



## Deep Listening: An Introduction to a Fundamental Coaching (and Life) Skill 4-Week Course with Cassandra Brown

Each week homework will consist of (1) reading, (2) daily journaling, and (3) a deeper dive.

The deeper dive is written here as a solo activity to be done with your journal. It can also be adapted to partner work. Let me know if you are interested in partnering for the homework and I will give you slightly different instructions. [Kassandra@parentcoaching.org](mailto:Kassandra@parentcoaching.org). 660-956-9592.

The minutes in parenthesis after the assignment give an estimate of how long I think each exercise will take you.

Commitment to doing the homework is a wonderful gift you give yourself, the other members of this class, and your future clients. To have lasting change for your clients, they must commit. To be a good coach, you must be able to model commitment.

### Week 1 Homework:

1. Reading: (10-20 minutes) I'd like you to read these two articles on reflective listening.

- [Reflective Listening: A Great Tool for Better Communication](http://www.prettyopinionated.com/2013/01/reflective-listening-a-great-tool-for-better-communication/) at <http://www.prettyopinionated.com/2013/01/reflective-listening-a-great-tool-for-better-communication/>
- Reflective Listening as a Conflict Resolution Tool at <http://positiveparentingconnection.net/reflective-listening-as-a-conflict-resolution-tool/>

2. Daily Journaling. (5 - 30 min daily)

This week you'll use the journaling to practice mindfulness. Notice what sensations you have in your body, what you are thinking, and what you are feeling. Write down what you notice. Consider that each of these thoughts, feelings, and sensations may be a part that would like attention.

Commitment. Write every day. Even if it's just a couple of sentences saying "I'm too busy. I'm prioritizing other things. I'm not going to journal more than this today."

3. Partnering in Compassionate Presence. (60 min, once)

Take 2-5 minutes to settle in to journaling. Say hello to yourself. Notice what's alive in you. Then pause from your writing and listen to the [guided meditation for connecting with your compassionate presence](#) or read the script below.

"Take a moment to wiggle around and get comfortable. Allow your body to find where it wants to be.

Notice your breath. Breathing in – notice the sensation of the breath in your nose, throat, chest, and belly. Breathing out – notice the sensations. Just notice without trying to change, fix, deepen, or improve. Just notice what is.



## Deep Listening: An Introduction to a Fundamental Coaching (and Life) Skill 4-Week Course with Kassandra Brown

Allow yourself to become aware of the chair and floor under your legs, buttocks, back, and feet. Notice the sensations. You can give the sensations words like - Pressure. Warmth. Coolness. Aching. Tingling. Pulsing.

Notice any thoughts or stories about the sensations.

Acknowledge that these thoughts are parts of you that are asking for attention. Let them know you'll give them attention soon. For now, we're connecting to the energy within you that can notice and welcome all the parts.

Imagine you are standing on the earth. Roots of energy are growing out of your feet into the earth. With each breath, the roots grow deeper and wider. You are ever more connected to the energy of the earth. Feel it's vastness. Feel how it supports you whether you are nice or mean, organized or distracted, fun or boring. The earth supports you regardless of your behavior.

Your compassionate presence is like the earth, holding all of your parts. No need to pick or choose. All are welcome. This energy of your heart, the earth, your roots, your breath, and your intention is the compassionate energy you can relax into. Let it hold and support you. It is you."

Set a timer to go off 5 minutes before you want to be finished.

After the compassionate settling in, start journaling in the PIES model. Share about what you are experiencing right now physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. You can go back and forth between these different aspects. Write about what you feel right now. Don't worry if it doesn't seem interesting or deep. Writing "My feet are cold" or "My elbow itches" is totally valid. Stay with present time mindfulness – noticing what is here and writing it down before it passes.

When the timer goes off, take time to thank each sensation, thought, and emotion that came up. Most of these thoughts, sensations, and emotions are parts of you that you will learn to connect with as the class continues. Acknowledge that you will be back. Close your journaling with an entry similar to this "Thank you all for coming and letting yourselves be seen and heard. I appreciate each of these thoughts, sensations, and emotions. I will listen more at a time that works well for me."

### Week 2 Homework:

#### 1. Reading: Two articles by Kassandra on feelings and needs. (15 min)

[Tips for handling your feelings when your child is](http://mamaot.com/2012/07/31/tips-for-handling-your-own-feelings-when-caring-for-a-fussy-child/) <http://mamaot.com/2012/07/31/tips-for-handling-your-own-feelings-when-caring-for-a-fussy-child/>

and

<http://parentcoaching.org/archives/941>

#### 2. Daily Journaling. (10 - 30 min daily)

This week you'll continue using the journaling to practice mindfulness. Now you can also read back through what you've written as a way to reflect to the parts of you that are writing.



## Deep Listening:

### An Introduction to a Fundamental Coaching (and Life) Skill

#### 4-Week Course with Kassandra Brown

Notice what sensations you have in your body, what you are thinking, and what you are feeling. Write down what you notice. Consider that each of these thoughts, feelings, and sensations may be a part that would like attention.

Commitment. Write every day. Even if it's just a couple of sentences saying "I'm too busy. I'm prioritizing other things. I'm not going to journal more than this today."

### 3. Deep Dive – Reflective Listening (45 min, once)

Exercise: Practice reflective listening with your journal writing. Use the following topics or pick your own.

- Write about your vision for your coaching practice.
- Write about the obstacles and blocks to manifesting your vision.
- Write about something that's up for you today.
- Complete the sentence "If you really knew me, you'd know that I ...."
- How is reflective listening going for you with other people in your life? What challenges and successes are you having?

As you write, practice mindfulness to notice the different opinions you have about your chosen topic. For instance, when writing on your vision for your coaching practice you might imagine having 10 clients a week that you work with one on one.

One part feels excited to do the work, enjoys talking to people and being of service.

Another part is the voice that feels doubt "Can I do it? Am I good enough to charge money just to talk to people? Where will I get the time?"

Another part is the voice of the inner critic "Well if you were serious you would do blah blah and blah or you would have done this business years ago. You're not organized enough, you don't have the marketing skills."

Another part may come up that soothes and rationalizes "We're doing well. Businesses take time to build. The other things we're doing with our time are important."

If you're not thinking about parts work, all of these different voices just sound like "you" and can be hard to really connect with. One or the other want to be primary and invalidate the other voices.

**When you listen to them as different and valid parts of you, you can reflect to them what you hear and ask if there is more they would like you to know.**

## Week 3 Homework

### 1. Reading: Feelings and Needs lists (Then post them). (15 min)

At the Center for Nonviolent Communication's website, [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org), there is a plethora of good information and resources. A trio of my favorite free resources to use with clients are the [feelings list](#) and [needs lists](#). Please go to the lists, read them, print them out, and post them somewhere you will see them often, especially while you are working.



## Deep Listening:

### An Introduction to a Fundamental Coaching (and Life) Skill

#### 4-Week Course with Kassandra Brown

### 2. Daily Journaling. (10 - 30 min daily)

Every day write either 3 pages long-hand or write for 10 minutes. Your choice. Write anything that comes to mind. Stream of consciousness without editing or rereading.

### 3. Deep Dive – Parts Work (60 min, once)

Let's build on the last two weeks of homework to use mindfulness, reflective listening, and compassionate presence to go deeper into connection with your parts. Read through the assignment before you start.

Settle in and connect with your compassionate presence using the script from Week 1, the [audio](#), or your own words.

You have the choice of listening to whatever arises spontaneously or to guide the parts that you want to connect with by vivifying a situation. This week's theme is *business*. So think of whatever you'd like to create in your life with respect to work, income, and living your purpose. Notice your desire for that sort of work or way to spend your time. Then notice and welcome in any parts that doubt, judge, or in other ways question the validity of that desire.

Exile parts may come up. It's very important to welcome them without trying to fix, heal, reassure or figure them out. It's also important to welcome any parts that want to fix, heal, or reassure. Welcome all the parts as they arise.

**You can guide yourself as needed to welcome parts and connect to compassionate presence.** You can use words like -

“Into this sphere of compassionate presence, I welcome any parts. Parts appear as thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations in my body. No part is more or less important than any other. I welcome each part as it appears in my awareness. I even welcome the parts that wonder if I'm doing it right or think this isn't working. I welcome all the parts with words like...

“Welcome part”

“Hi part”

“I see you and you are welcome to be here.”

Remember the best thing you have to offer is your compassionate presence. This week you'll also offer reflective listening either by rewriting, rereading, or (my favorite) reading what the part journaled out loud. You'll also ask the parts about feelings and needs. Try it on. It's OK to make mistakes.

You can reflect back to their parts with words like:

“I hear that you feel...”

“You believe....?”

Reflect back to your parts as though they are standing in front of you and you are talking to them. Use 2<sup>nd</sup> person voice and talk directly to the part.

It's a good idea to always check with the part and ask “Is this right?”, “Is this what you wanted me to understand?” or some other wording to check your understanding. Not only does this prevent misunderstanding, it invites the part to share more.

You get to guess at feelings and needs this week. When you reflect you can reflect what you heard, guess at how the part is feeling, and guess at a need this part would like to have met.



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Example:

Part: “I should just get to work. I don’t know why I can’t get it together and figure out what I want to do and be successful with it. Why do I waste time? I can’t believe I watched reality TV last night.”

You as the compassionate presence reflecting to the Part: “I hear you want to feel successful and have the judgment that you’ve been wasting time. I hear frustration and wonder if you’re also feeling longing to engage and feel successful?”

Part: “Yes. I’m frustrated and I want to scream. I also feel longing and a desire to engage and be successful. Yes. And sad too.”

You may guess wrong. That’s okay. The purpose is to help deepen connection to feelings and needs and allow the part to be heard. Getting it ‘right’ is optional and might not even be the most helpful thing you can do.

When the timer goes off, **take 2 minutes to finish up and thank the parts**. You can say something like:

“Thank you (to each part individually). If any of you need more attention in the future, let me know and I’ll listen to you at my earliest convenience.”

**Reflect.** How do you feel? What did you like? What was challenging? What was easy?

### **Week 4 homework**

Is written in as part of the class notes. There are several Try It’s throughout the text. That is the homework for Week 4.