

# COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY

Compassionate Integrity Training (CIT) is a multi-part training program that cultivates basic human values as skills for the purpose of increasing individual, social and environmental flourishing. By covering a range of skills from self-regulation and self-compassion to compassion for others and engagement with complex systems, CIT focuses on and builds toward compassionate integrity: the ability to live one's life in accordance with one's values with a recognition of common humanity, our basic orientation to kindness and reciprocity.

Unlike some definitions of integrity that focus on mere consistency with one's values without examining what those values are, compassionate integrity insists that consistency with one's values is not enough if those values promote

harm to oneself, others or the world. Instead, maintaining and increasing consistency with one's values is most beneficial when they are values that promote one's own wellbeing as well as that of others. As to what those values are and how we understand them, this is arrived at by investigating and examining things for oneself, using common sense, common experience and science. Compassionate integrity is, therefore, not something achieved merely as a result of wishful thinking or force of will, but rather as the result of building up knowledge, understanding and a set of concrete skills. Because compassionate integrity is what guards against actions that compromise the wellbeing of oneself and others, cultivating it in one's life and in one's community directly impacts individual and collective flourishing.

## THE CENTER FOR COMPASSION, INTEGRITY AND SECULAR ETHICS AT LIFE UNIVERSITY

# COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING

*A multi-part training program that cultivates basic human values as skills for the purpose of increasing individual, social and environmental flourishing.*

### WHY "SECULAR" ETHICS?

Although CIT deals with values and concepts like compassion and integrity, it is based on a secular approach to universal ethics based on common sense, common experience and science, rather than a particular culture or religion. Secular ethics can be useful to people of any or no religious background, while not conflicting with any particular religious values. The word "secular" in no way implies a stance that is against religion; on the contrary, it implies inclusivity and a respect for all. This approach to ethics has been advocated by organizations such as the Sustainable Development Solutions Network of the United Nations through its World Happiness Report and individuals such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights of 1948 was also

based on a secularized philosophy of universal values, which took all human beings, all nations, all cultures and all religions and non-believers into account.

### THE BASIS OF OUR WORK

CIT is based on cutting-edge developments in the fields of neuroscience, psychology, trauma-informed care, peace and conflict studies, and contemplative science. It builds off of work done by Daniel Goleman (author of the book Emotional Intelligence) and Peter Senge, initiatives in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), and other areas. Its development has been aided by the collaborative work of a team of experts with both academic and applied backgrounds in these areas.

## THE LIFE UNIVERSITY COMPASSIONATE INTEGRITY TRAINING PROGRAM (CIT)

Compassionate Integrity Training (CIT) is divided into three series designed to improve your individual wellbeing, relationships with others and engagement with the world by increasing your ability to practice the following skills:

### Series I: Self-Cultivation

1. Calming Body and Mind
2. Ethical Mindfulness
3. Emotional Awareness
4. Self-Compassion

### Series II: Relating to Others

5. Impartiality and Common Humanity
6. Forgiveness and Gratitude
7. Empathic Concern
8. Compassion

### Series III: Engaging in Systems

9. Appreciating Interdependence
10. Engaging with Discernment



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# THE “THREE-IN-THREE” EDUCATION MODEL

Each CIT module utilizes a “three-in-three” educational model that integrates three domains of knowledge and three levels of understanding. The three domains begin with a focus on the self (Self-Cultivation), then move to others (Relating to Others), and finally to a systems-perspective, meaning the larger networks we exist in (Engaging in Systems).

1. **“Self-Cultivation”** covers how one relates to oneself and the knowledge and skills related to the inner life of the individual. This begins with the ability to self-regulate one’s body and emotions, and then moves on to include self-compassion and inner qualities like courage, fortitude, forbearance and the identification of one’s values.
2. **“Relating to Others”** covers how one relates to others constructively and in a way that promotes one’s own and others’ wellbeing. Built on the foundation of self-regulation and restraint from harming others, this involves strengthening the prosocial skills of forgiveness, gratitude, impartiality, empathy and compassion.
3. **“Engaging with Systems”** covers how one engages compassionately and with integrity as a participant in complex systems. This involves recognizing our interdependence and the interdependence of systems, which can be as small as our family or local community, or as vast as the world, and developing the skills and discernment to act effectively for constructive change within those systems. Engaging with compassionate integrity and critical thinking gives us the best chance for achieving positive results that enhance the wellbeing and flourishing of ourselves and others.

Additionally, each module in CIT is intended to allow participants to progress through three levels of understanding. In CIT, it is important that knowledge not remain at an intellectual level; to be effective, it must lead to realizations and lasting changes in behavior. Knowledge becomes transformative when it moves from head to heart to hand. The three levels of understanding are:

1. **Received Knowledge:** This refers to learning new information and developing a clear understanding of a particular topic.
2. **Critical Insight:** This is when the participant, through exercises and practices, uses his or her own life experiences and reason to come to a flash of personal insight, an “a-ha moment,” when he or she realizes how the knowledge relates to his or her own life.
3. **Embodied Understanding:** Moments of critical insight are often not powerful enough to dislodge habits. Therefore, embodied understanding refers to the deepening and further internalizing of knowledge so that it becomes second-nature and spontaneous — not just something one knows, but part of who one is. This happens through repeated practice and continued reflection on one’s critical insights. This is where knowledge (including the knowledge and skills of self-compassion, compassion, integrity and so on) becomes transformative at its deepest level.

Each CIT module includes content for received knowledge, activities for achieving critical insight and guided reflective practices for deepening insights into embodied understanding. Once a participant completes CIT, they are eligible to enroll in the CIT Facilitator Training program.

## Some of the organizations and locations where CIT has been or is scheduled to be implemented:

- ❖ **Good Works Institute**  
Hudson Valley, New York, USA
- ❖ **Life University**  
Marietta, Georgia, USA
- ❖ **Lee Arrendale State Prison**  
Alto, Georgia, USA
- ❖ **Raising Expectations**  
Atlanta, Georgia, USA
- ❖ **St. Columb’s Park House**  
Derry, Northern Ireland
- ❖ **The City of San Antonio**  
San Antonio, Texas, USA

## “THREE-IN-THREE” MODEL



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Course materials for CIT, including podcasts, the CIT manual and guided practices, are all available online at [Compassion.LIFE.edu](http://Compassion.LIFE.edu).