

The Compassionate Listening Project:

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Compassionate ListeningSM finds its roots in many spiritual practices and cultural traditions.

It is also a major part of the body of conflict resolution knowledge and techniques.

It is interesting to note that many scientific principles support the theory behind Compassionate Listening. Relatively new is the research connecting the heart and brain, “known” for centuries in many spiritual practices.

Here is a list of just some of the principles on which Compassionate Listening practice is based.

- Energy cannot be destroyed - only changed from one form to another (transduced).
- We can't save the world - the world is saving itself. We can align with those forces.
- For every action, there is an opposite and equal reaction. It can mean a destructive cycle in people.
- “A problem cannot be solved at the same level of thinking that created it. A larger perspective or deeper understanding is needed.” *Albert Einstein*
- The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
- As above, so below. Fractals are simple, repetitive patterns throughout the natural world.
- Conflicts recycle, often in another form, if the basic, underlying needs are not addressed.
- “There is a drive in living matter to perfect itself.” *Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, Nobel Prize winning biologist.*
- “Every act of violence comes from an unhealed wound.” *Gene Knudsen Hoffman*
- Within each problem is the key to its resolution. Within each wound is a pure essence seeking expression.
- Follow each conflict to its source. The sources of interpersonal conflicts are often unmet inner needs, competition for limited resources, and/or conflicts of values.
- Everyone who is part of the problem needs to be part of the solution. Each person involved is part of the whole.
- Listening is accepting but not necessarily agreeing.
- The opposing view is always valuable. Look for underlying commonalities to build solutions of mutual benefit.
- Compassionate Listening is not about satisfying curiosity or problem solving. It is about being present to another.
- In resolving conflict, focus on the problem – not the person. Reach toward unconditional love for the person.
- Humans are more alike than not. All humans share the same needs for security, safety, belonging, love, approval and self-fulfillment. These human needs cut through cultural differences and become the basis for common ground.
- What we have not resolved within is projected on others.