



Presence Practice SERIES Overview & Guiding Principles

The primary intention of our Presence Practice SERIES is to **develop the fundamental awareness and skills we need, in order to build our capacity for Presence, Compassion (also known as "Nonviolent or NVC Consciousness"), and Authentic Choice (Authentic Power, living in alignment with our values) in all areas of our lives, *regardless of circumstances.***

These qualities are deeply valued in and of themselves, and they are also valued as powerful resources that help restore and sustain our authentic connection with ourselves, with others, and with Life Itself (God, Goddess, Spirit, Source, The Universe, or whatever name you know It by).

One of the most powerful paths to transformational healing (restoration of wholeness, or re-integration) I have found is ***restoring connection with our own felt experience*** -- our own Inner Truth, however that exists in the moment. And perhaps the most powerful way we restore this connection is through ***compassionate, accountable, witnessing and witnessed awareness.***

The Presence Practice SERIES was created to provide a space where All That We Are -- from our magnificent and gracious power to our warts and farts and ugly parts and everything in between -- can be safely shared with full authenticity/transparency and even (in moments) vulnerability, and received, witnessed, and held with resonant awareness and compassion ... because ***we cannot own what is ours to own when we are "made wrong" for it, whether by ourselves or others.***

The SERIES curriculum includes essential distinctions, tools, and practices from many different sources, including but by no means limited to the "classical" Nonviolent Communication (NVC) tools of feelings, needs, observations, requests; depth empathy processes developed by Robert Gonzales, Susan Skye, and Sarah Peyton (especially gifted NVC trainers who now live in our Portland community); Thriving Life principles, distinctions, and tools from my own work; and any others from any source that is discerned to be helpful in the moment -- including opinions, strategies, and advice ***when requested.*** (For those seeking a more NVC-focused group, please note that we don't actively use the NVC text or workbook. I recommend *Compassionate Noticing* or my *Healthy Boundaries Seminar* for basic NVC skill-building support.)

We work together to create and sustain a powerful, resonant "container" of deep compassion, clarity, ease, flow, integrity, self-empowerment, and authentic connection.

The structure of the group (how members participate and how we spend our time together) is designed to allow **everyone** to be "received, witnessed, and held" by compassionate, resonant community each week, either during check-ins, or by "working" with the support of the group.

We are a self-accountable group; while I hold primary responsibility for the creation and maintenance of our resonant, present, compassionate "container," as in all areas of our lives each of us is invited and encouraged to listen mindfully for our own inner wisdom, and to discern and offer what is Called For in any moment, that is in alignment with the requests of others that are active at the moment.

As a human being with my own inner work to do, I openly model how I live and practice everything I teach. This means that failing ("missing the mark") at times and making repairs are a core element of all of my work.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *If right now it would best support you to be "taken care of" by the group leader, or by the group as a whole, please note that Presence Practice and other Thriving Life offerings are NOT designed to meet your very legitimate and important needs. Please find a group led by a licensed mental health professional. (<http://portlandtherapycenter.com> is a good resource with advanced search capabilities, that can help you find a licensed mental health professional.)*

Guiding Presence Practice Group Principles

I believe we all long for the ability to remain **present, compassionate, and at authentic choice** in our day-to-day lives, most especially when we find ourselves in the midst of challenging internal or external experiences.

Our **Presence Practice SERIES** provides a compassionate, guided community experience that supports each of us in building our capacity to:

- Understand how our brains work in relationship, and how this impacts our inner world of perception, interpretation, experience, expression, and connection
- Compassionately notice, honor, and allow ourselves to Be With whatever's going on ("what's alive") inside us and others, rather than getting "captured" by our own or others' stories, upsets, or emotions ... leaving us increasingly at home and at ease with ourself and our experience, regardless of circumstances
- Wisely discern what's causing the disconnection, pain, and/or conflict we're experiencing, and respond in ways that meet our needs = contribute to our own and others' thriving (including respectful acceptance and/or detachment)
- Distinguish between what actually happened (observations, facts) and what we're telling ourself (evaluations, interpretations, stories, etc.) in ways that leave us more deeply, authentically connected with Life, ourself, and others
- Develop our capacity for authentic, transparent self-connection, self-expression, and self-care, even in the face of "no agreement" from others
- Identify the "automatic," often unconscious/hidden strategies we're using to try to meet our needs, that may actually block our needs from being met, and identify or invent and then try out strategies that are more likely to support our thriving...and then notice if they work
- Connect directly with and bring in the nourishing, life-giving energy of our fundamental human needs, so that we're no longer dependent on getting our needs met from outside of us (so that we're able to deeply nourish ourself at any time, regardless of what other people are doing ...or not doing)

Welcome to our compassionate, mindful, resonant, playful, transformational community! We're delighted to share All That We Are with you, and to receive your sharing of All That You Are with us.

Blessings on us all,



Vika