

May you grow into sharing it with others.

May you be happy.

May you be at peace.

XO,
Jane

Ferocious Compassion Practices

Read the excerpt from *A Heart of Gold* about Silence (printed below). Write down thoughts or phrases that stand out. What ideas around silence and presence have you learned over the last few weeks? What do you want to keep and carry into your life as we close our time together?

An excerpt from A Heart of Gold on Silence

*Somewhere we know that without silence, words lose their meaning,
that without listening, speaking no longer heals,
that without distance, closeness cannot cure.*

- Henri Nouwen

In order to do our good work in the world we need to rest our minds and take a break from the noise. When we get quiet and listen, we hear beneath the surface. It's an act of Loving Kindness for ourselves and our fellow humans.

Getting quiet is the first and most basic step we take to begin knowing who we are. It's also the most resisted practice. I witness time and again in my work how challenging it is to help people understand the art of creating quiet time. It's just not a priority in our culture. There are a million distractions and getting quiet is not compelling enough for most. Until there is a health, financial, or relationship crisis, most will ignore this calling.

Many of us feel completely knackered by all of the opinions, judgments, negativity, fear mongering, righteousness, nay-saying, confusion of the media. The social channels have become a very stressed place to wander into. It's like a river overflowing and we've got to learn to just dip a toe in now and then.

The volume is too high, and no one is listening. In our tumultuous times, personal rage and expression has become the new norm. In fact, if you aren't taking action and showing your anger, some consider you to be part of the problem. This feels very unloving. It creates a level of anxiety that is like a constant hum.

Silence is the only way to quiet that hum. When we enter deep silence, we can return to the world grounded in our true self and ready to live from our intentions, rather than just reacting to everything that comes.

This beautiful way of living is a gift we receive from cultivating silence.

I like the metaphor of listening, because in order to listen, we have to be silent. We have to be quiet inside, and hear what the other person is saying. This allows us to pause and calm ourselves.

Consider the difference between listening and hearing. One is active. The other is passive. But it's easier to listen to silence than to look at space. You can listen to the silence even when there is noise, and rest there -- silence in sound. I've often used this metaphor, silence in sound, to convey the idea that the silence, the space of mind itself, is always there, even when there is sound.

A Practice to Create More "Perfect Days"

Can you use your "mama bear" fierce heart to compassionately create more days that you love? Use this exercise to dream about what that would be like.

Take some time to write out what (in your opinion) constitutes a "perfect day." Of course, we know that there is no such thing as "perfect" but suspend that belief for a moment and let your heart open and imagine. Start at the beginning, right when you wake up. Describe where you are, what you eat, who you are with, etc. Write it out in as much detail as possible. Dream big. The sky is the limit! (Use the back of this page if you run out of room).

Now look at your calendar and your life and write down when and where you could really add some of the elements of your “perfect day” to your life. Write down the parts you can add on a regular basis and then write down the parts that you could schedule for once a week, or for at least once a month or even once a year.

You can even write the elements in a list below and create a chart to remind yourself when you can do them. For example if you wrote:

Wake up slowly, without having to rush anywhere.

Then write it down and add next to it some ideas for what days in the week or month you could actually do it. Do this for your whole “perfect day.” Then make a commitment to share your plans with a friend or family member. (When you tell others, you are more likely to actually do it.)