

How does compassion show up?

Hi yogis,

I hope this finds you well. Life has a funny way of connecting the dots when we most need it *if* we move through life at a pace where we don't have our blinders on. After sharing my feelings about true selflessness and being of service to our fellow human beings in last week's newsletter, a friend called me this week and he was asking me about feeling an overwhelming sense of someone else's true feelings, in this case, pain and sadness.

As my friend was leaving his house, a woman in her late 30's walked up to his car and he rolled down the window. Her clothes had holes but were not dirty or in rags. He asked if she was homeless and she replied that she and her daughter had some temporary roof over their head.

The woman told my friend that she was here from Eastern Europe and the man she married in the U.S was abusive, so she had left him. A center for abused women had given some money to an immigration attorney in order to get the woman a work permit. The permit had not come through yet, so she was without a job or money for food. She was in tears, honest, powerful, overwhelming tears, as she had to beg a stranger in a car for money.

My friend knew there was something different about this woman from many other homeless people or people clearly affected by street drugs that approach many of us live in major cities daily. My friend, a compassionate man in his 40's called me and said he could physically *feel* her pain, not just *empathy* for the pain, but he felt *her actual* pain. This was a new and overwhelming feeling for him and he felt powerless in the presence of the size and scope of this feeling. Truly feeling someone's pain is a rare gift.

My guess that people who casually use the phrase "I feel your pain" in casual conversation truly haven't been overtaken with sharing the pain another human being, especially a stranger in a situation they had nothing to do with.

The ability to feel the innermost emotions of another person is a challenge, but it is also a tremendous gift. It presents us with raw proof that we have passed the point of just being considerate in a casual, everyday fashion by doing things like smiling at strangers and opening doors for example. When we truly let another person in, in this case a person who we have no history with, it shows a high level true unselfishness, confidence in your own emotional state and it also shows enlightenment, because you are truly connected to other beings.

Allowing ourselves to feel those feelings deeply and to move through them is necessary in our path and in our practice. Having moved through them successfully will aid us endlessly in our path to enlighten and be teachers to others.

Have a blessed day,
Rae Indigo

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