

**Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries.**

**Without them, humanity cannot survive.**

**— THE DALAI LAMA**

# **EMBRACE COMPASSION DISSOLVE STIGMA**

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**A Self-Help Guide for Doctors**

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## Dedication

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**Lobsang Tenzin Negi, PhD**, along with the entire team that contributed to the development of this self-help guide, “Embrace Compassion. Dissolve Stigma. A Self-Help Guide,” wishes to dedicate this work to the healthcare providers, researchers, and philanthropic organizations and individuals who have devoted their efforts to contribute to the quality of life of people living with leprosy, their families, and their communities, and to eradicating leprosy from the human experience.

This self-help guide was designed and intended for use as supplemental material for the training entitled “CBCT® for Leprosy Care Providers: Embracing Compassion and Dissolving Stigma for Persons Affected by Leprosy and their Healthcare Providers.” This training was developed by Emory University, Piramal Foundation, NLR India Foundation, NLR | Until No Leprosy Remains, and Leprosy Research Initiative and derived from CBCT® (Cognitively Based Compassion Training). CBCT is based on ancient Indo-Tibetan approaches to cultivating inclusive and sustainable compassion. Inspired by the vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and developed with his encouragement, CBCT aims to promote fundamental human values – kindness, generosity, forgiveness, inclusivity, compassion – that resonate across cultures and traditions.

It is our hope that the dissemination of this program fosters these universal values and contributes to the relief of suffering for countless people affected by leprosy, now and in the future.

## Acknowledgements

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This project is the result of collaborative efforts by a dedicated, compassionate, and talented team of contributors from **Piramal Foundation, The Center for Contemplative Science and Compassion-Based Ethics at Emory University, the Taskforce for Global Health, NLR India Foundation and NLR | Until No Leprosy Remains.**

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to **Tripti Mishra and Eishan Sharma of Piramal Foundation** for their contribution and primary authorship on the adaptation of the CBCT® (Cognitively Based Compassion Training) program for the purpose of teaching CBCT to leprosy care providers.

Special thanks also goes to **Geshe Lobsang Tenzin Negi, PhD**, the developer of CBCT and primary author of *Training Compassion: The Official Guide to CBCT*, along with his co-authors **Timothy Harrison and Michelle Liberman at Emory University.**

Dr. Negi's development of CBCT provided the core materials tailored for this project. Negi and Harrison provided key guidance for the writing of this work, and their expertise enhanced the quality of the content and material. The collective contributions of the Emory Compassion Center team are deeply appreciated.

Preparation of this self-help guide would not have been possible without support from the team of NLR India Foundation. **Dr. Ashok Agarwal, Dr. Arup Chakrabartty and Anil Kumar from NLR India** provided technical support and field level insights that made this module realistic.

Also, it is important to mention that **Robin van Wijk from NLR | Until No Leprosy Remains and Amit Jain from NLR India Foundation** helped drafting the baseline report providing insights into the training content needs of Medical Officer and Healthcare Workers of Bokaro, Jharkhand.

Many thanks also go to **Amy Richards and Dr. David Addiss of the Taskforce for Global Health** who supported the project from its inception and provided research expertise and insight in the field of compassion and global health.

**Leprosy Research Initiative-LRI** ([www.leprosyresearch.org](http://www.leprosyresearch.org)) provided resources to conduct this research study, 'Compassion training for reducing stigma and improving quality of care for persons affected by leprosy', and under this research project, this module has been prepared as one of the deliverables.

## **Disclaimer**

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This document is intended solely for general informational and educational use. This document is not intended to replace or be a substitute for advice, diagnosis, or treatment for which a qualified professional should be consulted. Neither Emory nor the Piramal Foundation assume responsibility for the use or misuse of the materials.

## Copyrights

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## Relationship to CBCT® (Cognitively Based Compassion Training)

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This self-help guide is derived from and draws from Emory University's CBCT program, a manualized research-based compassion training protocol. This guide does not encompass all elements of the CBCT protocol. Should you wish to learn more, contact the Emory University Center for Contemplative Science and Compassion-Based Ethics ([compassion.emory.edu](https://compassion.emory.edu)).

In all cases, CBCT training must include instruction in the formal and informal practices designed to strengthen the full spectrum of enduring capabilities assigned to CBCT's eight modules, and CBCT must be taught by Emory-certified CBCT teachers. CBCT is a trademark owned by Emory University and registered in some jurisdictions. Nothing in this document grants any recipient or any third party any right to use the CBCT mark.

## Preface

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Healthcare providers play a crucial role in delivering compassionate care, but the demands of the job can often take a toll on their well-being. This guidebook is intended to support professionals in maintaining the balance between caring for others and caring for themselves.

Building on the key concepts from the "Embracing compassion for Persons Affected by Leprosy" workshop, this guide recaps the principles Compassion (Karuna), not only in patient care but also in care for themselves. While empathy and emotional connection are essential in healthcare, it is equally important to ensure that these qualities do not lead to emotional fatigue or burnout.

The guide provides practical checklists, reflection exercises, and strategies for integrating compassion into everyday patient care, while also serving as tools for self-care and emotional well-being. The aim is to help Doctors and Healthcare providers sustain their ability to offer high-quality, empathetic care, while fostering resilience and maintaining a sense of balance for themselves as well.

Ultimately, this guidebook emphasizes that self-compassion is a vital component of compassionate care. By taking care of their own physical and emotional needs, Doctors and health care providers can continue to provide the empathy and support that their patients need, creating a more sustainable and fulfilling practice for all.

## How to use

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This guidebook is designed to support Doctors and Healthcare providers in both providing compassionate patient care and maintaining their own well-being. It includes practical tools and exercises that can be easily integrated into your daily routine, whether you're new to these practices or have experience with reflective exercises. Here's how each section can help with imbibing such practices:

### 1. Prioritize Self-Care Practices

Regularly investing in your well-being will enable you to consistently offer empathetic care. The guide includes tools and tips to help you maintain your emotional well-being. You can utilize the self-care practices to recharge and protect against burnout.

### 2. Engage with Reflection Exercises

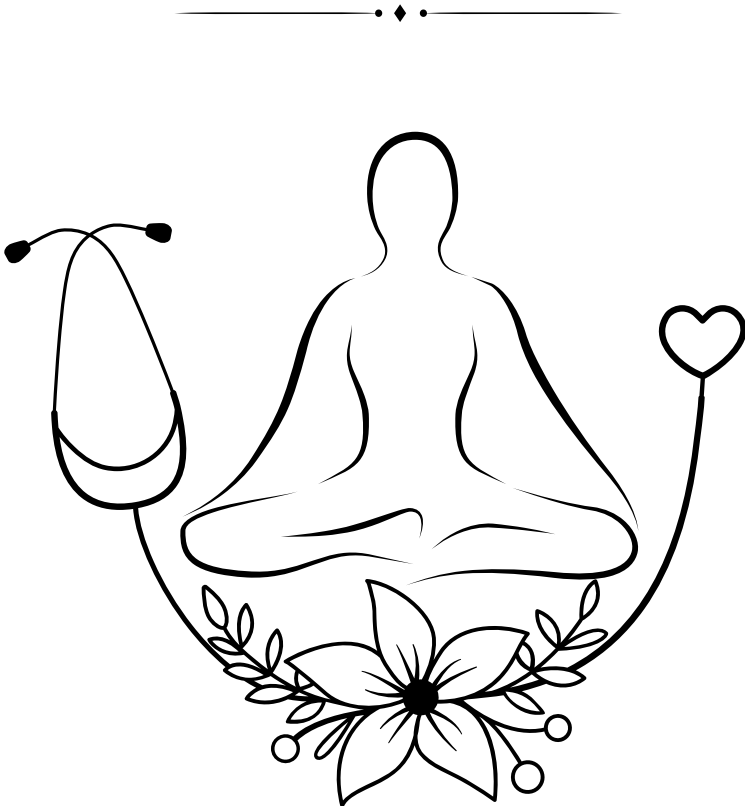
Throughout the guide, you'll find exercises designed to aid self-reflection. These exercises are intended to help you connect with your own emotions, identify areas that may need attention, and foster resilience. Take time to thoughtfully complete each exercise, as they're key to developing deeper empathy and self-awareness.

### 3. Review and Reflect

Revisit sections periodically (for example **once a week**) to deepen your practice and reinforce previous learning. 'Compassionate care' and 'resilience' are ever evolving skills; returning to these exercises and regular practice will aid in evolving these skills.

#### 4. Visit Checklists and Reminders for Quick Reference

Each topic includes checklists for specific aspects of compassionate care and self-care. Use these to guide your actions, whether interacting with patients, managing stress, or balancing workload. Refer back to these checklists regularly to reinforce your practice.



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# Why compassion matters and how?

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## Brief

- Compassion is the heartfelt care that arises when we see others in pain and feel driven to ease their suffering.
- Compassion can be trained. We can learn to be compassionate because of neuroplasticity.
- Compassion can help drive better healthcare outcomes by helping patients feel heard, seen and respected.

## Reflection

Dr. Arjun, working at a rural leprosy clinic, noticed Mr. Raj, a new patient, was withdrawn and hesitant.

Taking a moment, Dr. Arjun gently asked about his feelings, listening as Mr. Raj shared his fears of stigma.

By addressing his concerns with empathy and reassurance, Dr. Arjun helped Mr. Raj feel supported. Over time, Mr. Raj not only recovered physically but also showed emotional healing, feeling less isolated and more hopeful. This experience reminded Dr. Arjun of the profound impact empathy has on holistic patient care.



### Let's reflect and write:

- How might compassion from healthcare workers affect a patient's emotional and physical healing?
- Can you recall a time when a small act of compassion from someone made a difference in your life? How did it impact you?

### Reflection notes



### Reminder

- Focus on being present, in the here and now.
- Work on distractions - for example, checking your phone while interacting with others.
- Reflect on the interactions you had- how did it make you and the other person feel?
- Check-in with your team occasionally to foster a supportive environment.

***Remember, compassion not only benefits those you care for but also enriches your own experience!***

*Why compassion matters and how?*

| Activities   | S                        | M                        | T                        | W                        | T                        | F                        | S                        |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1- Reflect on why you chose healthcare and how it brings meaning to your life  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2- Revisit a moment when you went out of the way to extend compassion to a patient.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3- Practice active listening with a peer—focus fully on what they say.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4- Visualize advice from a compassionate mentor on a current challenge. Consider how their perspective will help you navigate the present challenge.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5- Reflect on a difficult interaction. Recall if you were able to understand the other person's perspective. What did you learn from this to handle similar situations better. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6- Think about how your work impacts others and reconnect with your purpose.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7- Revisit your journey and think of moments that affirmed your choice of profession- moments where you were proud of being a part of healthcare.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



# Personal resilience to sustain our work

## Resilience Brief

- Resilience is the ability to adapt and stay steady under pressure, helping you recover from setbacks.
- It is key to emotional balance that may often get challenged in the demanding healthcare settings.
- It is possible to build resilience through a combination of techniques such as mindfulness, relaxation, cognitive reappraisal, etc.

## Reflection

### Let's take this time to read and reflect:

Dr. Anika, working in a rural Indian clinic for leprosy patients, often felt the weight of their stigma and isolation. After a challenging day, she used mindfulness to refocus on small victories—a patient's smile, another's step toward social reintegration.



Inspired, she introduced support groups, fostering community among patients and strengthening her own resilience. Over time, she watched her patients thrive, realizing that resilience is about turning adversity into compassion and strength for herself and those she serves.

**Let's now reflect (you may want to write your reflection in a journal to help capture the thoughts and feelings):**

- Can you recall a time when you faced adversity and adapted positively? What helped you navigate that challenge?
- How do you recognize resilience in yourself and others during tough times?

**Reflection notes** 



## **Reminder**

- Focus on the small joys like a warm cup of tea or a beautiful sunset.
- Set aside 5-10 minutes daily for mindfulness, like deep breathing or meditation.
- Break down tasks into small, manageable, realistic goals.
- Think of things that inspire you to move forward despite challenges.

***Remember, resilience is a journey—so, celebrate your progress along the way!***

**Personal resilience to sustain our work - Part 1**

| Activities   | S                        | M                        | T                        | W                        | T                        | F                        | S                        |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>1- Do a 5 - Minute compassionate breathing exercise</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>2- Take a moment to celebrate something you have in common with a peer - it could be a hobby you have in common or some shared area of interest.</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>3- Appreciate a difference between you and a peer-this could be anything from the way they do their work or the extra care they put into something.<br/>Tell them how the difference inspires you!</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>4- Reflect on three things that contributed to your personal growth recently</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>5- Reflect on three things that contributed to your professional growth recently.</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>6- Take 5 minutes to think about how a past hardship helped you grow.<br/>For example: Starting a new role felt overwhelming, but looking back, you see how it built your confidence and trust in your own skills.</p>                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>7- Reflect on one strength that has grown out of a past struggle.<br/>For example: Handling slow-progress cases taught you patience. Now, you're able to reassure patients and families, appreciating the value of small, steady improvements</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



# Personal resilience to sustain our work

## Wellbeing Brief

- Building resilience involves cultivating self-compassion, gratitude, and empathy, which are key to letting go.
- With resilience, we can release what we cannot control and instead choose to stay focused on our purpose, putting our mental, physical and emotional energy into what matters.

## Reflection

**Here's a story. Let's read: -**

A senior and junior monk were traveling when they encountered a woman needing help to cross a river. Despite their vows not to touch women, the senior monk carried her across without hesitation. Hours later, the younger monk, troubled, asked how the senior could break their vow. The senior monk replied, "I set her down at the other side of the river long time ago, but why are you still carrying her in your thoughts?"



**Let's now reflect (you may want to write your reflection in a journal to help capture the thoughts and feelings):**

- How often do we find ourselves holding onto past hurts or resentments? Any examples of best efforts/selflessness shown for any patient who had not understood them?
- In what ways might holding onto these feelings be affecting our own wellbeing? What steps can we take to release these emotions and heal?

**Reflection notes** 



## **Reminder**

- Take 5 minutes to affirm yourself, especially after challenges.
- Take a moment to notice and appreciate the efforts of those around you.
- Release frustration by letting go of what you cannot control.
- Remember why you choose the profession and celebrate the impact you have made so far.

***Remember that mistakes are opportunities for growth, not reasons for self-criticism- so, choose to be compassionate to yourself!***

**Personal resilience to sustain our work - Part 2**

| Activities  | S                        | M                        | T                        | W                        | T                        | F                        | S                        |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1- Include at least 15 minutes of movement daily to relieve stress and refocus on health.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2- Keep nutritious snacks on hand to maintain energy level and support physical well-being throughout your shift.         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3- Incorporate short stretching sessions during your day to ease tension and improve posture.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4- Set reminders to drink water regularly, as staying hydrated supports energy and focus.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5- Step outside, if possible, to enjoy fresh air and natural light, boosting mood and reducing stress.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6- Take a brief walk, focusing on your surroundings and breathing, to rest your mind and recharge your body.              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7- Establish a consistent bedtime routine to ensure quality sleep, which is essential for mental and physical resilience. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



# Personal resilience to sustain our work

## Attention Brief

- Being attentive helps in recognizing and managing emotions early, reducing burnout risks in demanding environments.
- Staying mindful enables clear-headed responses to stress, enhancing both patient care and personal resilience.
- Practicing mindful focus encourages learning from everyday challenges, strengthening resilience for future situations.

## Reflection

Dr. Ravi, a dedicated Doctor, understood the need for clear focus. One afternoon, he noticed Kumar, a long-time patient, seemed unusually withdrawn. Though briefly distracted by other tasks, Ravi redirected his attention to Kumar, dismissing intrusive thoughts.



Gently, he asked, "How are you feeling today?" Kumar opened up about his fears of stigma and isolation. By staying present and listening attentively, Ravi helped Kumar feel validated, which lifted both their spirits and strengthened Ravi's sense of purpose. Through mindful presence, Ravi created a safer space for both his patient and himself, enhancing outcomes and building resilience.

- In what ways can you guard against distractions when interacting with patients?
- How does recognizing when your focus drifts help you manage your emotions during challenging moments?

**Reflection notes** 



## Reminder

- Center yourself by inhaling for four counts, holding for four, and exhaling for four.
- Use open-ended questions to invite patients to share their feelings.
- Listen to your peers and patients without interruption. Ask clarificatory questions as needed.
- Avoid multitasking. Put in your undivided attention into one task at a time.

***Remember to stay grounded, stay present—one mindful interaction at a time.***

**Personal resilience to sustain our work - Part 3**

| Activities   | S                        | M                        | T                        | W                        | T                        | F                        | S                        |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1- Dedicate 5-10 minutes daily to mindfulness or focused breathing to stay present and enhance your concentration.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2- Choose a single task to complete without distractions, helping you train your mind to maintain focus.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3- Check in with yourself throughout the day to recognize emotions and manage them effectively, improving attentiveness.                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4- Spend a few minutes paying close attention to your environment or a specific task to strengthen your ability to stay focused.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5- Step away from digital devices for short periods to give your mind a chance to recharge and refocus.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6- Use grounding exercises, such as identifying sensory details around you (such as color, sounds or smells), to refocus when your attention starts to wander. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7- Reflect on a situation where staying attentive made a difference or could have improved the outcome, reinforcing mindful habits.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



# Self-Compassion

## Brief

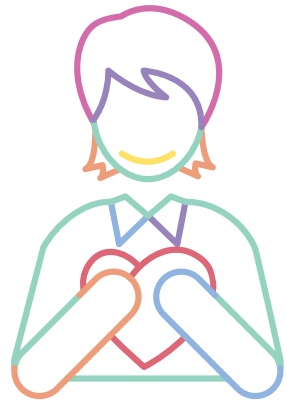
- Everyone makes mistakes, even those with the best intentions; recognizing this is essential for self-compassion.
- Use moments of guilt as opportunities for growth, understanding that they can lead to deeper empathy for yourself and others.
- When you falter, redirect your energy towards the compassion that motivated you in the first place, fostering resilience in your practice.

## Reflection

Let us read the story below and see if we can relate it to our own experiences:

Dr. Sameer, an empathetic physician, had always been dedicated to his leprosy patients. One day, he instinctively pulled back when a patient extended their hand in gratitude. The patient's expression of disappointment stayed with him. That evening, Dr. Sameer reflected deeply, feeling guilty for reinforcing the stigma he worked to combat.

He confided in a colleague, who reassured him: "Even the most caring professionals have moments of hesitation. What matters is learning and growing from them." Encouraged, Dr. Sameer returned to the clinic the next day, more mindful and determined to treat his patients with even greater respect and warmth.



**Questions for reflection: (you may want to write down your reflections in a journal to record your thoughts and feelings):**

- Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation like Dr. Sameer's? What was the incidence?
- What/ who helped you shift your perspective from self-blame to self-compassion?

**Reflection notes** 



## Reminder

- Remind yourself that making mistakes is a natural part of being human.
- Talk to yourself like you would to a close friend. Extend the same compassion to yourself.
- Replace negative self-talk with uplifting and encouraging messages.
- Identify lessons learned, shifting from self-blame to constructive growth for the future.

***Embrace growth by reflecting on setbacks with compassion and turning them into stepping stones for a better tomorrow.***

## Self - Compassion

| Activities  | S                        | M                        | T                        | W                        | T                        | F                        | S                        |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1- Write a short, encouraging letter to your future self.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2- Identify a small boundary to set and practice saying "no" kindly.<br>For example: Decide on a specific time to leave work each day, barring emergencies, to ensure rest and balance                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3- Do a 5-minute body scan meditation, consciously relaxing and tense areas.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4- Write down three things you genuinely like about yourself.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5- Practice gratitude towards yourself by noting three things you're grateful for.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6- Talk to your inner critic with kindness, softening self-blame.<br>For example: Replace self-critical thoughts like "I'm not good enough" with phrases such as, "I'm doing my best, and that's enough". | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7- Write a letter to yourself about a challenge, offering words of self-kindness.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



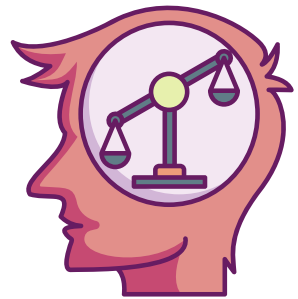
# Harnessing power of compassion

## Biases Brief

- Loyalty to one's group can reduce empathy for outsiders.
- Focusing on shared interests broadens our capacity for empathy and compassion.
- Understanding our biases allows for more mindful and compassionate responses.

## Reflection

Raj, a Doctor in a rural Indian clinic, had always approached his patients with care—until he met Arjun, a man suffering from leprosy. Raj felt a wave of discomfort wash over him, rooted in thoughts/beliefs developed through life experiences.



As he prepared to treat Arjun, he paused to reflect on his purpose: to provide compassionate care to all, regardless of their condition. Determined to overcome his initial hesitation, Raj greeted Arjun warmly, focusing on his humanity rather than his illness. As they spoke, Arjun shared stories of his life, revealing his dreams and struggles beyond leprosy. This connection shifted Raj's perspective, allowing him to see the person behind the diagnosis.

With each interaction, Raj's biases faded, and he found renewed energy in his work. By the end of the visit, Arjun left feeling respected and valued, while Raj realized that compassion transcends fear. Through this experience, Raj learned that embracing empathy can transform not only patient care but also his own sense of purpose as a healer.

**Let's now reflect (you may want to write your reflection in a journal to help capture the thoughts and feelings)**

- What personal biases have you identified in yourself when interacting with patients with leprosy, and how can you challenge them?
- What strategies can you implement to ensure that all patients, regardless of their condition, feel welcomed and valued in your practice?

**Reflection notes** 



## **Reminder**

- Invite your colleagues to share their observations of your patient interactions.
- Share experiences and strategies with them for promoting inclusiveness.
- Try to reach out to a patient who seems isolated with compassion.
- Reflect on a recent patient interaction to identify ways to enhance inclusion.

***Commit to unbiased, inclusive care daily by reflecting on patient interactions, seeking feedback, and setting compassionate goals.***

## **Harnessing power of compassion - Part 1**

| Activities   | S                        | M                        | T                        | W                        | T                        | F                        | S                        |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1- Reflect on how you want to approach your interaction today (e.g., with more kindness, patience, attentiveness).   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2- Begin each interaction with the goal of approaching the patient without assumptions or judgements.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3- Notice any biases in your thoughts while interacting with a patient.<br>When you notice a judgement or assumption, take a brief pause to evaluate its validity. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4- Listen closely to the patient's words without interrupting or mentally categorizing their responses.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5- Focus on shared experiences or goals with patients, such as their desire for better health, to build empathy and understanding.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6- Imagine yourself in a patient's situation, considering their challenges and feelings to foster a more compassionate approach.                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7- Ask colleagues for feedback on how biases might affect your interactions and use their insights to improve your approach.                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



# Harnessing power of compassion

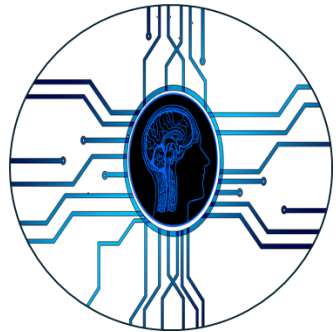
## Mutual dependence Brief

- One act of kindness can inspire a culture of care that benefits entire communities.
- Recognizing mutual dependence fosters collaborative relationships between caregivers and patients.

## Reflection

**Here's a caselet. Let's read: -**

Dr. Sharma, a dedicated physician in a small clinic, had spent years treating a variety of persons affected by leprosy. One day, after a particularly long shift, he sat down to reflect on his work. He thought about his patients, farmers, laborers, mothers, and children—who came to him not only for treatment but also for hope.



Just like he was dependent on others for the fulfilment of his needs, these patients depended on him for their well-being. Many would even express their gratitude, verbatim post-treatment, thanking the doctor for his services. Dr. Sharma felt a fresh surge of energy take over. He had a purpose, a reason for doing what he was doing- a reason that was bigger than him.

His act of service was in effect an act of giving back to the people, the system on which he himself was depended for so many things. With this realization, Dr. Sharma pressed on, ever dedicated to do his best to alleviate the suffering of his patients.

**Let's now reflect (you may want to write your reflection in a journal to help capture the thoughts and feelings):**

- Gratefulness stirs compassion. Do you agree with this statement? Why?
- How can one act of compassion result in ripples of change across entire communities and systems?

**Reflection notes** 



## Reminder

- Thank a colleague for their support or a patient for their trust in your care.
- Appreciate points of commonality (shared humanity) between you and the patients.
- Organize a team meet to share inspiring stories of compassion experienced by your team.
- Reflect on how these moments of compassion are impacting your personal growth.

***Remember, one act of compassion can affect entire generations!***

## **Harnessing power of compassion - Part 2**

| <b>Activities</b>   | <b>S</b>                 | <b>M</b>                 | <b>T</b>                 | <b>W</b>                 | <b>T</b>                 | <b>F</b>                 | <b>S</b>                 |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1- Offer support to a colleague by helping with a small task or checking in.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2- Offer a kind word to acknowledge your peers' efforts, which can go a long way in boosting morale.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3- Say "thank you" to someone who helped you recently.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4- Involve patients in their care decisions, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and mutual dependence in the healthcare process.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5- Give and receive feedback with empathy, focusing on mutual improvement and fostering a collaborative environment that strengthens team bonds.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6- Acknowledge and celebrate team achievements, no matter how small, to reinforce the importance of working together and appreciating each other's contributions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7- Set aside time for team discussions, where everyone can share insights and support each other in problem-solving and patient care.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



# Action Plan

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## Checklist

- Am I aware of how my attention and care will make a difference to the patient?
- Am I able to offer comfort and support to the concerned patients?
- Am I aware of how my actions will inspire others to extend the same compassion to my patients?
- Did I make time/effort to action my intentions
- Did I complete a part of my action plan today



## Reminder

- Focus on the patient in front of you, without stressing about the long queue behind.
- Offer comfort through words and small gestures to alleviate patient's concerns.
- Look for ways to inspire your peers to be compassionate to their patients- be the first to do so!



***Choose to be an inspiration of compassion for others around you with one act of kindness at a time.***

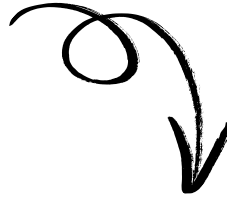
# Planner - Next 3 Months

You can use the calendars below to plan out your compassion journey over the next 3 months:



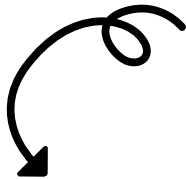
## JUNE 2025

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 |    |    |    |    |    |



## JULY 2025

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |



## AUGUST 2025

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|    |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 |    |    |    |    |    |    |





# Frequently Asked Questions

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## 1. What are formal practices?

Also referred to as meditation, formal practices are intentional mental exercises, aimed at developing specific skills or insights. These practices involve concentrating on the inner realm of thoughts and emotions. As one advances, they may also engage in analytical reflection.

## 2. What are informal practices?

Informal practices refer to ways in which we intentionally incorporate the skills and insights gained through formal practice into our day-to-day.

## 3. What are some of the requirements to...

### *a. Engage in formal practice?*

CBCT formal practices start with three essential steps:

- **Find a comfortable posture:** Choose a position that promotes both stillness and a balance of relaxation and alertness.
- **Ground yourself:** Notice the sensations of your body being supported by gravity and surfaces.
- **Settle your breaths:** Take gentle, elongated breaths to energize your mind and release tension.

**These steps will help you achieve a calm and alert state, which is the foundation for the subsequent formal practices.**

### ***b. Ensure a conducive practice setting?***

While no setting is ever truly perfect, it aims for a location that feels safe and quiet. This could be a serene spot in your home, a peaceful area in your community, or some natural setting.

When choosing a time, look for moments when your attention is less divided, and interruptions are minimized.

Once you establish a conducive external environment, focus on creating internal conditions that help calm your body and mind.

## **4. How can I...**

### ***a. Engage in formal practice?***

While quiet settings are ideal to engage in formal practice, one can even lie down, walk or stand while doing it. With repetitions, you can bring the insights gained into your daily life, thus paving the way for informal practice.

### ***b. Stay focused when I start to feel sluggish or distracted?***

To maintain focus, try to counterbalance distractions. If your mind starts to wander, make a deliberate effort to intensify attention. If you feel sleepy or hazy, wake up with deep breaths, open your eyes, and refocus.

### ***c. Ensure continued practice, building it into a habit?***

Here are some tips to solidify your meditation practice:

- 1. Track your progress:** Keep a simple log to record your meditation time, experiences, and how insights translate to daily life.
- 2. Find a meditation buddy:** Sharing experiences with a friend or group can be motivating and insightful.
- 3. Join a community:** Look for a group of practitioners, or online resources that offer support.

#### ***d. Overcome feeling sleepy during practice?***

If you're new to relaxation practices, you might experience initial drowsiness. This is a common response as your nervous system adjusts. To overcome this, you can:

- Take a short walk or engage in a light exercise
- Try focusing more intently or taking deep breaths.
- Take a nap and return to meditation later, if the drowsiness persists.

### **5. What should I do when...**

#### ***a. My mind races during meditation?***

Meditation involves observing your thoughts, and you might be surprised by how much mental activity is happening. With practice you develop focused mind. While it won't happen every time, you'll gradually experience a calmer and more focused state.

#### ***b. I experience strong emotions during meditation?***

It's natural to experience strong emotions during meditation. While we often use distractions to cope with emotions in daily life, meditation can bring them to the forefront. CBCT provides strategies for navigating and understanding these emotions, helping you gain valuable insights.

### **6. How often should I meditate?**

You can start with 10 minutes daily, divided into two 5-minute sessions if needed. Then, with practice, you can gradually increase the duration to 15-20 minutes per day.

## **7. Should I listen to recorded instructions or guide myself through silent meditation?**

Whether to use a recording or meditate in silence is a matter of personal preference. Many beginners find guided meditations helpful. However, as you gain experience, you may prefer the flexibility and independence of self-guided meditation.

## **8. How's CBCT different from other forms of meditation?**

CBCT and traditional relaxation meditations share the goal of reducing stress and promoting relaxation. However, CBCT goes beyond this by aiming for a broader range of outcomes.

While the early modules of CBCT emphasize building resilience, they also lay the groundwork for later practices. CBCT seeks to cultivate mental clarity, self-awareness, self-compassion, inclusivity, systems awareness, and ultimately, compassion.

## **9. Is CBCT meditation a religious practice?**

No, CBCT meditation is not a religion or a substitute for religious beliefs. It's a personal practice that can be beneficial regardless of religious affiliation.

Many people who practice CBCT, including those from various religious backgrounds, find that it enhances their faith and commitment. Others may consider themselves spiritual but not religious or non-spiritual, yet still find value in CBCT for personal well-being.

# EMBRACE COMPASSION DISSOLVE STIGMA

## A Self-Help Guide for Doctors



This guidebook has been created to address stigma through **Compassionate Care!**