

2024 NATIONAL DAY
OF
Compassion

Saturday, 21 September, 2024

DEEP CONNECTION



CHARTER FOR
COMPASSION
AUSTRALIA

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About THE 2024 NATIONAL DAY OF COMPASSION

Each year the Australian Compassion Council holds a National Day of Compassion, to provide a meaningful opportunity for all Australians to participate in learning about and in practicing compassion.

The National Day is always held on 21 September, which is also the International Day of Peace.

This is the fourth year this National Day has been convened and each National Day has a theme and in 2024 our Theme is Compassion and Deep Connection.

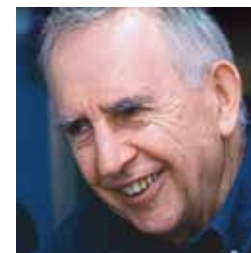
Join the Australian Compassion Council in Deep Dreaming Australia A Continent for Compassion – commencing with our online launch which starts the day at 8.00am (AEST) followed by sessions throughout the day that explore various aspects of deep connection.

NATIONAL DAY *Launch* : 8.00am – 8.50am (AEST)

The National Day will start with a launch that includes:



Marilyn Turkovich – CEO of the global Charter for Compassion, on the Charter's involvement in the 19th World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates
<https://nobelpeacesummitmexico.com/en>



Hugh Mackay – Australian Charter Ambassador, on Deep Connection in Community



Dr Lynne Reeder – National Lead, ACC on a Compassionate City project: Seeds of Compassion – along with some inspiring young students and their compassionate wishes for their city;

Members of the Australian Compassion Council who will provide an outline of the inspiring events occurring throughout the rest of the Day.

The online fifty-minute live launch starts at 8.00am on Saturday 21 September 2024 – [Register here](https://charterforcompassion.civiplus.net/civicrm/event/info?id=103&reset=1):

<https://charterforcompassion.civiplus.net/civicrm/event/info?id=103&reset=1>

NATIONAL DAY *Sessions*

Commencing at 9.00am and finishing at 4.30pm you are invited to 'drop-in' to as many sessions of your choosing and there is much to choose from!

These sessions feature a wide array of aspects of deep connection including as they apply to:

- Contested Spaces
- Indigenous Justice
- Peace Culture
- Repairing Relationships
- Innate connection with external elements
- Better dealing with our distracted world

SESSION 1: 9.00am – 9.50am (AEST)

Deep connections through deep justice



Presenter – Katie Kiss is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. Katie is a proud Kaanju and Birri/Widi woman who grew up in Rockhampton, Central Queensland on the lands of the Darumbal People. She has previously held

senior roles in the Queensland Government, including the Chief of Staff to the Minister for Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. She has also worked at the Human Rights Commission as director of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social justice team and was Director of Strategic Projects at the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples.

Facilitator – Terry Ayling: Australian Compassion Council, Charter for Compassion, Australia – National Lead Compassionate Cities.

In this session Commissioner Kiss will integrate the topic of deep connection through steps towards justice, especially as it relates to our indigenous people. She will reflect on responses to last year's unsuccessful National 'Voice to Parliament' Referendum, including next steps in the process of truth-telling and treaty as well as progress (or not) in the 'Closing the Gap' agenda. Recently Katie attended the 'Garma Festival of Traditional Cultures' in the Northern Territory and, the 'Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' Conference in Geneva, where she issued statements about the key issues facing our indigenous people, and reflected more broadly on Australia's human rights record in the light of the 'UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' During this session, Terry & Katie will take listeners on a journey which reaches back 65,000 years into the ancient past and into a hope-filled future, with an honest and sane appreciation of the issues of injustice and justice, which impacts on indigenous people in the present and calls out for our compassionate and wise response, if we are to be honest about past hurts and forge deep connections for generations in Australia's future.

Register here: <https://charterforcompassion.civiplus.net/civicrm/event/info?id=103&reset=1>

SESSION 2: 10.00am – 10.50am (AEST)

Creating deep connections with peace culture through new narratives: inspiration and imagination



Presenter – Rivera Sun is an author and activist who serves on the Advisory Board of World BEYOND War and the board of Backbone Campaign. She is the editor of Nonviolence News and the Program Coordinator for Campaign Nonviolence. Her articles

are syndicated by Peace Voice and published in hundreds of journals nationwide. Rivera has written numerous books and novels, including *The Dandelion Insurrection* and the award-winning Ari Ara Series. – Peace-waging fantasy for readers of all ages! This Series combines the classic elements of epic myths – courage, daring, adventure – with the skills of conflict resolution, anti-bullying, peace, and nonviolence. Ari Ara is a young shero with spunk and spark who acts on her deeply felt connection to peace. <https://riverasun.com/the-ari-ara-series/>

Facilitator – Madonna Quixley: National Peace Sector Coordinator, Charter for Compassion, Australia

In this session Rivera will talk about the power of literature in sparking imagination toward peace and helping to dissolve the cultural connections that mesmerize us into a war culture. While war and violence is normalized in books, movies, news, and other aspects of our culture, peace and nonviolent alternatives are largely ignored. But fiction has a powerful potential to portray effective solutions like unarmed peacekeeping, violence de-escalation, peace teams, nonviolent action, conflict skills, and peacebuilding. Rivera will share how she's seen young readers discover their deep-seated compassion, raising their voices for peace through falling in love with these books. A good story can help children – and readers of all ages – become life-long peace activists. Fun, engaging, and compelling stories can affirm the deep connection to, and love of, peace that exists in readers of all ages. By igniting our imaginations, novels and stories can build a culture of peace that is anchored in both pragmatic strategies and inspiring heroes.

SESSION 3: 11.00am – 11.50am (AEST)

A lifetime of learning how to create and repair relationships and why it matters so much



Presenter – Dr John Hendry OAM has been an educator for more than 50 years serving in many roles; teacher, school councillor, and in many leadership positions, including in student welfare. He is one of the originators of Positive Education, a Life member of the

Careers Development Association of Australia, a consultant to Primary and Secondary Schools across all systems in Australia, Hong Kong, China and a consultant to UNESCO on bullying and school violence. He consults and works with the Positive Institute, The Flow Centre, Resilient Youth, Invictus Well-Being and many local councils and professional associations.

Facilitator – Bishop Philip Huggins: National Interfaith Sector Coordinator, Charter for Compassion, Australia

In this session John will speak to his forgiveness cycle model to give this conversation a particular focus. John has learned deep things about forgiveness and about relationships of wellbeing. We will speak about these personal and vocational learnings and why they are so crucial now. This nurturing conversation will also include music from contemporary pianist and Instrumental composer, Galliano Somnavilla who creates instrumental music for the soul and the senses.

SESSION 4: 1.00pm – 1.50pm (AEST)

Deep connections in a distracted world



Presenter – Sabina Vitacca

inspires people to navigate the world of work in a more conscious and productive way. Starting her career in the mental health field, she now has over a decade of experience supporting individuals and organisations integrating

mindfulness practices for connection with each other and their outcomes – to help leaders and their teams’ overcome feelings of stress, overwhelm and lack of focus – driving engagement, connection, and productivity. Through her work, Sabina gives practical tools that help to remove the distractions and noise, to focus on what matters. With decades of working with CEO’s, leadership teams, sports stars and athletes, Sabina is an expert in leveraging modern day mindfulness to achieve success through connection.

Facilitator – Gwen Pinnington: Australian Compassion Council, Charter for Compassion Australia

In this session Sabina will integrate the topic of deep connection into the world of work, applicable across various sectors including healthcare, education, corporate environments, and community organisations. In organisations today, people are more connected with technology and yet people are still experiencing a world of disconnect... change fatigued, overwhelmed, stressed, unable to make decisions and reduced productivity. You will be taken on a journey that will explore how mindfulness can be integrated into daily routines to strengthen genuine connections with others and the natural world, fostering a sense of belonging and interdependence. She will share understanding about the role of mindfulness in enhancing deep, meaningful connections with people, nature, and the environment. She will discuss mindfulness practices on active listening, presence, and appreciation of the world around us.

SESSION 5: 2.00pm – 2.50pm (AEST)

Integrating deep wisdom and deep connection in contested spaces



Presenter – Chloe Spackman, CEO

Next25 is the CEO of Next 25 and has over a decade of experience in program design, delivery, and evaluation, focusing on leadership and global citizenship, innovation, and social impact. Prior to becoming Next25’s inaugural CEO,

Chloë was Next25’s Director of Programs and Engagement for six years, managing the programs team and overseeing our “think” (research) and “do” (initiatives) work. During this period, she led the development of Leadership, Improving Democracy: Transforming Parliament for Women and 21st Century Service, a suite of training courses specialising in building culture and capability within the public service. Chloe is the Board President of an Australia-based international charity and is an accredited Facilitator of Transformation through Values.

Facilitator – Dr Lynne Reeder: National Lead Australian Compassion Council, Charter for Compassion, Australia

In this session Chloe will take us on a journey from last year’s theme of Deep Wisdom to this year’s theme of Deep Connection as they apply in contested spaces. Today’s fractured political discourse challenges us to recognise how our emotional triggers interfere with our capacity to hear others. This was particularly so during the Voice Referendum, and Next 25’s report *Contested Spaces: Australia, the referendum and constructive discussion* sought to review how we can better engage with complex policy issues. As the report notes ‘we need to learn how to argue, we need to learn to negotiate difference, and we need to make space to talk about key issues that have affected us in the past, in the present and in the future. In this conversation Chloe will discuss how we can learn to model open and curious conversations; forge connections before conclusion; practice reflexivity of thought; and foster genuine exchanges and deflect divisive tactics – all very important skills for us to deeply connect with others.

SESSION 6: 3.00pm – 3.50pm (AEST)

Realising our innate state of connection with the elements of water, fire, wind and space



Presenter – Dr Devin Zuckerman, PhD is a teacher and scholar of religion whose research explores elemental theory as a “pre-scientific theory of matter” to understand our deep connection with the five elements of earth, water, fire, wind, and space. These

elements are the historical precedents to the periodic table in use today. Through understanding the way in which we carry these elements within our bodies we can engage in practices to actualise this deeper connection for personal transformation. Devin studied a Master of Divinity at Harvard University and received a Fulbright-Hays Scholarship to study elemental theory. She is currently a post-doctoral research associate at the Contemplative Sciences Center (CSC) and Climate Fellow with the Environmental Institute (EI), at the University of Virginia.

Facilitator – Dr Susana Sumskis: Australian Compassion Council, Charter for Compassion, Australia

In this session Devin will talk about elemental theory and discuss connection through the lens of the five elements, earth, water, fire, wind and space. Specifically, how these elements are within us and outside of us and that we can engage in practices to realise that this connection is always there. Through contemplative practices, and our greater connection, ecological, personal, and social, we can open ourselves to transformation, whether it be of our present state of mood or emotion or a deeper life realisation.

SESSION 7 – 4.00pm-4.30pm (AEST)

Review and Reflect on the whole day including what we can take with us into 2025 for personal, organisational, systemic, and global change.



This National Day will finish with an open session that invites us all to take the time to ponder the rich discussions from this National Day. Share your thoughts with others as they review what they will take away with them from this inspiring National Day of Compassion as Australians come together to Deep Dream Australia: A Continent for Compassion.

Facilitator – Michael Bartura: Australian Compassion Council – Charter for Compassion Australia



AUSTRALIA COMPASSION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dr Lynne Reeder
Terry Ayling
Dr Susana Sumskis
Gwen Pinnington
Dr Mark Crosweller
Michael Bartura
Dr Debbie Ling
Dr Geoffrey Woolcock

NATIONAL SECTOR COORDINATORS

Bishop Philip Huggins – Interfaith
Madonna Quixley – Peace
Joanna Giannes – Education
Sharon Davson – Arts

More information: www.charterforcompassion.com.au

