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Difficulty Compassion is the ability to see the deep connectedness
between ourselves and others. Moreover, true compassion
recognizes that all the boundaries we perceive between ourselves and
others are an illusion. When we first begin to practice compassion,
this very deep level of understanding may elude us, but we can have
faith that if we start where we are, we will eventually feel our way
toward it. We move closer to it every time we see past our own
self-concern to accommodate concern for others. And, as with any
skill, our compassion grows most in the presence of difficulty. We
practice small acts of compassion every day, when our loved ones are
short-tempered or another driver cuts us off in traffic. We extend our
forgiveness by trying to understand their point of view. we know how
it is to feel stressed out or irritable. The practice of compassion
becomes more difficult when we find ourselves unable to understand
the actions of the person who offends us. These are the situations that
ask us to look more deeply into ourselves, into parts of our psyches
that we may want to deny, parts that we have repressed because
society has labeled them bad or wrong. For example, acts of violence
are often well beyond anything we ourselves have perpetuated, so
when we are on the receiving end of such acts, we are often at a loss.
This is where the real potential for growth begins, because we are
called to shine a light inside ourselves and take responsibility for what

we have disowned. It is at this juncture that we have the opportunity to transform from within. This can seem like a very tall order, but when life presents us with circumstances that require our compassion, no matter how difficult, we can trust that we are ready. We can call upon all the light we have cultivated so far, allowing it to lead the way into the darkest parts of our own hearts, connecting us to the hearts of others in the understanding that is true compassion.

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