Tending the caring heart within: Compassion training in medicine

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The science and evidence are compelling – compassion benefits patient health outcomes, helps alleviate clinician burnout, strengthens relationships, and improves organizational measures such as employee turnover, absenteeism, revenue, and costs. Aspects of compassion training have also been shown to decrease racial bias. While we know compassion is helpful, what we’re less familiar with is how to cultivate compassion so it becomes our default stance in every moment.

The capacity to accompany suffering and discomfort (my own and others) with strength and a caring heart has become all the more essential in the context of a pandemic and social justice movement. In this experiential workshop, we will explore the science of compassion and the difference between empathy (empathic distress) and compassion, and experience a taste of compassion training through interactive and contemplative exercises.

As an inter-disciplinary scholar and practitioner, Dr. Jane Chun works at the intersection of inner states of being and organizations and systems. As Program Director of Specialized Programs at the Compassion Institute, she oversees initiatives in healthcare and social change. Jane is also a Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) instructor. She has led trainings and has spoken at the UN Development Program (UNDP), Columbia Business School, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Brookings Institute, and University of Oxford. She holds a DPhil from the University of Oxford where her research investigated the intersection of human ecology, decision sciences, and forced migration.

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