

Audio Track 5: Finding the Strong Back of Compassion

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Try this: Finding the strong back of compassion.

You can begin by remembering a time when you were scared, not a time when something traumatic was happening. Instead, please choose something easier to work with here. Maybe you got a bad review at work or your partner was unhappy with you. Maybe you experienced a subtle discrimination because of your age, your gender identity, sexual orientation or racial identity.

And then consider, could you lean on anyone for help? And if there was someone you could lean on for help, what did the person do that was helpful? Can you feel the strength of compassion in the way that person stood up for you, protected you, gave you what you needed to get through it, provided for you or encouraged you to make a change, motivated you?

And if no one was there for you to lean on, or even if there was, can you now feel into your own strong back? How might you take steps to protect yourself, provide for yourself, or motivate yourself? You might think about what a loved one would say to you or what you would say to a loved one. Can you try saying those things to yourself? If you like, you can try freely and spontaneously writing a letter of support to yourself, from that kind, compassionate voice.

And when you're done, you can take some time to read through the letter or to consider the letter that went through your mind. And you feel yourself being strengthened by your own strong back.

And notice the two avenues to activate in the care system through your own strong back: compassion from others and compassion from yourself. Both are relational. Which do you prefer? Is there room for both?

And don't forget to take a moment and thank yourself for showing up and exploring and practicing, giving yourself compassion.

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