

## **PRACTICAL SUPPORT**

### **☞ Self-Empathy**

Compassionate Communication begins with self-empathy, when we self-connect. Whenever a feeling arises, we can ask ourselves these two questions: **What am I feeling? What am I needing?**

When we are able to self-empathize, we create a space of freedom between the stimulus and the response. We deepen our presence in the moment. In relationship, when something happens and we take a moment to identify our own feelings and needs, we become freer to choose whether to express ourselves compassionately, or empathize with the other.

To learn Compassionate Communication, developing a daily practice of giving oneself empathy is an effective way to become literate in the vocabulary of feelings and needs, and disentangle from our habitual thinking and ways of reacting. Through self-empathy, we stay responsibly present to our own needs, and thus present for our life as it comes into being.

### **☞ Geography of Presence**

Where is our presence in the moment? Is it in our thoughts, or in our perceptions? In Compassionate Communication, there is a geography of presence. When we give ourselves self-empathy, our presence is *here* with ourselves. When we meet another person and give them empathy, our presence is *over there*. This is the geography of presence.

Our work in groups can foster deeper connections when we consciously choose where we are giving our presence. When we are able, as a community, to give our undivided presence to the speaker until they have been understood, healing, simplicity, connection and efficiency will follow. When the speaker is *complete*, we can move our presence either to ourselves or another.

### **☞ Requests**

For requests to be effective, they need to be concrete, presently doable, and framed in positive language. When we think about making a request, we usually think of requesting an action that would meet our needs. However, there are two helping requests that are very useful in serving the intention to connect.