



Compassion Day

Compassion in Action – Activities for Children, Families, and all

Compassion Day is your chance to get your Green Tara* on! Have you ever noticed how Green Tara sits, majestic on her throne of lotus, with one foot outstretched? The energy of that willingness to leap forth from your meditation to assist any beings who need you is the idea behind Compassionate Action! How can we cultivate compassion, not just in our hearts as we do our daily practices, but in reality, in a real and meaningful way that benefits others? How can we inspire others to also act in compassionate ways? There are so many in need, so many places to unleash our love and compassion...it can feel overwhelming and then that foot gets tucked back underneath us and we convince ourselves that it's too big a need! Well not anymore! Now we get our Green Tara on! Now we leap up out of our comfort zone and into action. We CAN be of benefit in real and simple ways every day, in fact, you probably bring joy to at least one person each day, though you may not realize it. Let us unleash our love and see what can be accomplished!



* *Green Tara is a Buddha who represents compassionate action through skillful means.*

Here are some very easy ways you can get involved in Compassion Day. Take these ideas and make them yours, improve upon them and brainstorm with your friends and families, there are endless ways to put compassion into action...

Compassion Journal

Get a small notebook, you probably have one lying around, or pick one up at the grocery store for about \$2. Each evening after dinner, when you are nearing the end of your day, reflect back on what acts of compassion you put out into the world. Write them down, share them aloud with your family, allow yourself to feel happy about the things you did and to rejoice in your friends, colleagues or family member's actions as well. This will inspire more compassion in action...you may need to get another journal! You can start your Compassion Journal on Compassion Day (July 6th) or start it today! Pick an entry or two to share with the community.

Secret Agent of Compassion

Each morning think of one person whom you encounter every day, the barista at your coffee shop, the lady at work you pass each morning, the kid at school who always sits alone... Each morning choose a different person and figure out one thing that day you could do to show compassion for them. You could offer to bring them a cup of coffee, bring some oranges or some treat to share with them, compliment them and tell them one thing that you appreciate about them. Be like a secret agent, perform an act of compassion without them even knowing! Start being an secret agent on Compassion Day (July 6th) or start it today! Pick an example or two to share with the community!

First You, Then Me

How often do we think about being first, going first, doing first? We tend to put ourselves before others without realizing we're doing it. Now is your chance to actively have compassion by putting your own needs after someone else's. This sounds scary at first but it's alarmingly simple! At line in the grocery store? Let that lady with the exhausted children go ahead of you. Driving on the freeway on the way to work? Let that other car merge in front of you. Long line for the bathroom? First you, then me! Watch out! This one slips into your consciousness and before you know it you are constantly thinking of others first.

Compassion Through Generosity

We all think of donating to those who are in need during the holidays but there is real and ongoing need all the days of the year. Go through your closet and find clothing and shoes to donate to your local homeless shelter. Even those fancier clothes for when they get that job interview they've been waiting for. Have the kiddos go through their toys...a daycare center in an under-privileged neighborhood would be glad to have them. Women's shelters also are in need of toys for the families in transition that they serve. Do you have millions of books on your shelves that are collecting dust? Hospitals all have programs where they loan out books to patients and would be glad to have them. You can donate so very much...not just material items but your time as well. The opportunities are only limited by your own imagination!

Sharing Your Compassionate Heart

Put that badge back on that you earned in preschool...you, know, the one that says "I share well with others!". This badge can be put to good use at home with your family, or at work. All you need to do is listen. Did dad come home saying he was tired? Had a long day? Offer to give him a massage! Is mom always the one doing the dinner dishes? Offer to do them for her! Someone hungry? Get them a snack? Tired? Give up your seat on the couch and get them a blanket. Did someone just whine that they're bored? Think of a game to play with them. Someone feeling sad? Draw them a picture. Put that badge to good use again! (Maybe you'll even earn another one!)

Give It Back To The Earth

Where does all of our water, food, materials for shelter, clothing and air to breathe come from? You got it! The Earth! The Earth was even Buddha's witness when he defeated those nasty Maras! So take some time to be thankful for all that bounty by unleashing your compassion on the planet! Spend a day at the beach picking up trash is a great way to show compassion for all the animals in our oceans, not to mention providing a pristine place for all those humans to frolic! And be sure to be safe by protecting your hands! Not near the ocean? Spend some time picking up trash in your neighborhood or town. All that litter ends up in the storm drains, which end up in the rivers and streams, which end up in the ocean.

But that won't happen on your watch!

You could even make a family or personal pledge to do something for the planet! Vow to recycle more. Vow to buy things with the least amount of packaging. Figure out how to carpool or bike to work for one week a year. You may make a life long friend as well as a carpool buddy!

Animals Need Compassion Too!

All that compassion for humans is pretty amazing but you know, there are other sentient beings that need your help too! Plan an animal liberation! You can do it on your own, you can invite your friends to join, whatever feels right! All those worms at the bait shop are heading towards an end of suffering on a hook until you show up and dig them a nice soft spot in the earth to be their new home! (Be sure to make sure the worms you get can thrive in the soil you plan to put them in.) Crickets at the pet shop are on the menu for lizards until you give them a new home in your garden, then listen to them sing your praises all summer long! Cute little mice at the pet shop are dinner for snakes! Perhaps you need a new little pet. Watching them run on their little wheels can be quite the meditation. If you do an animal liberation, be sure to say some prayers for them, first. You can find specific animal liberation mantras [here](#)¹, or if doing this with children, let them speak wishes from their hearts, their prayers will astound you!

A little squeamish about handling live tiny beings? Well how about going through the linen closet for old towels and blankets. They will be gladly received at the animal shelter. And hey, while you're there, see if they have a dog-walking program! You can volunteer to walk those critters or just cuddle a few of them for half an hour. Maybe you'll even fall in love and liberate something larger than a worm or a cricket...

When saving or helping animals, use your wisdom to keep you and the animals safe! If you're not sure, ask an experienced helper for advice.