

## **Audio Track 7: Discovering How We Treat Ourselves and Others**

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Try this: Discovering how we treat ourselves and others.

Take a moment to remember a time or various times when a dear friend, not your partner, someone else, a dear friend was having a really hard time. Maybe your friend got some difficult feedback at work. Or received a difficult health diagnosis. Or perhaps your friend was having a relational problem with a partner, a child, or a sibling. And as you call this situation to mind, consider how you typically respond. What do you say? What tone do you use? Is it soft and warm, or cold and harsh? What words do you use? And is there any physical gesture of kindness? Take a moment now and note how you typically treat your good friends when they're having a hard time. You might even want to pause and write down what you found.

And then when you're ready, take a moment to remember a time or various times when you yourself were having a really hard time. Maybe your boss gave you some difficult feedback or you just received a difficult health diagnosis, or you felt concerned about or let down by a child, a partner, or a sibling. And then, consider how you typically respond to yourself in such situations. What do you say to yourself? Is your tone warm or harsh? What words do you use? And is there any physical gesture of kindness? And take a moment to note how you typically respond to yourself when you're having a hard time. If you like, you can pause and write this down too.

And when you're ready, take a moment to remember a time or various times when your partner was having a difficult time. Maybe your partner got some painful feedback at work, a difficult health diagnosis, or was in the midst of a relational problem with a child, a sibling, or even with you. How do you typically respond to your partner when your partner's having a difficult time? What do you say? Is your tone kind or critical? What words do you typically use? And is there any physical gesture of kindness? When you're ready, you can take a moment to note how you typically respond to your partner during their hard times, and it could be helpful to write this down as well.

And then considering these three directions for compassion, notice the relationship between these three different people. Was it easier to feel compassion for a good friend? For yourself? Your partner? Were they about equal? Was one more challenging for you? Please know, as you do this exercise, that it's human to have differences in how you treat yourself, your partner and your friends.

And of course, remember to thank yourself, for showing up. For looking deeply, setting your heart in the right direction.

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