## EXERCISE 16 Compassionate Touch Exercise

- **Step 1:** Begin by getting into a relaxed and present position, most likely seated, with feet flat on the floor and hands placed gently in your lap. Take several deep breaths.
- **Step 2:** Begin an experiment with touch, starting with your dominant hand on neutral parts of your body. This might mean clasping your other hand, touching your feet, or resting your hands on your knees. Notice any sensation that arises from this touch.
- **Step 3:** Continue exploration of compassionate touch, including holding your arms in a self-hug, touching your face, the top of your head, the back of your neck, or placing your hands over your heart. Make note of which touch feels most comforting or evokes feelings of warmth for you. Also note which touch is not a good fit in feeling charged or uncomfortable.
- **Step 4:** Recall a criticism or stressor and make note of any uncomfortable sensations in your body. Engage in your chosen compassionate touch as you continue to recall a criticism or stressor. Notice how your body and mind respond to the compassionate touch in the face of anxiety or worry, reinforcing any alleviated sensations or movement toward warmth and relaxation due to the compassionate touch.

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