



Building a Compassionate Image

This exercise is to help build up a compassionate image for you to work with and develop (you can have more than one if you wish, and they can change over time). You may choose to develop a compassionate image which is sitting next to you (the driver) on your bus and will offer you unconditional support and guidance.

Whatever image comes to mind, or you choose to work with note that it is your creation and therefore your own personal ideal what you would really like from feeling cared for and cared about. In this practice it is important that you try and give your image certain qualities. These will include; Wisdom, Strength, Warmth and Non-Judgement. Your compassionate image will be there for you no matter what and will always be by your side to support you and give you wisdom and strength.

Here are some questions that might help build the image.

1. *How would you like your ideal caring, compassionate image to look/appear – visual qualities. Does your compassionate image seem old or young; male or female (or non-human looking e.g., an animal, sea or light).*

If possible, we begin to focus on our breathing, finding a calming rhythm and making a half smile.

Then we can let images emerge in the mind as best we can- do not try too hard, if nothing comes to mind, or the minds wander, just gently bring back to the breathing and practice compassionately accepting.

2. *How would you like your ideal caring-compassionate image sound? (voice/tone)*

3. *What other sensory qualities can you give to it?*

4. *How would you like your ideal caring- compassionate image to relate to you?*

5. *How would like to relate you like to relate to your caring compassionate image?*



Building a Compassionate Image

| Undermining thoughts & images | Compassionate alternative thoughts & images |
|-------------------------------|---|
| | |

Reprinted with permission from M. Welford, *The Compassionate Mind Approach to Building Your Self-Confidence* (London: Constable & Robinson, 2012)