

Weekly Meditation by Rev. Teri Lubbers

Compassion for Ourselves

It is all too easy to make a vow to be full of goodwill: Peace on earth, good will toward men...but how does this manifest concretely in the details of everyday life? What is the practice of a being who has chosen compassion as a rule of life? ~ Jean-Yves Leloup, "Compassion and Meditation"

The only reason that we don't open our hearts and minds to other people is that they trigger confusion in us that we don't feel brave enough or sane enough to deal with. To the degree that we look clearly and compassionately at ourselves, we feel confident and fearless about looking into someone else's eyes. ~ Pema Chodron, "The Pocket Pema Chodron"

A lot of us live double lives. There is what we say we believe and there is what we do. Hopefully our spiritual practice – whatever that practice may be – helps us bring both worlds into synchrony. So that what we are thinking matches what we actually say, and that what we say matches what we ultimately do. Then we can spend less time in that in-between place that is born of doubt and uncertainty about our own intrinsic worth. Then our insides begin to match our outsides.

When we know ourselves well – when we see the places we struggle, get hurt or upset, get tripped up – we become a whole lot more tender and patient towards others experiencing the same things. Courage to open our hearts and minds to others flows from fearlessness in looking at ourselves. Compassion for others begins with compassion for ourselves.

Prayer: Beloved, help me to see myself and others with your love and compassion. Amen.