Going High When Others Go Low:
How Educators Can Promote “Courageous Compassion”

Presented by: Marilyn Levin
March 1 @ 3:00 CT
What are leaders of the fields of whole systems change, healing, transformation and spirituality using to navigate?

Background is in following fields: Experiential Education, Social Justice, Whole Systems Change, Transformational Change and Consciousness/Spirituality

Examples:

- GALAXY and RAY
- Coulee Region Social Justice Coalition
- Global Sufficiency Network
- Four Years Go
- KINS Innovation Networks and Green America Center for Sustainability Solutions
- Also Author of Experiential Activities for a Better World in English with Lea Arellano and in Spanish with Mache Trevino
Polling Questions

- I am most interested in activities I can use with students/participants
- I am most interested in new approaches/perspectives that will help me be more effective
- I am most interested in tools that I can use in a variety of settings
- I am interested in all of the above
As Experiential Educators/people who want a better world working in a variety of settings – what do we most need a hand with?

- Please enter your answers in the chat box so we can presence what some of the common needs are.
- The presentation should address these and we will revisit this and take questions at the end as well.
Society is undergoing a massive transformation where divisiveness, incivility and gridlock are present as we re-shape our world.

Global Mind Change by Willis Harmon explains:

“Throughout history, the really fundamental changes in societies have come about not from dictates of governments or the result of battles but through vast numbers of people changing their minds – sometimes only a little bit. Some of these changes have amounted to profound transformations – for instance the transformation from the Roman Empire to Medieval Europe or from the Middle Ages to modern times.”
Going High is Catching On!!

- Examples from [www.facebook.com/wegohighproject](http://www.facebook.com/wegohighproject)

- Jews & Arabs helping Syrian Refugees
- US & Mexican Women Weave Hair Together
- Veterans Ask Native Americans For Forgiveness
- Woman Treats Homophobic Table to Lunch
The job of our time is to hospice the death of the old unsustainable systems and structures with compassion and love and to mid-wife the birth of the new sustainable systems and structures and new ways of being.

What does this hospice/midwife role look like?

- We release old patterns that created the mess we are in and we learn to use new ones that will build the world we want
- We practice with every belief, thought, feeling, word and action
- We bring compassion to ourselves when we fall short
- We have compassion for the conditioning of others and their efforts to change

This is what I call

“COURAGEOUS COMPASSION” - Serving as a courageous stand for a better world by using radical compassion to navigate daunting terrain with a nimble mind and heart.
Why Compassion

- The fields of quantum physics, social healing, generational trauma, epigenetics, brain plasticity and more are uncovering new extensive and complex forces behind our current predicaments.
- We are truly all in this together (whether we realize this or not)
- There are so many reasons people are “mis-behaving” (i.e. generational trauma, limbic brain impairment)
- Extrinsicating ourselves from our current cultural conditioning is essential
Mind Power Activity

We all have amazing capacity that we are not aware of. Standing in the awareness of your extraordinary nature and seeing this in others is a powerful strategy for cultivating success.

It is mostly cultural conditioning, not personal failing that is causing us to fall so short of our amazing capacity.
Hand Fold Activity

- Many of us are conditioned to react negatively to things we are unfamiliar with.
- It can be a peaceful practice to withhold our initial judgments to things that are new to us.
Emotional Bruise Activity

These are times of high levels of trauma from many sources (injustice, misplaced values, hate, etc)

- Embrace emotional flow and loosen the conditioning of emotional control
- The more you clean up your wounds the better you will navigate other’s wounds and the systems that are perpetuating them (Dad story, Going to Hell Story, Brother story)
- When you get triggered ask “How am I like that?”
Recommended Shifts to Undertake

In these highly complex and rapidly changing times we can focus on navigating key shifts that give us new perspectives and cultivate new skill sets.

- While doing so I encourage you to:
- Trust in a positive outcome in spite of confusing and disruptive times. (Fear is not our friend!)
- Develop your inner wisdom, intuitive awareness and innate capacity for complex discernment.
- Develop your capacity for acceptance and surrender - be strong like a supple tree that makes it through the storm.

"Fighting the darkness ensnares us in an eternal battle. Transcending the battle is the only way forward."
Deepak Chopra
Shift - Self Care as extra V Essential

Deepak Chopra says:

“Healing your own heart is the single most powerful thing you can do to change the world. Your own transformation will enable you to withdraw so completely from evil that you contribute to it by not one word, one thought, or one breath. This healing process is like recovering your soul.”

If you are frazzled, stressed, exhausted and spent you are not in a good place to face the volatile and complex challenges we are facing these days.
We are conditioned to think in dichotomies of right and wrong but the reality or truth of something is dependent on the observer.

We can remember that to validate someone else’s truth from their view does not invalidate our truth from our view.

We are at a time when humanity is being asked to hold multiple seemingly conflicting truths and find the coherence within divergent perspectives.
Shifts in Approach

- Intellectual intelligence V multiple intelligences (mind, body and spirit wisdom)
- Resistance V acceptance
- Acting from mind V co-creating from the whole
- Competition V collaboration (Thumb Wrestling Activity)
- Criticism and judgment V appreciation and compassion (Hand Slap Activity)
- Seriousness V Playfulness
Tools - Effectively Handling Hurtful Remarks

- Have group agreements (like assuming good intentions and oops and ouch)
- Choose for results over freedom of expression
- Show hurt without lashing back
- Show TLC “who hurt you that you feel the need to lash out to others?”
- Assume Good – “I know you are a decent human so I know I won’t hear that from you again
- Affirm and move on – I know I am fabulous
- Ask questions – so where did you learn that?
More Handling Hurtful Remarks

- Use humor without put-downs (gravy baby)
- Provide info with compassion (did you know...)
- Relate (I used to think that but then I learned)
- Don’t buy in (the purple test)
- Respect the culture (reasonable progress)
- Take a silent stand (nurses)
- Don’t play (my respect for you diminishes)
- Be Firm (not in this space!)
- Appreciate all progress frequently
Tools – Being an Amazing Ally

- We need to be allies to the bullied and the bully
- Use the best in you to inspire the best in others
- Remember no one does their best under attack
- Shift from fear to trust
- Get out of the victim/villain/rescuer cycle
- Have compassion for cultural conditioning
- Encourage emotional flow and intelligence
- Bring energy of compassion
- Be playful when possible
Tools – Transforming Conflict

- Treat conflict as an opportunity (Dog Whisperer)
- Make a conscious choice versus reacting
- Reframe conflict to seek win-win outcomes
- Know your default reaction to conflict and practice new approaches
- Start with desire for resolution then move to agreement of respect and circle back if neither are possible
- See breakdowns as access to breakthroughs
More Tips for Transforming Conflict

- Acknowledge the underlying struggle and feelings that are often mutual (like despair and hopelessness)
- Encourage active listening with/out negative energy
- Invite people to come from their higher self
- Challenge perceptions versus realities thoughtfully
- Remember we all have blind spots and have been taught misinformation
- Seek both/and thinking instead of either/or thoughts
- Use avoidance strategically
Resources

- I invite you to go to www.wegohighproject.com to get your free report and resource guide that includes all of the activities used today, guidance on going high when others go low and a list of other valuable resources.

- If interested in more activities and facilitation in English or Spanish see my book at www.experientialactivitiesforabetterworld.com
HELP US LAUNCH WE GO HIGH

- We are doing our initial launch of The We Go High Project and we want your help!
- Please spread the following meme through facebook and twitter on March 1 (or March 2 is ok too)

THIS IS MICHELLEN

While haters take joy in going low and being mindless
I stand proud, stay cool and go crazy with kindness
I wanna be like MichEllen
Nastiness & division has gotta go
Going high is the only way to flow

BE LIKE MICHELLEN

#WEGOHIGHPROJECT
Q&A - What are some specific struggles you would like feedback on or questions you have?

- Please type into the chat area and we’ll address some specific concerns.
We know we must change our internal world in order to change our external world.

- If we want acceptance we can’t live in judgment
- If we want respect we can’t disrespect others
- If we want peace we can’t demean and diminish others
- If we want co-existence we can’t demand only our way
- If we want compassion and forgiveness we must give it
- If we want healing for the world we must do our own healing and support the work of others’ healing

Your greatest power lies in seeing where you are adding to what you seek to end!