



**Western Michigan University FASTER Project: SAMHSA Grant**

- “There’s much more to healing than just knowledge or awareness. If it was a matter of intellectual awareness, I would’ve been healed a long time ago.” Gabor Mate

In our work in child welfare we can experience intense emotional pain which can lead to dehumanization and othering as self protection resulting in the loss of compassion.

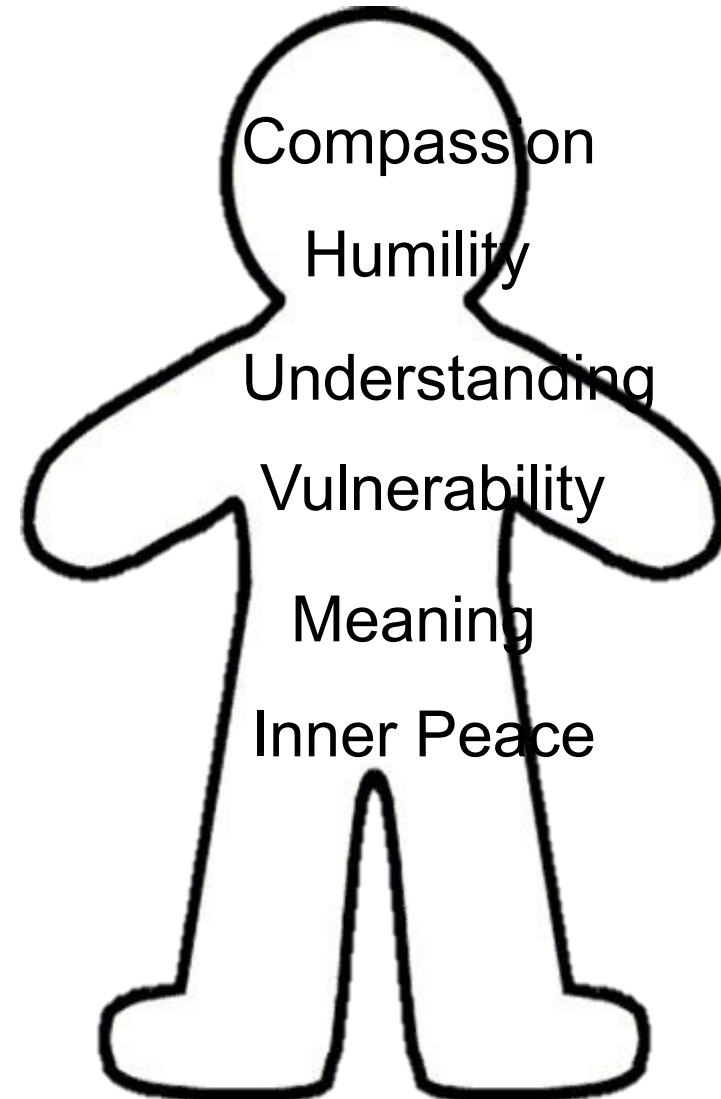
The Lack of Compassion is the  
consequence of the suppression of our Pain!  
(Mate, 2023)

How does this Happen?

## *Professional Role*



## *My Humanness*



Suffering is an integral part of the human condition it is not personal to us.

My pain becomes “the pain.”

“We are in this together!”

Ego wants to be protected from pain.

Compassion seeks to open us to pain.

Compassion opens our hearts as wide as the sky. (Rumi)





# Antecedent to Compassion

**Empathy:** we feel with the other person.  
There is both cognitive and affective  
empathy.

## C's Story

Cognitive Empathy: 10/10

Affective Empathy: 0/10

- Compassion is attuning to the underlying suffering of another that we then hold their story so that they are not alone.

In order to be compassionate we must be willing to embrace our own grief and the grief of others. Starts with being human!

“Can we be compassionate to ourselves?”  
Buddhist saying!

- The measure of our compassion lies not in the service of those on the margins, but in our willingness to see ourselves in kinship with them (Boyle, 2010).

“The work of the mature person is to carry grief in one hand and gratitude in the other and to be stretched large by them. How much sorrow can I hold? That’s how much compassion I can have”  
Francis Weller, Jim Henry.

# Compassionate Inquiry (Mate, 2024)

## Primary Principles

Faith in the client inner process.

Do we believe that our clients have within them the capacity to be successful in becoming the best version of themselves?



# Compassionate Inquiry (Mate, 2024)

## Primary Principles

Do you have faith in your own intuition?

Can I see something in someone that I can't easily name but that prompts me to believe in something in themselves that they may not know.

# Compassionate Inquiry (Mate, 2024)

## Primary Principles

Am I present to “self” when I do inquire?

What is my body telling me?

What are my emotions telling me?

What is my thinking telling me?

# Compassionate Inquiry (Mate, 2024)

## Primary Principles

Responsibility to what arises in you so I am not making it about the other person.

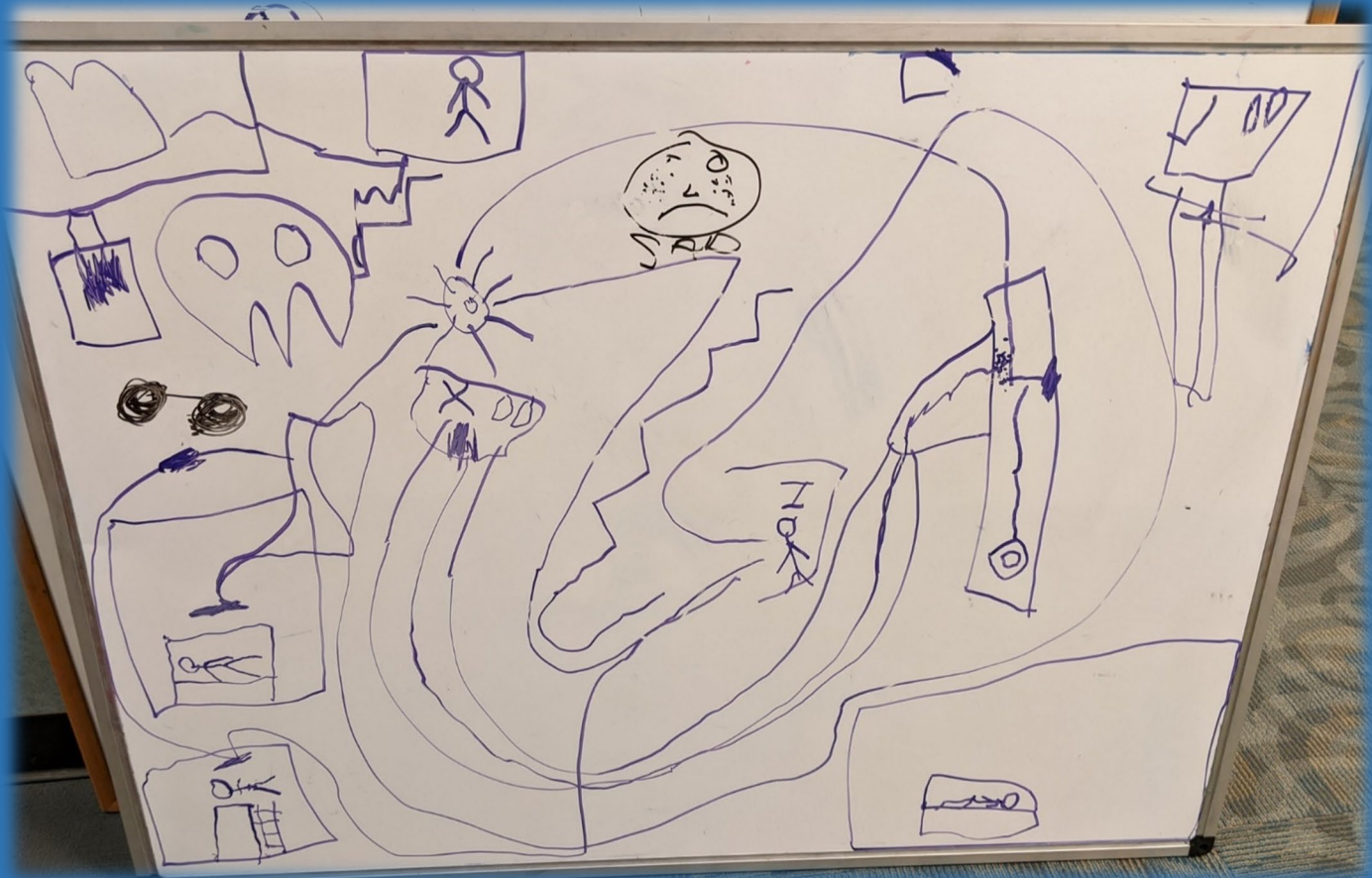
How are my reactions to a client not about who they are but rather my own history and map of the world that judges others?

# Compassionate Inquiry (Mate, 2024)

## Primary Principles

Compassion for my client and for myself with whatever arises.

Hold do I recognize the pain of others and my own pain no matter how difficult it is for me?



# Compassionate Inquiry (Mate, 2024)

## Primary Principles

Being Driven by Curiosity: Exploration! Rather than making it a problem see it as a treasure.

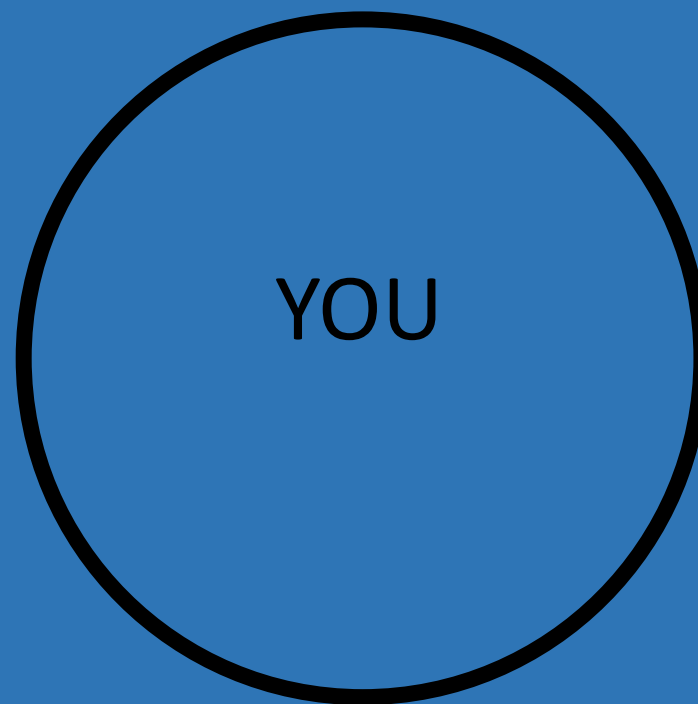
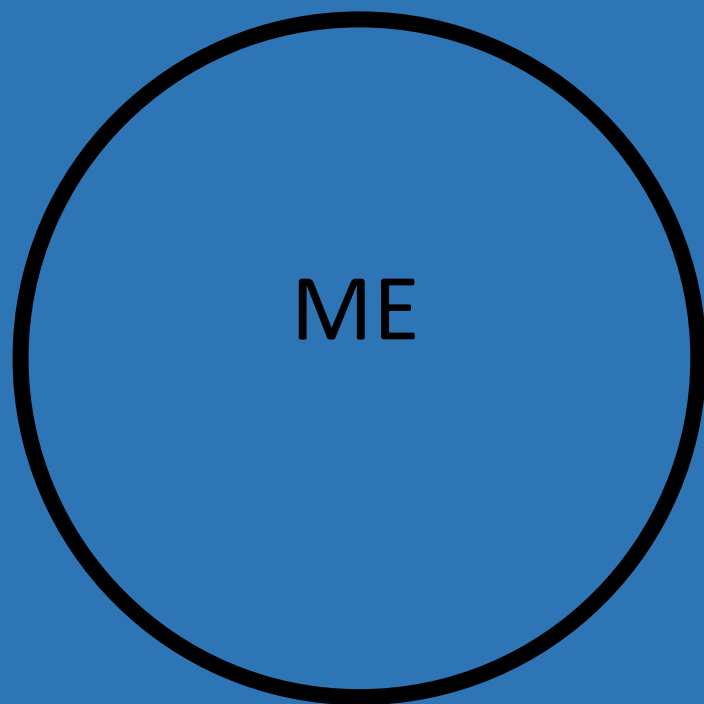
Am I willing to learn from others.

“You are the expert of you!

“Please teach me what it is like to be you!”

## **Sacred Moments:**

Transcending roles connecting in heart to heart and having the sacred privilege of connecting with each others vulnerability and is felt in kinship with them. A “soul to soul” moment





You are not alone! “To be understood is to be home” (O’Donohugh, 2010).

•“

Compassion gives us meaning  
and a call to purpose.

Growth is living the questions  
not having the answers