

Building a Compassionate Image

This exercise is designed to help you *build* up a compassionate image for you to use. You can have more than one if you wish, and they can change over time. You get to create whatever image comes to mind. Make it your own personal ideal. One that you feel cares for and about you. It can be anything you wish, but it is important that you try to give your image certain qualities. These will include:

Wisdom, Strength, Warmth and Non-judgment

So with each question below think of these qualities (wisdom, strength, warmth and non-judgment) and imagine what they would look, sound or feel like.

Begin by focusing on your breathing, finding a calming rhythm and making a half smile. Then let images emerge in the mind -as best you can - do not too try to hard. If nothing comes to the mind, or the minds wanders, just *gently* bring it back to the breathing and practice compassionately accepting.

Here are some questions that might help you build an image:

- ✓ Would you want your caring/nurturing image to feel/look/seem old or young;
- ✓ Male or female (or nonhuman looking e.g., an animal, sea or light).
- ✓ Would your 'image' have gone through similar experiences to you?
- ✓ Would they be like a friend or even part of a team that welcomes you to belong?
- ✓ What colors and sounds are associated with the qualities of wisdom, strength, warmth and non-judgment?

Remember your image brings full compassion to you and for you.

- ✓ How would you like your ideal caring compassionate image to look - visual qualities?
- ✓ How would you like your ideal caring compassionate image to sound (e.g., voice tone)?
- ✓ What other sensory qualities can you give to it?
- ✓ How would you like your ideal caring compassionate image to relate to you?
- ✓ How would like to relate to your ideal caring compassionate image?