

On 4th March 1950, Albert Einstein wrote to a gentleman (translation quoted in **“Finding Peace in Life and Death: A Synopsis of Reality Versus the Human Mind”** by Patrick Baxter) who had requested him to help comfort his daughter – after her sister had passed away. In the letter, we read Einstein on the relationship between *compassion* and *liberation*.

A human being is a part of the whole, called by us “Universe,” a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separate from the rest — a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us.

Einstein goes on: *“Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all....the striving for such achievement is in itself a part of....liberation and a foundation for inner security.”*



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About two thousand years before this letter, in the **Vivekachudamani** (Verse 82, translated by Swami Ranganathananda in “**The Message of the Vivekachudamani**”), we read the sage Adi Sankara tell us that if we have “a craving for liberation”, one of the “*the nectar-like virtues*” we must cultivate is “*compassion*”.

The Buddhist Teacher, Joan Halifax takes this a bit deeper than *liberation* in a talk delivered at the Wisdom 2.0 Conference on 1st March 2015. She says the “*images of aggression, violence, of suffering*” that we “*are flooded*” with clearly tell us that “*Compassion is a....radical necessity.*”

In an essay titled “**Good Leadership is an Act of Kindness**” published in the 1st

November 2020 issue of “Harvard Business Review: Working Knowledge”, Boris Groysberg (Professor at Harvard Business School) and Susan Seligson advise Business Leaders that we are confronted with times where *“the manager’s toolkit must expand in ways we haven’t seen before.”* The most important addition to the toolkit, they say, is *“kindness”*. They write: *“Even if gestures of....compassion were not woven into business as usual before the pandemic, they are essential now and going forward.”*

Peace ☐

“Compassion — a radical necessity”

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