

*Habit 2: Hoping for what we want and fearing what we don't want*

<b>The Habit</b>	<b>The Compassionate Antidote</b>	<b>Our Experience – Your Insights</b>
<p>Many of us put so much effort into trying to organise our lives to fit with the expectations that we have developed as we have grown up and that are now part of our worldview. As a means of trying to fulfil our wish for happiness, there is nothing wrong with this approach if we can combine it with the understanding that things do not always work out as we wish – if we learn to be more accepting of what life throws at us. Unfortunately, this is something that many of us do not do and so we end up experiencing the repeated stress of trying harder, planning more carefully and still facing disappointment.</p>	<p>Compassion for ourselves begins when we notice this cycle and realise that instead of enabling us to achieve our goals, it is making us stressed and exhausted. If we can see our own suffering clearly then it becomes a springboard for being able to see the suffering of others and to want to do something about it. Compassion for other people begins when we see that just as we are caught in this cycle of stress, so are most other people. This touches us so deeply that we want to do something about it. Reflecting in this way reduces our focus on our own stress and so helps us to approach it in a more useful way. Training in compassion reduces the intensity of one's own problems because it helps us to see that our problems are not unique, or a special punishment for us, but are simply part of the inevitable ups and downs of life.</p>	