

Week 7 - Responding to Reactivity with Compassion

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” — Lamentations 3:22–23

“To listen another’s soul into a condition of disclosure and discovery may be almost the greatest service that any human being ever performs for another.” — Douglas Steere

Education:

- Review: recognizing signs of activation in self and other through somatic tracking.
- Slowing down by using our grounding skills and offering presence through reflection and open ended questions instead of counter-reactivity.
- Strong emotional reactions usually indicate that a core belief or value is being challenged (about safety, security, connection, shame/disgust, religious or cultural norms, etc.)
- We can reframe emotional responses as an opportunity for “discharge”
- Discharge refers to an energetic release that can happen through temperature increase, voice raising, crying, laughing or shaking/trembling
- If presence and empathy can be maintained through discharge, the emotional activation is often “neutralized” and a more connective conversation can happen
- It is important to know your own boundaries around what types of discharge feel safe for you to be present with and which do not.