



Develop your teaching your way

A Pedagogy of Kindness: Compassion Toward the Self

Cate Denial

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Welcome!

Take a moment to introduce yourself in the chat if you haven't already. Where are you Zooming in from?



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Please use the chat throughout to interact



Agenda



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- Getting to know me

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- Defining our terms

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- It's not just about self-care

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- Actionable steps

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- It's not just about self-care
- Actionable steps
- Your tips and ideas



I'm Cate Denial

Bright Distinguished Professor of American History, Chair of the History department, and Director of the Bright Institute at Knox College

Getting to Know Me

I'm originally from Sheffield in the north of England





I'm a first-generation college
student



I emigrated to the USA in
1994 to get a Masters degree
in History at UW-Milwaukee





I got my Ph.D. in History
at the University of Iowa
in 2005

I work at Knox College in
Galesburg, Illinois.

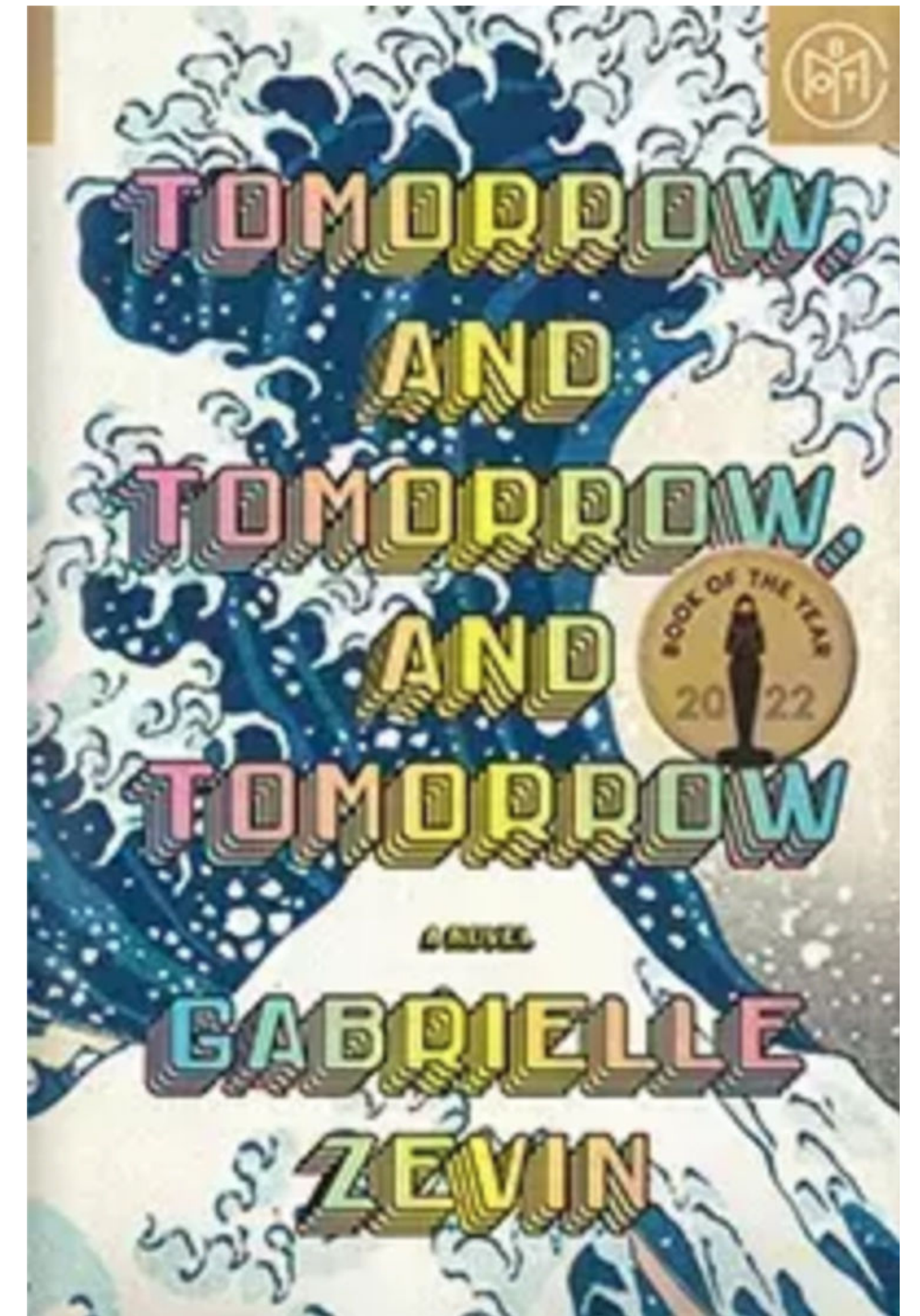




My favorite movie I've watched recently is The Eight Mountains



I'm reading *Tomorrow and Tomorrow*
and Tomorrow right now



I'm a big fan of Captain America



In my spare time I design the windows and merchandising for my friend's specialty food store





Pleased to Meet You!



Kindness Toward the Self



Defining our Terms



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Kindness is not a practice that appears in a vacuum.

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If we want to be kind to others, to create classroom experiences that are alive with compassion for everyone involved, we have to start by being kind to ourselves.



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Self care *should* mean securing the time, energy, creativity, and rest we need to support our existence in all its (wonderful, frustrating, liberating) complexity.



Kindness refines self-care



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Kindness understands our imperfections, frailties, and the things we don't know, and suggests that we cannot move forward in the world without the opportunity to pardon ourselves for our mistakes.



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But kindness also holds us accountable; it does not suggest we 'let things go' without examining them, considering our positionality, and assimilating that knowledge into our understanding of who we are, what we prioritize, and where we must try again.

A concrete example

Ground rules

“We will remember that all of us have learned misinformation about ourselves, our social groups, and other social groups. Discrimination functions, in part, by keeping us uninformed. We will not blame ourselves or others for getting something wrong on the first try. After we have learned new information, however, we will hold ourselves and others accountable for that information.”

Catherine Denial and Gabrielle Raley-Karlin, “Ground Rules for Dialogue,”
adapted from “Ground Rules” from the Program on Intergroup Relations
at the University of Michigan.



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These ideas are still somewhat abstract—they do not necessarily tell us how to find space within the overwhelming press of our working lives as we try and get through graduate school, pay the bills, secure benefits, get a permanent job, get our contract renewed, make tenure, manage our load, and teach.

What does this mean?

There are things that belong to us—times, practices, and strategies that we get to craft and, crucially, boundaries that we need to put in place and maintain.

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We can implement changes that have a meaningful impact upon both our well-being and the store of compassion we have to direct elsewhere.

What does this mean?

“How we are at the small scale is how we are at the large scale. . . . Grace [Lee Boggs] articulated it in what might be the most-used quote of my life: *‘Transform yourself to transform the world.’*”

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*



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- Careful planning
- “Guard your yes”
- Create community



What do you recommend?

What do you recommend?

[Share your tips and ideas on Padlet](#)

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What questions do you have?



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Thank you!

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