

Compassion in the Midst of Madness

Written by Leo Babauta.

Whether you're in the U.S. or not, the results of yesterday's election can bring up some strong feelings — maybe outrage or depression, maybe elation and shock, maybe contempt for others.

In this crazy emotional time, I urge you to try a compassion practice.

Perhaps, like some people I know, you are angry about the outcome, and can't believe your fellow Americans would elect the person they elected. Perhaps you're feeling vindicated, and are unhappy with the way your fellow Americans have steered this country for the last eight years. Perhaps you're not from the U.S., and you're feeling scorn for Americans, or confusion, after the results of this election.

Whatever you're feeling, it's likely to come from a place of non-understanding. That's not likely to help our community, locally or globally, nor will it help our own happiness. It can be a transformative practice to practice compassion right now.

The truth is, we each have personally experienced what the other side is going through. The results of the election represent the feelings of millions of other people — they speak in some way for our fellow human beings. We have each felt these emotions: feeling left behind, feeling frustrated, distrusting, powerless, angry, hopeful for change, disliking the change that we see.

Imagine yourself feeling those feelings, one at a time. Feel how difficult they are. Now imagine that someone from the other side is feeling those things.

See if you can feel compassion for a fellow human being for feeling them. Feel a connection to them, because you too have suffered through this difficulty. Feel a connection to all your fellow humans who are going through their difficulties right now, in the U.S. and around the world.

We are connected, even if we have immense differences. We live and work together, we feed each other and depend on each other, we support each other and share ideas, we all are going through immense change and struggle, we have struggles in our lives and feel helpless to change the world at large.

The other “side” might have a different worldview that causes them to vote a different way than you, to want different policies ... but underneath, we all have the same tender hearts. And by finding this common ground, we can reconnect to each other in a compassionate

way.

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