

Los Angeles-based Mindfulness and Humanitarian Organizations Join Forces for the Inaugural Global Compassion Circle

[February 13, 2019] *Los Angeles, California, USA* — Two Southern California-based organizations, iACT and InsightLA, have partnered to create the Global Compassion Circle: an interactive series of units that creates a circle of compassion and support between people around the world and immigrants, refugees, and the displaced—linked through compassion, understanding, and action.

The free, online program will launch on March 11, 2019, and will feature InsightLA founding teacher **Trudy Goodman**, mindfulness icon **Jack Kornfield**, iACT founder **Gabriel Stauring**, and InsightLA mindfulness teacher **Joslyn Hitter**.

Everyone is invited to be a part of the free inaugural Global Compassion Circle. The pilot involves four units, each unit made up of the following parts:

- A brief teaching video featuring Trudy, Jack, and Gabriel
- Informative multi-media focused on the theme as it relates to Darfuri refugees
- A short mindfulness activity for Global Compassion Circle participants, guided by Joslyn
- A conversation with other participants within the Circle about the theme and activity

Both Jack Kornfield and Trudy Goodman believe, “The Global Compassion Circle offers a rare opportunity to grow our compassion for ourselves and for other people, with community support — compassion for those who are physically near to us, as well as those who may be thousands of miles away but with whom we long to connect. Though far away, we can feel close, especially through practices we learn together like mindfulness and meditation.”

For more information and to sign up for the Global Compassion Circle, please go to: <https://www.iactivism.org/global-compassion-circle/>.

The story behind the Global Compassion Circle

iACT has had the privilege of walking next to and earning invaluable lessons from Darfuri refugees on the Chad-Sudan border for many years. These refugees have experienced unimaginable loss. Their homes were destroyed, family members killed, and then they had to walk across the desert to seek safety. They also experience life in a deep, meaningful way. Maybe because of both tradition and need, they live in the moment, and, through the pain, are admirably able to experience joy and compassion.

When co-creating education, sports, and human rights programs with and for refugees, mindfulness presented itself as a powerful and gentle tool for promoting peace—from internal peace to community peace, to world peace.

iACT reached out to mindfulness expert Trudy Goodman for guidance. As the Founding Teacher of InsightLA, a meditation center in the Los Angeles area, Trudy did not only bring a lifetime of experience in psychology and mindfulness, she also brought with her an amazing, dedicated team of experts that

immediately wanted to join the iACT team in walking with refugees. It wasn't long before Trudy and InsightLA teacher Joslyn Hitter joined iACT's Founder, Gabriel Stauring, and the iACT team on a visit to Darfuri refugee camps on the Chad-Sudan border.

After first meeting the refugees, sitting with them, and walking with them, Trudy and Joslyn became aware of how much mindfulness expertise they, the refugees, already had within them. A refugee leader and iACT's good friend *Oumda* Tarbosh showed Trudy how cutting a tomato and preparing a sauce was itself a wonderful act of mindfulness. Refugee teachers shared about their daily experiences and how being mindful comes naturally to them.

From this ongoing collaboration between iACT, InsightLA, and the Darfuri refugee community came the idea for the Global Compassion Circle.

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About iACT

iACT is a Los Angeles-based non-profit organization providing humanitarian action to aid, empower, and extend hope to those affected by mass atrocities. iACT's vision is to create a world where people are connected and empowered to act. iACT places the beneficiary at the heart of each program and uses community members to co-create, manage, and expand impact; and to build resilience and restore dignity. For more information about iACT, visit iact.global (www.iactivism.org).

About InsightLA

As a meditation center serving the Los Angeles area, InsightLA offers meditation classes, retreats, and special events in an open and welcoming community. Its outreach program, Insight in Action, brings mindfulness and meditation classes to underserved communities and schools, and to individuals who would otherwise not be exposed to these potentially life changing classes. InsightLA's retreat center on 17 acres of preserved land in Beverly Hills additionally allows for the development of compassion for the land and the environment. For more information about InsightLA, visit www.insightla.org.

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