

What are the qualities of the compassionate mind in action?



Compassion Defined

- ✿ *“...a basic kindness, with deep awareness of the suffering of oneself and of other living things, coupled with the wish and effort to relieve it.”
(Gilbert, 2009)*



Interacting Processes of Compassion

- ✿ Compassion involves a series of interacting processes



Interacting Processes of Compassion

- These processes can be trained



Interacting Processes of Compassion

- ✦ This training can involve deliberate practice



Interacting Processes of Compassion

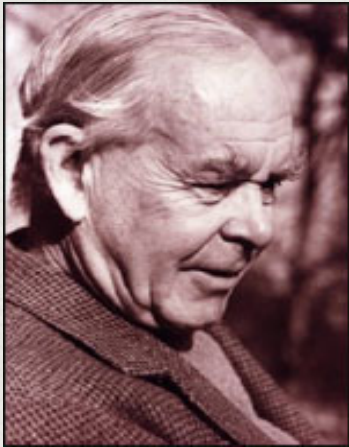
- Shaping facilitates such practice



Brahmaviharas - Immeasurables

- ✿ *Karuna* (compassion)
- ✿ *Metta* (loving-kindness)
- ✿ *Mudita* (sympathetic joy)
- ✿ *Upeekha* (equanimity)

Bowlby & Ainsworth



- Proximity seeking – desire closeness, to be with
- Secure base – source of security and guidance to go out, explore and develop confidence
- Safe haven – source of comfort and emotion regulation
- Social signals are the drivers (social mentality)
- Lack of these in early life can seriously disrupt motivation, emotion and self regulation systems

Attachment and Response Flexibility -Seigel

- ✦ *Frontal cortex (orbitofrontal) involvement in secure attachment serves as an:*

- ✦ *“interface between automatic default-mode operations of the central nervous system and neural processes that allow for flexible adaptations to shifting contexts and perspectives.” Nobre et. al. 1999*



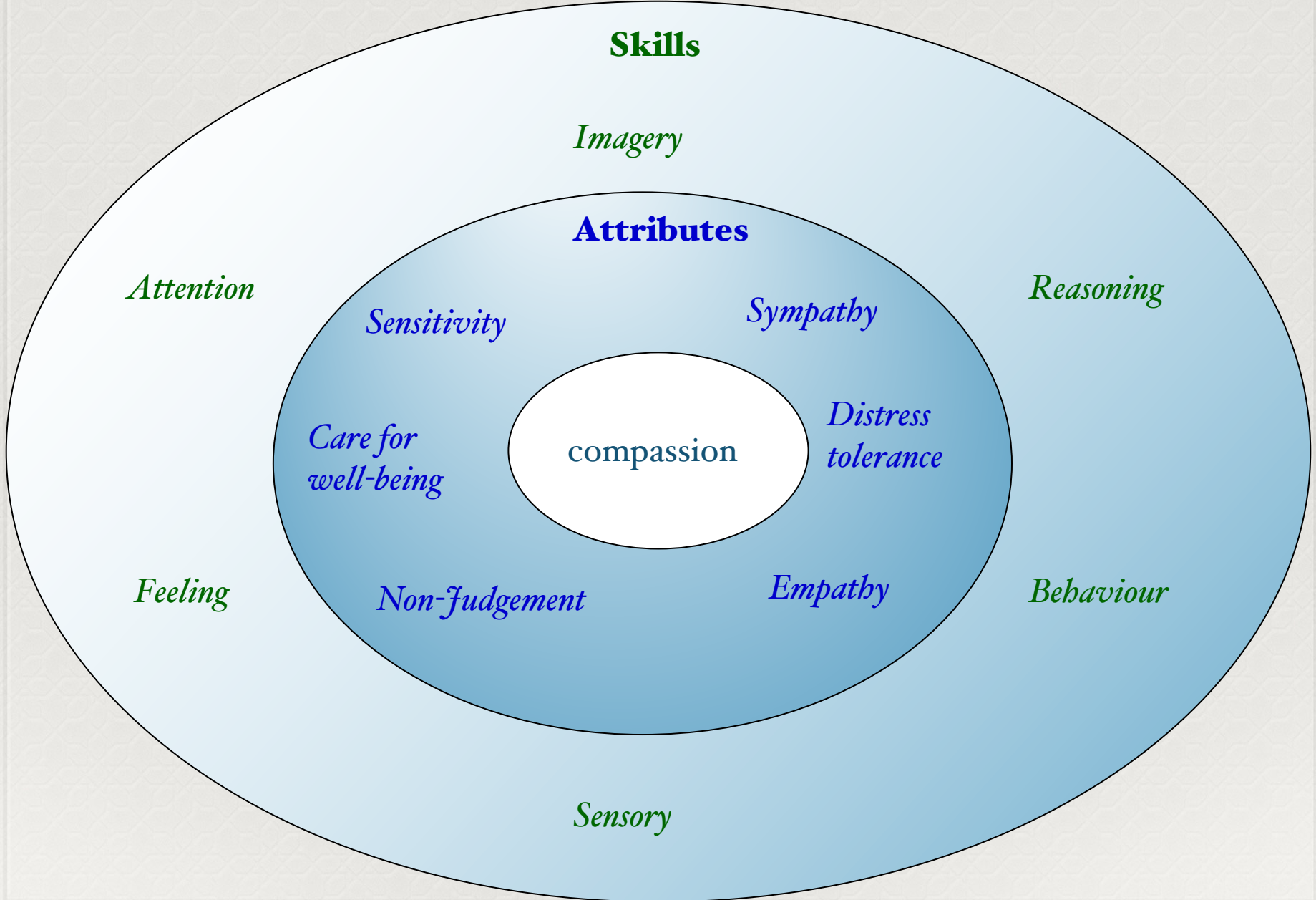
Attachment and Response Flexibility -Seigel

- ✦ *The prefrontal mediation of response flexibility involved in secure attachment dynamics involves a coordinated process incorporating sensory, perceptual, and appraisal mechanisms and enabling new and personally meaningful responses to be enacted.*
- ✦ *May allow us to approach life decisions, relationships, and narrative responses with self-reflection and with a sense of perspective on past, present, and future contingencies.*

Yearnings, Values and Motives

- *Evolved biosocial goals for care-giving and care-seeking = Motives*
- *Phenomenology of a “yearning for transcendence and belonging”*
- *Freely chosen value (establishing operant) of valuing compassion*





Skills

Imagery

Attributes

Attention

Reasoning

Sensitivity

Sympathy

Care for well-being

Distress tolerance

compassion

Feeling

Behaviour

Non-judgement

Empathy

Sensory

Psychological Flexibility

Present Moment Contact

Willingness

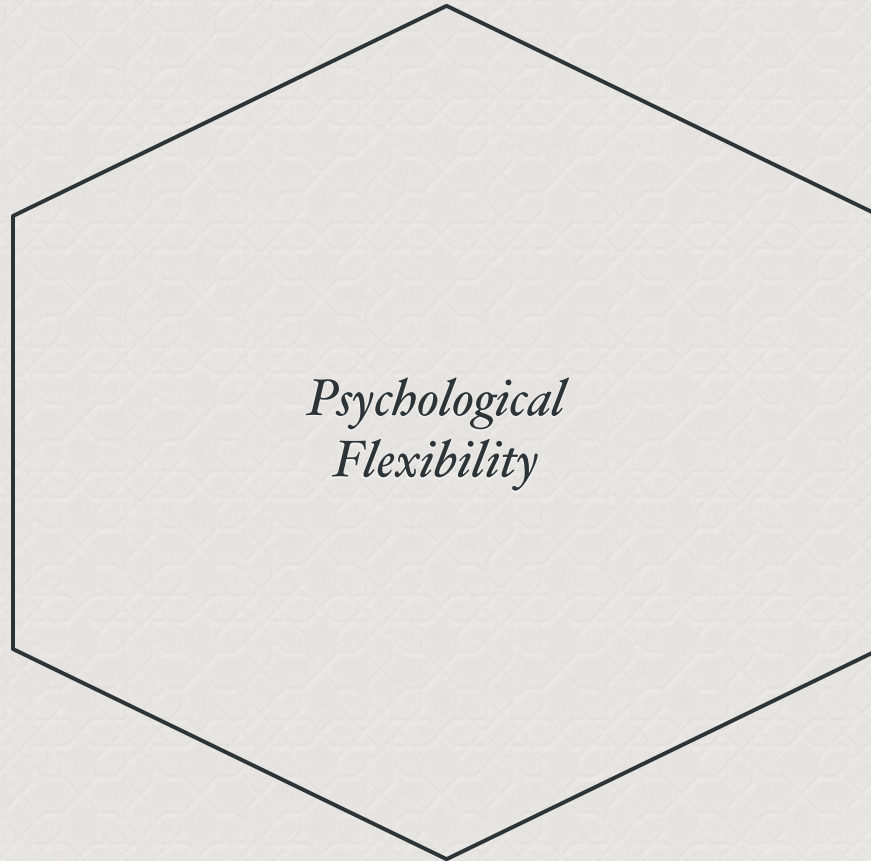
Values Authorship

*Psychological
Flexibility*

Defusion

Commitment

Self-As-Context



Psychological Flexibility



- In more than 40 studies with nearly 10,000 participants, psychological flexibility accounts for 16 to 33% of most psychological outcomes
- There is evidence that the effects of negative thoughts, difficult feelings, maladaptive coping, emotional response styles, cognitive reappraisal, and perceived controllability, are all partially or fully mediated by psychological flexibility (Hayes, 2008)

Compassion from a Contextual Behavioral Perspective

- ✦ *Compassion involves:*
 - ❖ *willingly experiencing difficult emotions;*
 - ❖ *mindfully observing our self-evaluative, distressing and shaming thoughts without allowing them to dominate our behavior or our states of mind*



Compassion from a Contextual Behavioral Perspective

- *Compassion involves:*

- *engaging more fully in our life's pursuits
with self-kindness and self-validation*
- *flexibly shifting our perspective towards a
broader, transcendent sense of self*
- *(Hayes, 2008)*



Psychological Flexibility

Present Moment Contact

Willingness

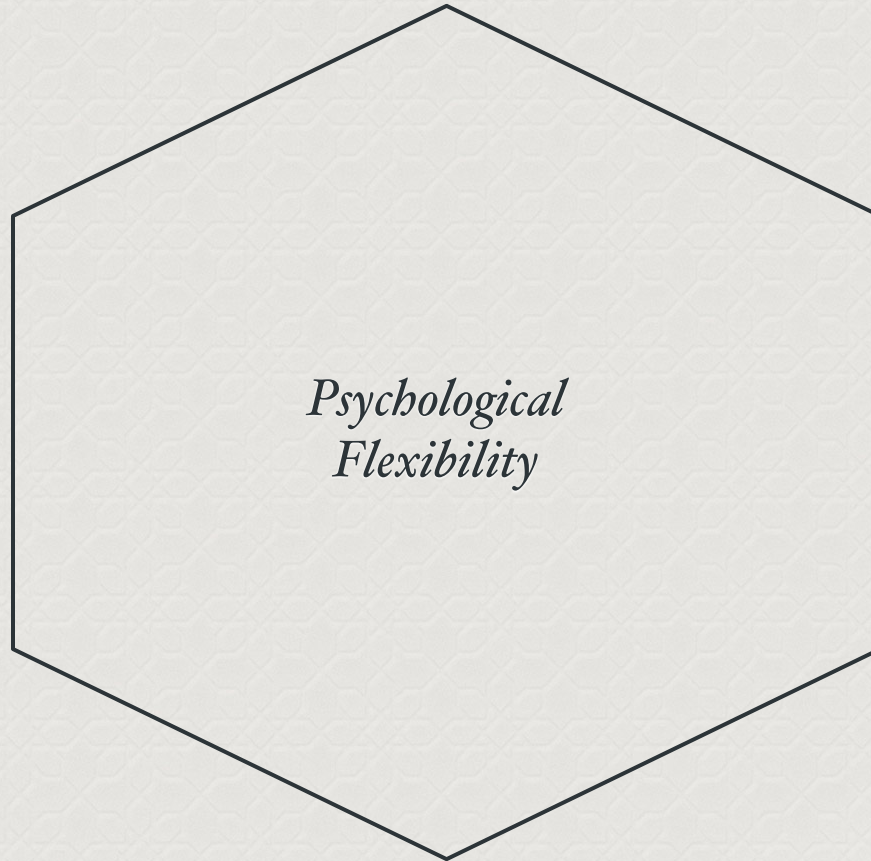
Values Authorship

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Self-As-Context



Compassionate Flexibility

Sensitivity

Distress Tolerance

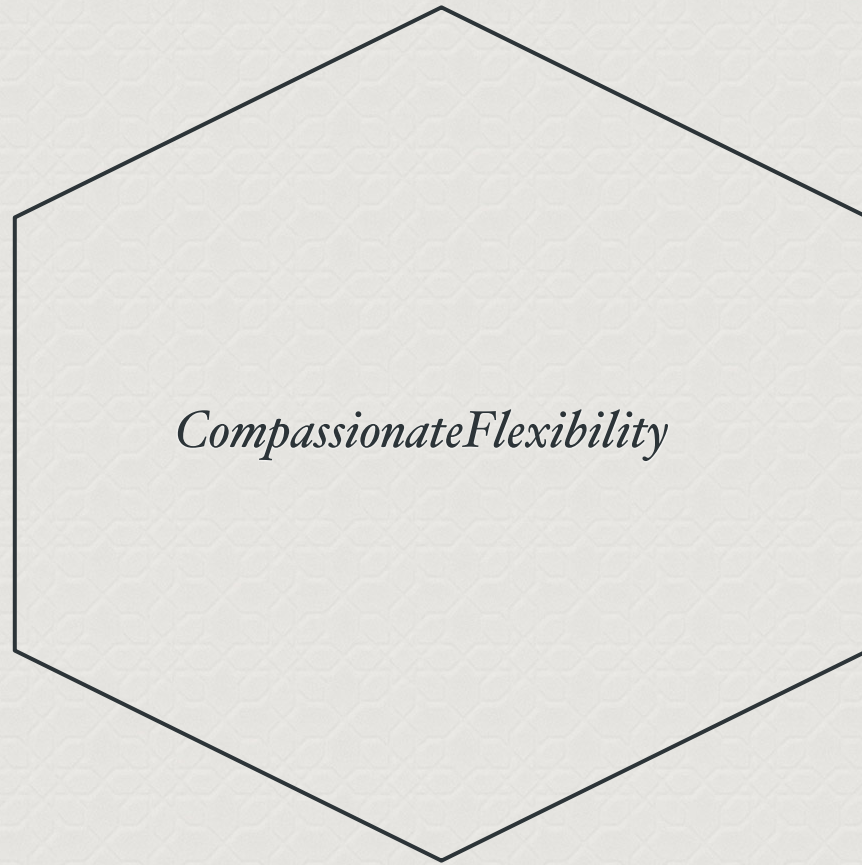
Care For Well-Being

Compassionate Flexibility

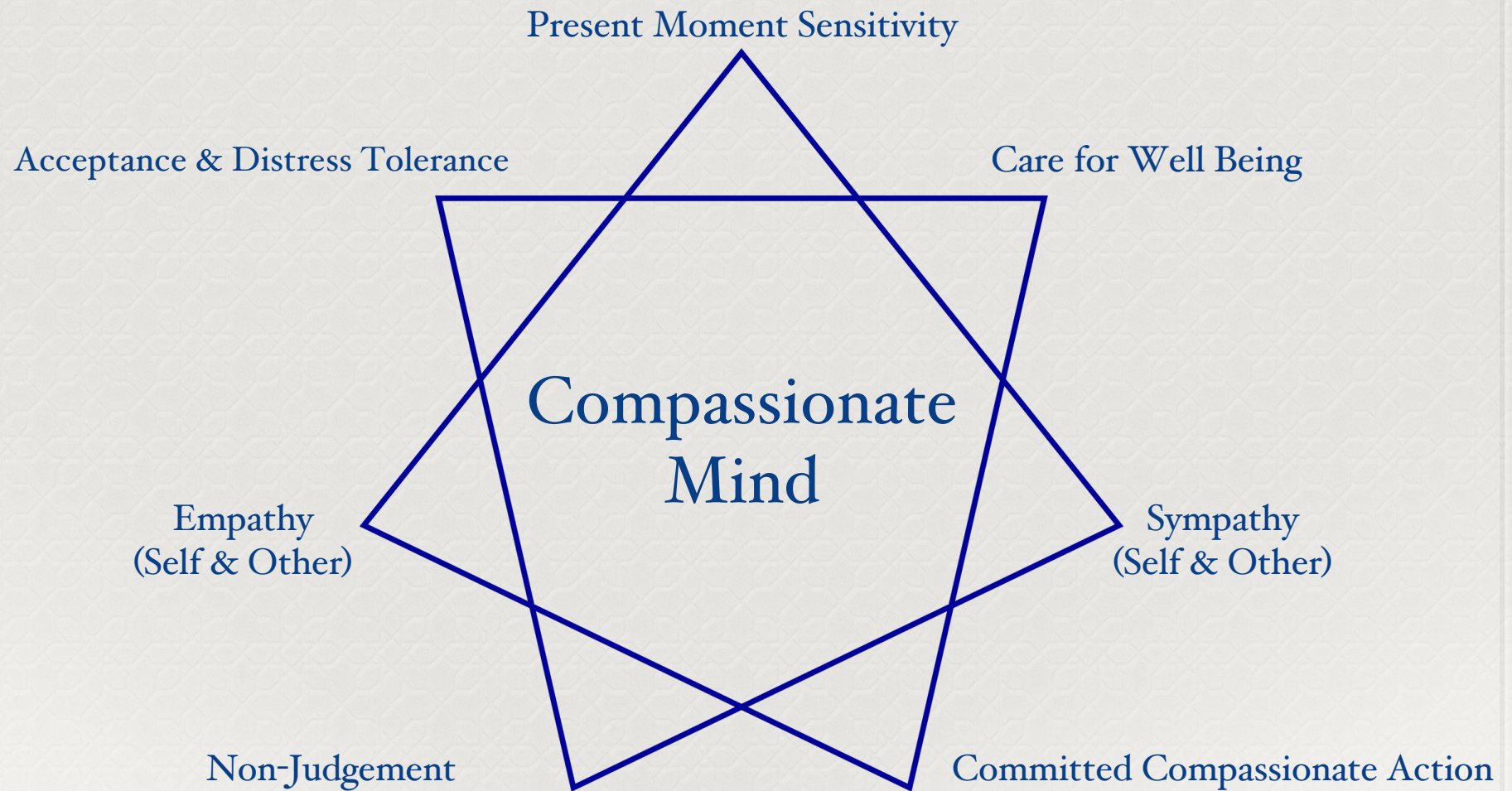
Non-Judgment

*Commitment to
Compassionate
Behavior*

*Sympathy,
Empathy*



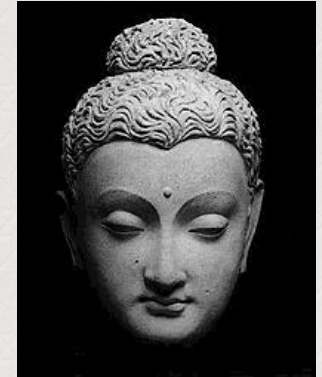
Compassionate Flexibility



Compassionate Flow



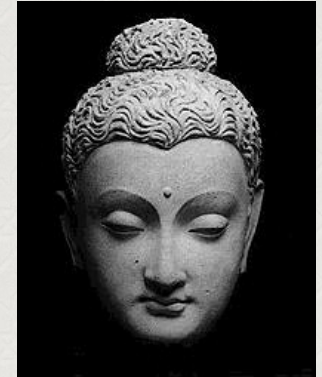
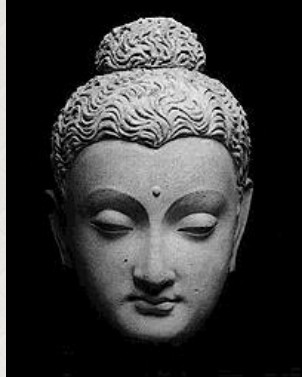
Compassionate
Mind



Compassionate Flow

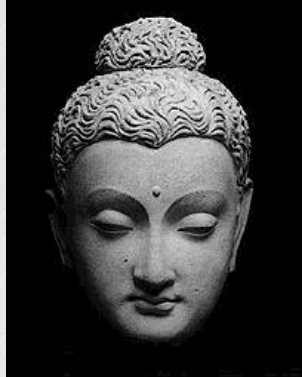
Self

Other

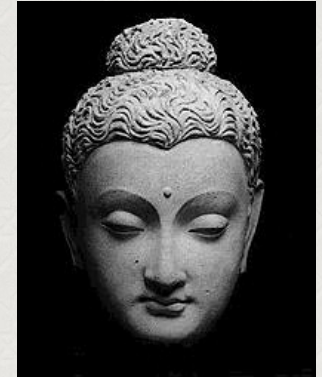


Compassionate Flow

Self



Self



Training the Interacting Processes of The Compassionate Mind

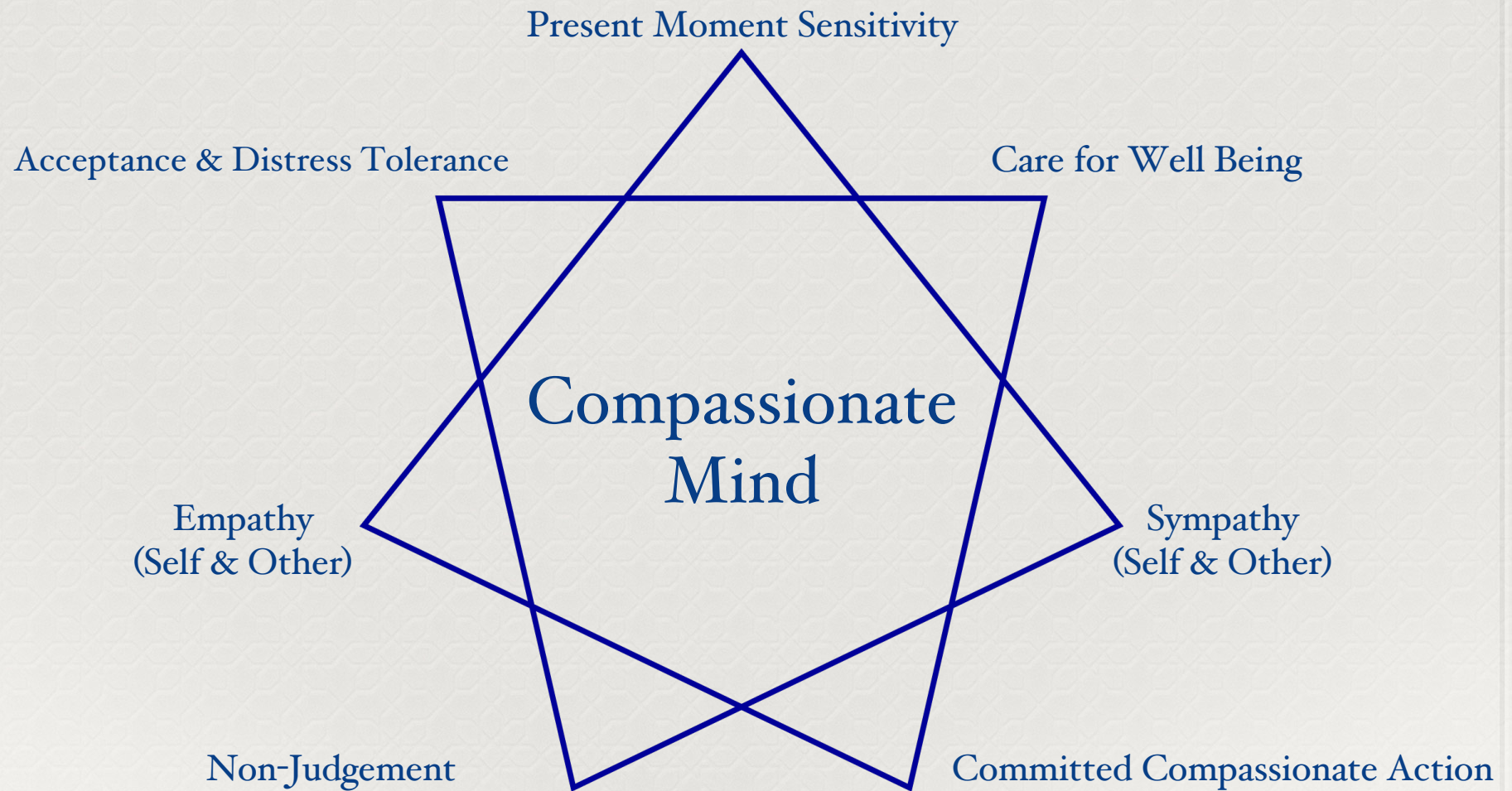


- *Training Compassion in The Therapeutic Relationship*
 - *Therapist as social reinforcer*
- *Compassionate Mind Training*
- *Specific Techniques of The Psychology of Alleviation*
- *SelfTherapy Practices*

Playing The Octave



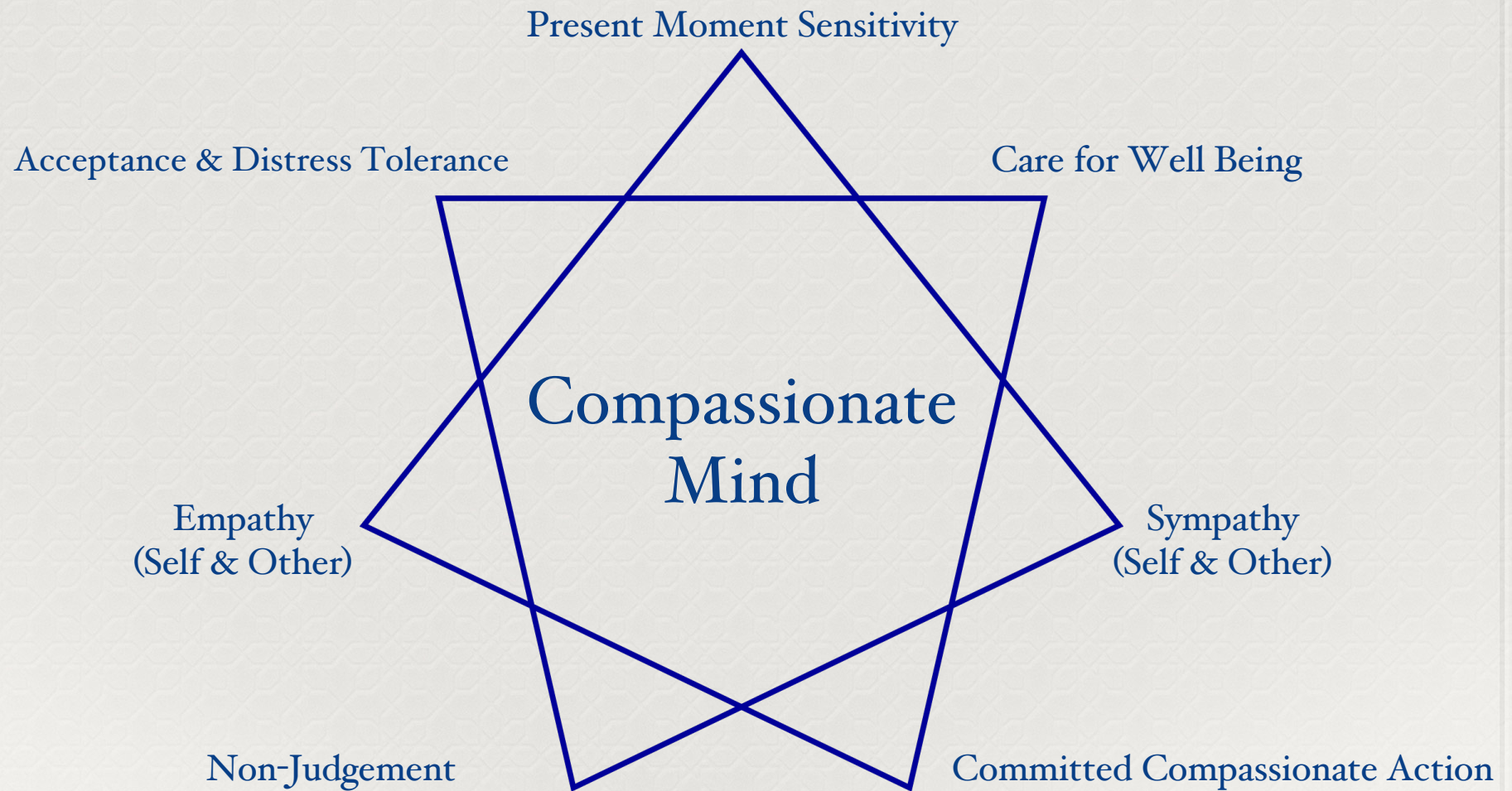
Compassionate Flexibility



Compassionate Flexibility	Signals or Indicators	Guided Discovery or Transitions
Sensitivity	Narrow or inflexible attention	Where or how does that feel in your body? Where is your attention pulled?
Distress Tolerance	Avoidance Rumination	What part of this are you least willing to feel?
Non Judgment	Literality of private events “word prisons”	If that were true, what would be your biggest fear? If I could take that away what would you be afraid of happening? How old is that? What would your compassionate self say about this?

Compassionate Flexibility	Signals or Indicators	Guided Discovery or Transitions
Flexible perspectives (Sympathy Empathy)	Lack of presence or verbalizations re: perspective taking	If I were you and you were me, what would your be thinking/feeling about this? Imagining child self.
Care for well being	Reduced or lack of caring behaviors, lack of motivation to care	What would you have to stop caring about for this not to bother you? How would you treat someone you loved in this situation? Values authorship
Committed behavior to prevent or alleviate suffering	Impulsivity or stagnation, behavioral constriction	What is it that we are not doing that would move us in that direction? Could we come up with a practice that will help you embody and act on this? One small thing . . .

Compassionate Flexibility



Courage

- ◆ *The mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger fear or difficulty*
- ◆ *The ability to do something that you know is difficult or dangerous*



Courage

- ◆ *Because of great love one is courageous*
- ◆ *Being deeply loved gives you strength. Loving someone deeply gives you courage – Lao Tzu*



Courage is not simply one
of the virtues, but the form
of every virtue at the
testing point — C.S. Lewis

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."

Nelson Mandela



Compassionate Flexibility

