

Cultivating Compassion

Mindfulness Worksheet

Date / Time:

What have you brought mindful awareness to today? Check all that apply.

Heart

Mind

Body

Breath

Environment

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



PURPOSE / EFFECTS:

1. Can you envision a state of mind where there is no harsh, condemning judgment of yourself or of others? This state of mind does not view the world in terms of good and evil or right and wrong; it sees only “suffering and no suffering.”
2. What would happen if we did not judge any of the things that we see? We would see things that bring happiness and things that bring pain but we would not see fear, guilt or shame. Wouldn't it be remarkable if we saw the world this way? When we only see suffering and no suffering, we feel compassion.
3. Compassion can lead to forceful action without judgment. For example, if we see a small child reaching for a cup filled with hot coffee, we instantly respond. This response is born out of the compassion we feel; we move to keep the child from harm, without any judgment.
4. Compassion is the ability to feel someone else's experiences and wish them to be free from pain. To view life compassionately, we have to look beyond the end result of what is happening now, and look at the underlying conditions that caused the end result.
5. If you have insight into someone's history you may realize past events cause them to behave in a certain way. Then you can see the conditions that led up to that situation, not just the end result of those conditions.

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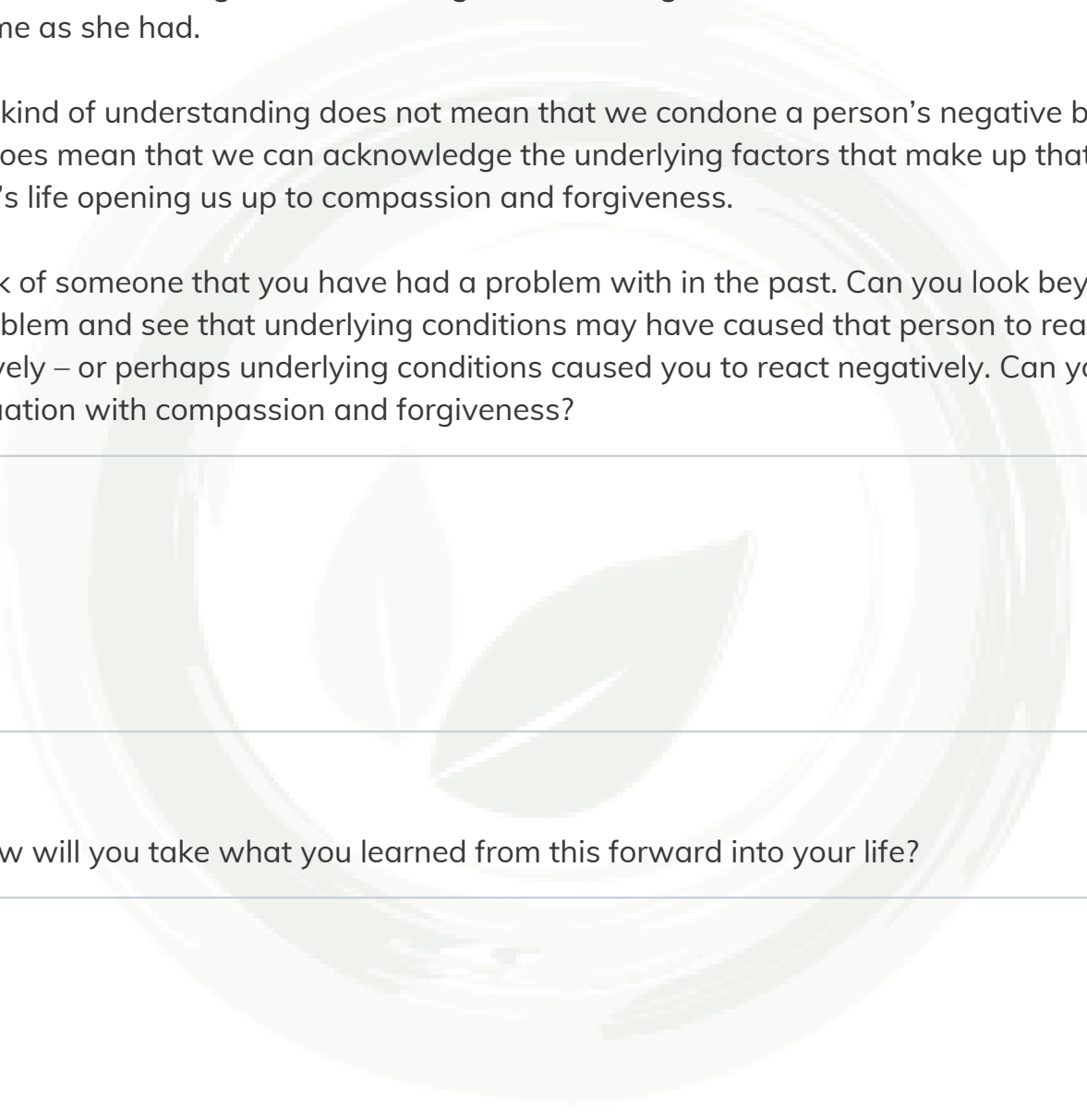
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6. For example, two people, a man and a woman, both suffered childhood abuse. The woman grew up to be fearful; the man grew up to be angry.

7. As adults they found themselves working together and the fearful woman disliked the angry man – until she gained some insight to his background and realized he had suffered the same as she had.

8. This kind of understanding does not mean that we condone a person's negative behavior but it does mean that we can acknowledge the underlying factors that make up that person's life opening us up to compassion and forgiveness.

9. Think of someone that you have had a problem with in the past. Can you look beyond the problem and see that underlying conditions may have caused that person to react negatively – or perhaps underlying conditions caused you to react negatively. Can you view the situation with compassion and forgiveness?



10. How will you take what you learned from this forward into your life?