

THE COMPASSIONATE MIND

A New Approach to Life's Challenges
PAUL GILBERT, PH.D.

About the Author

PAUL GILBERT, PH.D., is a professor at the University of Derby in the United Kingdom and director of the mental health research unit at Derbyshire Mental Health Trust. He has written over a hundred academic papers and is a fellow of the British Psychological Society.

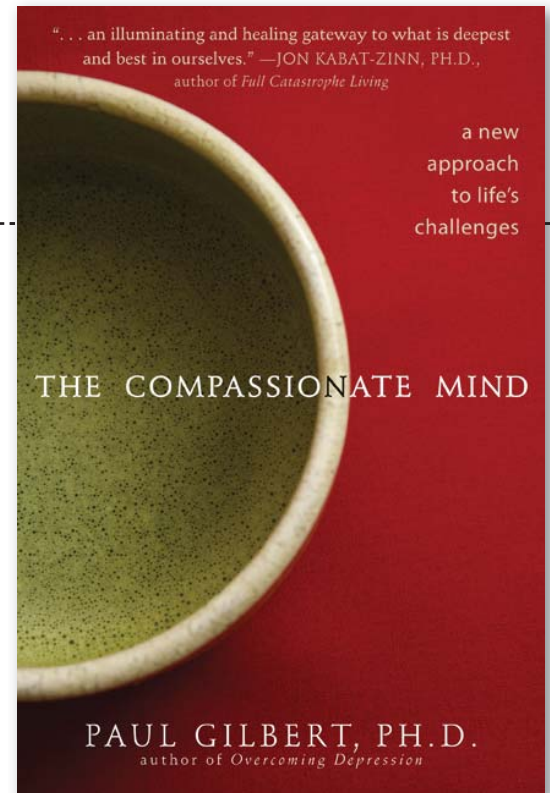


“Compassion can be defined in many ways, but its essence is a basic kindness, with a deep awareness of the suffering of oneself and of other living things, coupled with the wish and effort to relieve it.”

In societies that encourage us to compete with each other, compassion is often seen as a weakness. Striving to get ahead, self-criticism, fear, and hostility toward others seem to come more naturally to us. Yet researchers have found that developing kindness and compassion for ourselves and others builds our confidence, helps us create meaningful, caring relationships, lowers anxiety and hostility, and promotes physical and mental health.

The Compassionate Mind reveals the evolutionary and social reasons why our brains react so readily to threats. Because of this tendency, it's easy to slip into anger, fear, and depression, and compassion can be difficult for us. This is not our fault. However, research has shown that our brains are also hardwired to respond to kindness and compassion. Building on this latest research, this book offers many practical exercises to help deepen compassion towards ourselves and others. Far from fostering emotional weakness, compassion subdues our anger and increases our courage and resilience to depression and anxiety. Wisely used, compassion arms us with the strength to pursue genuine happiness, peace of mind, and peace in the world.”

“... an illuminating and healing gateway to what is deepest and best in ourselves.” —**JON KABAT -ZINN, PH.D.**, author of *Full Catastrophe Living*



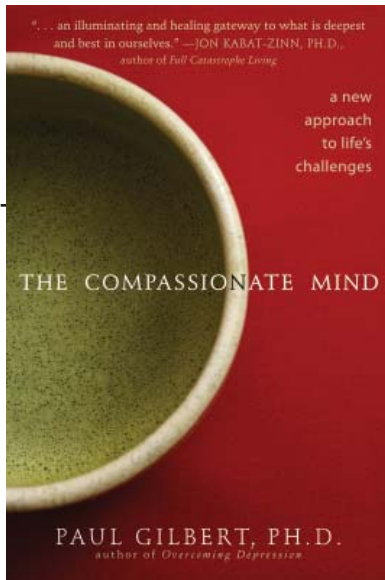
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A New Approach to Life's Challenges
Paul Gilbert, Ph.D.
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Praise

“For a long time, Paul Gilbert has been making seminal contributions to our understanding of compassion and how, if systematically cultivated, it can become a force for greater good both in our hearts and in the world. This book offers a deep and compelling evolutionary perspective on the human brain, mind, and culture. It demonstrates how much meaning and our well-being hinge on our innate capacity to extend heartfelt compassion to ourselves and to others. It also guides us in working skillfully with deeply ingrained tendencies such as anxiety, anger, and depression, so they do not dominate our lives and erode our health and happiness. Written with a deep sense of kindness towards all who suffer, including himself, this book is a very friendly, practical, and potentially illuminating and healing gateway to what is deepest and best in ourselves, often completely unknown or unrecognized by us.”

— **Jon Kabat-Zinn, Ph.D.**, professor of medicine emeritus at the University of Massachusetts Medical School and author of *Full Catastrophe Living* and *Coming to Our Senses*

“In this impressive volume, Paul Gilbert offers compelling insight into a key challenge of our time: compassion. The reader will find a conceptual and practical guide to cultivating a more compassionate mind. The author gracefully integrates evolutionary neuroscience, cognitive behavioral therapy, Jungian archetypes, attachment theory, Buddhist psychology, and over thirty years of clinical experience into a book you won’t want to miss. Dozens of accessible exercises make this book especially helpful for readers who want to transform their lives for the better.”

— **Christopher K. Germer, Ph.D.**, clinical instructor in psychology at Harvard Medical School and author of *The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion*

“Paul Gilbert has created a masterpiece urging us to harness the power of our minds to shape our brains toward compassion and kindness. Exploring the science of our ancient neural circuitry and weaving this with our contemporary cultural pressures, *The Compassionate Mind* takes us on a powerful journey into the origins of the challenges that keep us from living life with meaning, connection and resilience. Once we’re wellprepped with this fascinating background, Gilbert shows us in useful detail the personal practices that enable us to sharpen our skills of compassion for ourselves, for others, and for the larger world in which we live. The result is not only increased happiness and better physical health, but more meaningful relationships with others, and even a better relationship to our planet. There is no better time than the present to learn these important steps to enhance our individual and collective lives, and even to transform our place in the ‘flow of life’ on Earth.”

— **Daniel J. Siegel, MD**, clinical professor at the University of California, Los Angeles School of Medicine and author of *Mindsight* and *The Mindful Brain*

“Paul Gilbert is one of the most brilliant scientists studying compassion today. In this wonderful book, he makes his theories very accessible and down-to-earth. You feel like you’re having a chat in his living room with a warm cup of tea. I also love his easy-to-follow exercises, which offer concrete ways to help you develop greater compassion in daily life.”

— **Kristin Neff**, associate professor of human development at the University of Texas at Austin

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