

Socially Distanced Climate Change and Compassion Public Engagement Strategies

**Started by KU Urban Planning Class of
Compassion and Climate Change 2020**

Collective Drawing

Number of Players: 3 – 20

Duration: 10 - 25 mins per exercise

Materials: Remote: computer or tablet, internet, web conferencing tool. In-person: whiteboard or large poster/piece of paper and various colored markers.

Brief Activity Overview: Participants will take turns drawing images representing sustainability values or what they think of when they envision their ideal future. For the second activity participants will create a web of barriers to reaching this vision or sources of climate change by writing words or phrases and connecting them with drawn lines.

Why to try it: This activity facilitates community visioning and collaboration and open discussion of values. Collaborating with other community members sparks ideas that may not be realized individually. The second exercise helps identify areas of concern and foster a better understanding of systems thinking. Both exercises build awareness and increase discussion around what the community identifies as important issues.

Requirements: If done remotely: internet access and AWWapp online. The browser is fairly mobile friendly but there is not an actual downloadable app for this particular whiteboard. If done in-person: a spacious room and large table or whiteboard access. Final export of both activities. AWWapp allows for PDF exports of your board.

Exercise

Questions and prompts used/considered:

Activity 1:

What do you think of when you hear the word sustainability?

How does your ideal community look and/or function? (Think environmentally, infrastructure, food, energy etc.)

Activity 2:

What are barriers to reaching this world?

What are causes of Climate Change?

What are issues or things you don't like about the world or your community specifically today and wish you could change?

How do these connect to one another?

Reflection:

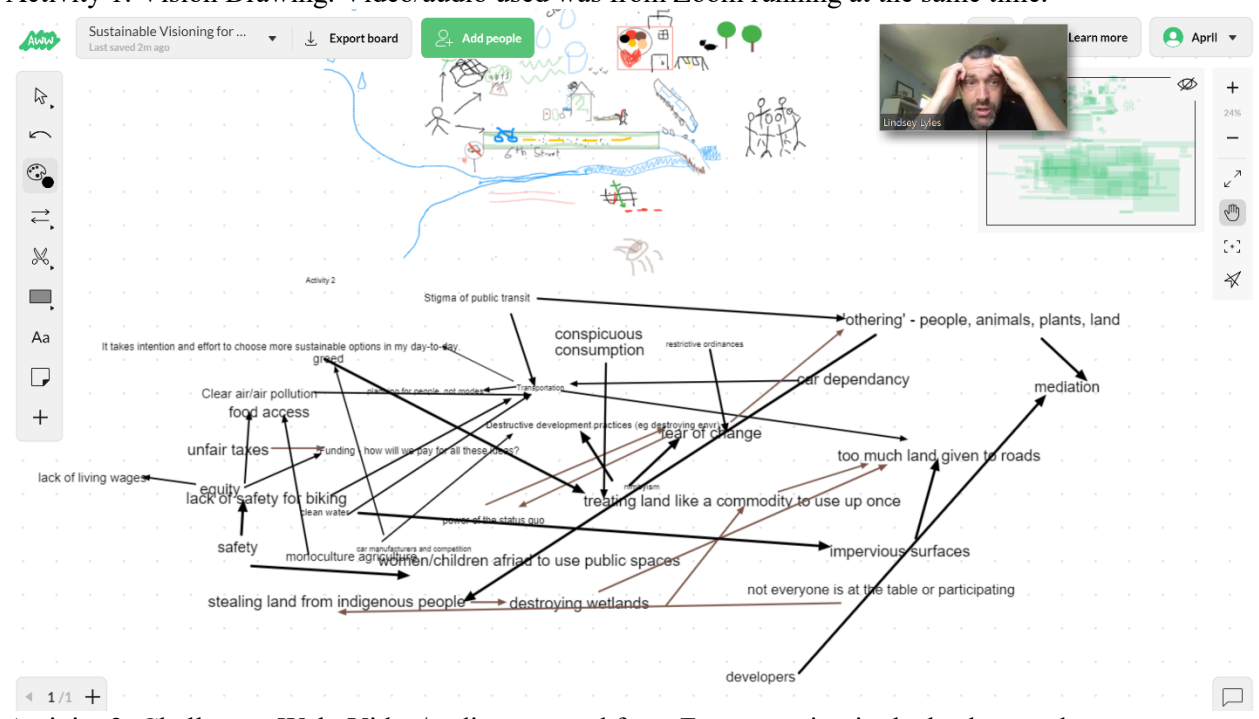
How did these activities make you feel?

Did you like one over the other? Why?

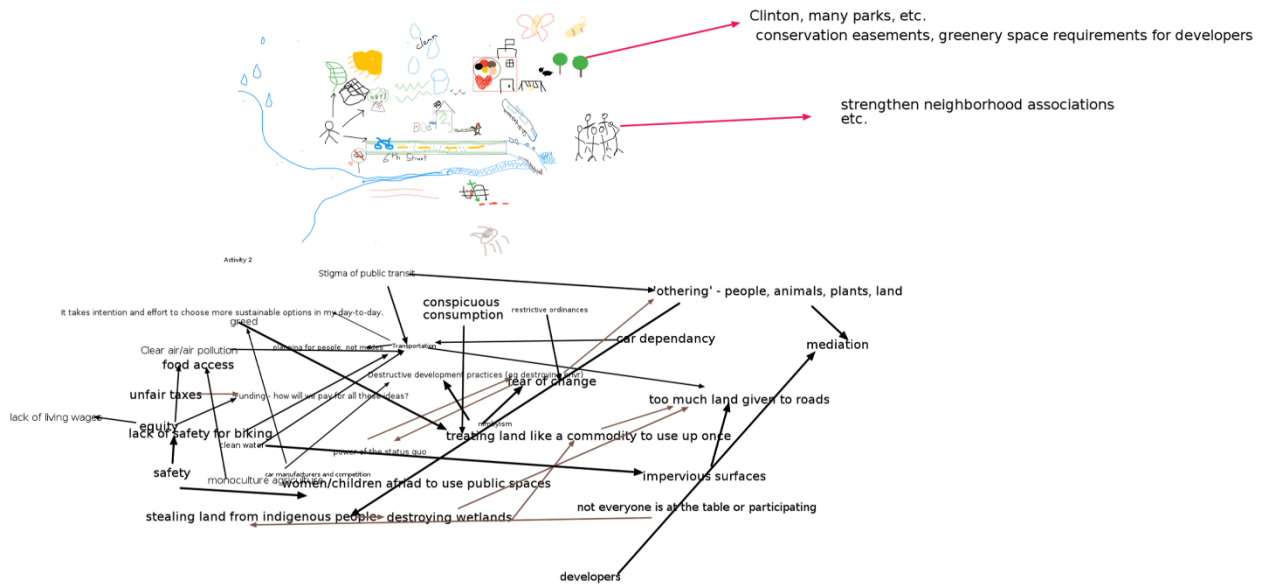
Is there anything you would change about the activities?



Activity 1: Vision Drawing. Video/audio used was from Zoom running at the same time.



Activity 2: Challenges Web. Video/audio was used from Zoom running in the background



Detailed Instructions

	Activity Organizer	Activity Participants
Before Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather supplies. Ensure participants have access to the link or are aware of the time and location. Prepare prompts for discussion or facilitation of the activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure you have the link or location of the activity and time.
During Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand back except to interject prompts or examples when the drawing slows, or participants are shy to start. Ask participants to explain their drawing if the activity is becoming silent. The goal is to use the activity as an aid for communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on your ideal community. How does your neighborhood look? How does the infrastructure and environment around you look? Stretch yourself to think on a large and small scale. Draw symbols, scenes, objects etc. that represent your vision. Simple sketches are perfect! Explain briefly what you draw either while drawing or right after. The process does not need to be orderly. Everyone should draw what they think of when they think of it. This is a collective process. For the second activity on a new board or paper, write words or short phrases of barriers to your vision, or

		causes of climate change. Draw lines to words that relate, connect, or affect each other.
After Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save and export the drawing if a digital platform was used. • Ask participants for a brief reflection. How did the exercises make you feel? What did you like and not like about the process? Etc. • Lead a group discussion based on participants' reflections. • Ask if any participants are willing to have a short interview if video or audio is desired. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step back from the board and digest what has been created. What do you agree with? Are there things you hadn't thought of before? • Take a moment to write down your thoughts on the exercise. How did each make you feel? Did they spark new thoughts or feelings about your community and/or climate change? • Share your thoughts with the group and try to be open and accepting of yourself and others.

Additional Information

Inspiration and Sources: The Climate & Energy Project. Workshop lead by Rachel Myslivy.

Community Toolbox. Chapter 1. Section 9 Community Action Guide: Framework for Addressing Community Goals and Problems.

Community Toolbox. Chapter 3. Section 17. Leading a Community Dialogue on Building a Healthy Community

Cautions: If the exercise is completed virtually, there is the risk of not including those without internet or device access. There is also always the risk of technology failure. It's advised facilitators screenshot, save, and/or record the process throughout. It's also encouraged these activities be carried out in person when possible.

The second activity particularly has the potential to trigger stress, anxiety or feelings of being overwhelmed. It's important to focus on the vision established in the first activity as what we are striving for and look forward too. It's also important to try and frame the larger web into smaller pieces and highlight how it is a system effected by everything else. So, while it may seem like a lot, many of the issues identified would be addressed if one issue was solved.

Possible Extensions: This activity could take place at a public event like Earth Day celebrations and on a giant paper, or at public meetings. The topic also is not locked to climate change. This activity can be used as a visioning exercise for many types of projects, long-range, master plans, transportation, corridor studies or neighborhood plans. The end product can also be saved and turned into public art, simply

incorporated in a plan for an excellent demonstration of community involvement or used to guide a mission statement.

Another variation of the activities can be done individually as well to reach remote participants, if there are technology issues, or if gathering a group of people is not feasible. Prompts can be prepared and sent out via mailers, or email, and participants can find a sheet of their own paper and draw with their family, roommates or just themselves. Participants should be encouraged to sit with the exercise for at least 10 minutes if they're alone, and 15-20 if they're with others. Pictures can be taken of the drawings or mailed in and combined into a collage with other participants' drawings. The instructions could also ask the participant write or record a brief explanation of their doodles after they're finished. This activity promotes self and future reflection in a low-stress environment that can be pretty fun! A creative name or slogan for the vision could also be thought of while everyone is in the mindset of the topic and being creative.

Reflection: One unexpected response was the preference for anonymity. This website did not show who was drawing what. Many participants voiced their enjoyment of this because they felt they could draw more freely if they were self-conscious about drawing skills and realized they may have silent allies that feel the same way about things they do. One thing that was difficult was trying to get participants to explain what they were drawing and why, while they were drawing. I think this is maybe because they were embarrassed about drawing skills and didn't want to be singled-out, or because it was over video call which can be hard to have a multiple-person conversation. Ideally, I learned it would be beneficial to have multiple facilitators because I was trying to watch, facilitate, and participate. It could help to have one person prompting the group if they're stuck, and another couple depending on the size of the group monitoring and identifying themes.

Each activity has the ability to please different types of people. A person that loves the drawing may not find the web as pleasurable or those that like the web making may find the drawing hard to participate in. As much as possible, it's important the participants feel comfortable and realize the activity is not meant to judge and is not high stakes. It's just a way to facilitate thinking differently.

Other ideas for improvement include using another tool that would allow the web to be movable so you could categorize themes. This could be another online tool specifically for brainstorming/web making, or in person, notecards and string could be pinned up.

A final possible activity to conclude these could involve a discussion or writing exercise where participants think about what they are doing or could be doing to help these issues. The main issue with ending the activity with the challenges web is the feeling of overwhelmed and out of control. So, a more positive and action-oriented activity to end would be beneficial for mental health and planning purposes.

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Watch and Discuss: Snowpiercer

Number of Players: 1-60

Duration: 2 hours reading and watching – 30-60 min discussing

Materials: Internet, movie rental/streaming device, computer or phone for reading

Brief Activity Overview: Look at discussion questions, then watch movie and/or read story. Afterward discuss questions, observations, hopeful imaginings with friends, family, or strangers.

Why to try it: Ingesting this media will help us to reflect on current cultural and social economic phenomena while putting it into context of disasters or a climate changed world. It hopefully helps to spark imagination as people are led to contemplate what they may or may not want to see in their own future. This watch and discuss could be projected and held in the Lawrence Public Library green area when distancing is over.

Requirements: Internet and reading/renting/streaming devices

Application Tips: This watch and discuss format can be adapted to other movies or literature. Some quick tips:

- Using the Chrome Netflix Party Extension allows for real time discussion and one moderator controlling the video. Similar services could be utilized.
- If using discussion live while watching, it is beneficial to include two moderators: one that is watching the chat, one that is responding. The City may need to consider stricter moderation if this was a larger public event.
- Discussion after watching also benefits from two moderators: one to note comments, one to keep discussion active and guided.
- Discussion questions and choice of film could be revised to include more direct application to a community's focus.

Detailed Instructions

	Activity Organizer	Activity Participants
Before Activity	Ensure everyone has access to media and discussion questions	Read discussion questions
During Activity	Enjoy the movie and story; possibly guide discussion with moderator or two for the questions that come up in text throughout the movie	Enjoy the movie and story; if participants have questions during the movie that can be shared in the Netflix party app
After Activity	Help guide discussion with moderator(s)	Apply discussion questions to viewed media

Additional Information

Inspiration and Sources: adrienne marie brown, author, activist, and Octavia Butler Scholar who writes that all organizing is science fiction. Brings the idea of imagining and creating the future we want

through creative writing and reading. The final page of this document has a selection of climate related poetry, books, movies, and television shows that could be used instead of *Snowpiercer*.

Cautions: These cli-fi types of media often depict dystopias in which social norms as we know them now have broken down so warnings for violence, rape, and applying harsh hierarchical value to humans often applied based on unchangeable socio-economic circumstances. Warning also for upsetting dystopian worlds in which the earth may function or fail in ways we have not considered. *Snowpiercer* for our pilot – contains moderate violence.

Exercise: Discussion Questions for *Snowpiercer*

Snowpiercer, a 2013 sci-fi film by Bong Joon-ho

Quick characters: Gilliam and Wilford, Mason, Curtis, Namgoong and Yona, Franco, Edgar, Timothy,
Themes to think on: class, climate inequities, nature, sacrifice, revolution

Discussion Questions:

1. The film is set in 2031. How does it feel to think about how close that is to present-day, in imagination?
2. What is the purpose of religious rhetoric in the movie? What kind of “tool” is it to different characters?
3. Is there anything from this media that you’d like, or not like, in your future?
4. Are there any people of color, if so where are they/what is their role?
5. Are there any people in poverty, if so where are they/what is their role?
6. What about people with disabilities, how were they treated?
7. In what ways does the future portrayed in the media reflect disparities that occur during the present?
8. What about the future portrayed in the media seems realistic? Is that something desirable or undesirable?
9. How did the film make you feel? What parts felt powerful or important to you?

Warning: The following questions have specific prompts from the content, but no real spoilers:

1. In the film, we saw the narrative children were told, while hearing the stories of adults who lived it. What about the portrayed propaganda, or a false narrative, felt realistic or similar to today?
2. This film showed stark inequities caused by climate: front car passengers eating sushi and partying, and caboose passengers being packed like sardines, without food or water, forced to violence. What parallels, or less stark examples, do you see today?
3. The train cars served as a strict hierarchy and order. What is the purpose of keeping people in poverty/hierarchy? How do sacrifices and quality of life differ as they move through the train?

4. In the movie, they used technology to try and solve the problem of climate change. What do you think the role of technology is in combating climate change?
5. Scientists in the future of this movie were trying to cool the atmosphere in a reaction to warming. Is this difficult to imagine, or can you think of less intense “band-aids” to climate, in science and policy?
6. The children born on the train, Yona and Timothy, emerge from its rubble to see a polar bear. Thinking about climate, today and future, what did this scene make you think or feel?

Selections of Climate fiction poetry, books, TV series, and movies

Climate fiction poetry and poetry collections

- Melting Ice, a youth poetry anthology, 2017. https://issuu.com/poetrysociety/docs/melting_ice_poetry_anthology
- “How to Let Go of the World” by Franny Choi, 2019. <https://pen.org/how-to-let-go-of-the-world/>
- “Particulate Matter” by Molly Fisk, 2018. <https://poets.org/poem/particulate-matter>
- “Evening” by Dorianne Laux, 2019. <https://poets.org/poem/evening-4>
- “A Plastic Theatre” by Katie Schaag, <http://imaginedtheatres.com/a-plastic-theatre/>
- “Goodbye, Goldeneye” by May Swenson, 2017. https://www.elyricsworld.com/goodbye_goldeneye_lyrics_may_swenson.html

Climate Fiction books

FULL LIST: <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/944643-climate-fiction-from-diverse-authors>

- *Orleans*, 2013. Author Sherrie L. Smith
- The MaddAdam trilogy: *Oryx and Crake*, *The Year of the Flood*, and *MaddAdam*, 2013. Author Margaret Atwood
- ***The Wastelanders*, 2014. Author Tim Hemlin**
- The Southern Reach series: *Annihilation*, *Authority*, and *Acceptance*, 2014. Author Jeff VanderMeer
- The Drowned Earth series: *Shards of Silver*, *The Rise*, *Fire Over Troubled Water*, *Submerged City*, *Tides of War*, *The Jindabyne Secret*, and *River of Diamonds*.
- The Broken Earth series: *The Fifth Season*, *The Obelisk Gate*, and *The Stone Sky*, 2015-2017. Author N.K. Jemisin
- *By the Feet of Men*, 2019. Author Grant Price
- *The Jindabyne Secret*, 2019. Author Jo Hart.
- *Blue Karma*, 2015. Author J.K. Ullrich
- Author Tim Jones
 - *Where We Land*, 2019.
 - *Extreme Weather Events*, 2001. (short stories on extreme climate)
 - *Voyagers: Science Fiction Poetry*, 2009.

Climate Fiction TV series

- Soon: [Losing Earth](#)
- Years and Years, 2019. BBC One network.
- Incorporated, 2016. Syfy network.
- The 100, 2014. The CW network.

Climate Fiction movies

- **Mad Max: Fury Road**, 2015. Director George Miller.

- **The Colony**, 2013. Sci-fi/horror. Director Jeff Renfroe.
- **Snowpiercer**, 2013. Director Bong Joon-ho.
- **Beasts of the Southern Wild**, 2012. Director Benh Zeitlin.
- **Hell**, 2011. Director Tim Fehlbaum
- **Wall-E**, 2008. Director Andrew Stanton.
- **The Day After Tomorrow**, 2004. Director Roland Emmerich
- **The Day the Earth Caught Fire**, 1962. Director Val Guest.
- Climate films that are non-fiction/documentary/less speculative:
 - <https://www.wbur.org/artery/2019/09/09/climate-change-films-fall-new-england> & <https://medium.com/unclelearn/the-7-most-epic-climate-change-documentaries-abd52e3ddf64>
 - True North Docuseries <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pddinH3O5J0>
 - An Inconvenient Truth
- 2067 -- Unsure if this is to come or has been canceled but it had an interesting premise <https://embed.letterboxd.com/film/2067-2019/>

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Photovoice Mapping

Number of Players: 3+

Duration: 30 mins

Materials: camera/phone, internet

Brief Activity Overview: Ask participants to take photo, video, or audio documentation of an area in town they enjoy. Think about what it is about their area of interest, then complete a survey.

Why to try it: The areas in town where photos/recordings are taken will be geotagged and used in a map story. The goal is to accumulate a collection of preferred spaces which planners can reference when considering strategies for placemaking in future plans, corridor studies, etc. Identified areas can be evaluated for placement of signage with links to the dropbox and survey to build an ongoing collection of resources.

Requirements: Walking/biking, use of recording equipment, access to internet survey

Example: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/4cab9e9fecb4c23a337d36405fa1a4c>

Excercise

Survey Questions:

Identify a space near you where you enjoy spending time.

What is it about this space that makes it pleasant?

What threats exist that could change the character of that space?

In what ways would you like to see elements of that space integrated into the city as a whole?

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/13czALrHxCKaFZdYsoON7053aPUqPHaGerIgPq6X53yg/edit?usp=sharing>

Detailed Instructions

	Activity Organizer	Activity Participants
Before Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create survey• Send link to participants• Communicate duration activity will be available	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thoughtfully consider places nearby that are of interest
During Activity		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Walk through identified space, taking audio/visual recordings of aspects which make the space attractive• Access and submit survey

After Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize and geotag responses • Consider areas for placement of signage which could continue the activity indefinitely 	
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Additional Information

Inspiration and Sources:

APA Great Places in America

Community Toolbox. Chapter 3. Section 13. Conducting Surveys

Cautions: Safety/liability of encouraging people to use their judgement in documenting attractive places. Assumption of access to a recording device and internet. Could exclude low SES individuals, or those with mobility challenges. Unfamiliarity with Google Forms which may dissuade responses.

Possible Extension: Post physical signage in spaces identified in this exercise to encourage residents to deposit their own media. On signs, add a link for depositors to take their own survey to build an inventory of new places. Geotag the areas in town where photos/recordings are taken and evaluate those areas for placement of more signs with links to the dropbox and survey.

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Online Conversation/Interview

Number of Players: 3+

Duration: 20-30 mins for each person

Materials/methods: phone/online interview

Brief Activity Overview: Participants were involved in a compassionate conversation about how they were coping with the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. To do that, I invited participants for coffees virtually for 1) compensating their time, and 2) hoping that they could pull themselves away from stressful situations and be more compassionate about what have happened to them and their surroundings.

Why to try it: The conversations should include but are not limited to interview questions. With consents of participants, conversations should be recorded for qualitative analysis. Online conversation is an opportunity to engage with citizens during quarantine. However, activity organizers should be mindful about selecting participants and crafting interview questions due to 1) the limited access to the internet. 2) participants may have varied experience regarding COVID-19.

This project aims to learn 1) how do people handle the pandemic in different cities. 2) Who are the most vulnerable group during the crisis. 3) What do participants need to maintain physical/mental health during the crisis.

Exercise

Conversations will be directed by the following questions and topics:

How are you doing?

- Self introduction including age, occupation, and hometown information.
- To what extend have you experienced the COVID-19, do you know anyone who's been tested positive?
- What tips would you give for staying healthy both physically and mentally?

What changes/challenges have you experienced?

- Is online education/ working challenging for you?
- How do you get food and daily grocery shopping? Is the "stay-home-order" affecting your way of life?

How did you overcome challenges?

- Did you get help from your community? Or did you provide help to other people?
- Could you identify some socially vulnerable population during the pandemic in your community? Are they getting the help needed?

Detailed Instructions

	Activity Organizer	Activity Participants
Before Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft interview questions and conversation themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give consent/refusal

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send out drafted questions to potential participants and ask for consent • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedbacks on how to improve interview questions
During Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate conversations and deliver care and compassion • Record conversations 	Provide personal knowledge and experience on relevant issues
After Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct qualitative research based on the recorded conversation. • Share the research outcome with decision makers as well as the participants. 	NA

Additional Information

Inspiration and Sources: Communities are under quarantine, but the internet is accessible. It would be nice if the activity organizers are connected with citizens from different cities.

Cautions: During the interview, the activity organizers should be mindful when asking questions that may trigger anxiety/grief. Consideration should be taken in to account that interviewees may have encountered different circumstances regarding COVID-19.

Possible Extension: One possible extension of the project is to include more participants (across the city or across the globe). For instance, a contrast can be made between Kansas and Missouri. Learning the citizens’ perceptions on dealing with the pandemic in two different cities (or more cities), planners can be offered an opportunity to investigate what’s the best practice to deal with future crisis. More importantly, by engaging a wider range of participants, we can spread compassion and self-compassion more broadly and effectively.

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