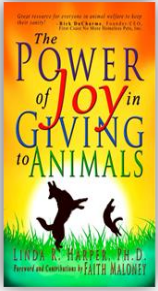


# Compassionate Heart Training by Dr. Linda Harper

## I. Refresh Your Compassion Heart: Take Care of You & Your Team



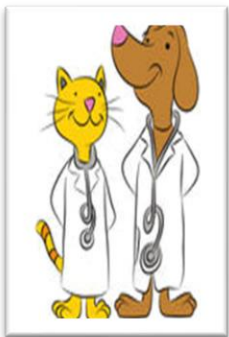
Compassion fatigue and burnout with their long-term consequences are real in every animal-helping organization from shelters, veterinary clinics, and rescues to facilities that provide grooming, boarding, and daycare. It is inevitable that the challenges we face will contribute to feeling overwhelmed, being depleted, and at times, locked into a lasting sadness. With so many animals to help and so many ways to help them, it is easy to understand how we neglect our own needs. It is **essential**, however, that caring for ourselves and each other be a priority. Discover proactive tools to help face the unique challenges of this invaluable work and restore the joy in the journey.

## II. Connect in Compassion: Be Stronger Together to Help More People & Pets



How often have you heard, “It’s not the animals that stress me out –it’s the people!” We naturally focus our efforts on relating to animals. To best help them, however, it is **essential** to learn how to work with all kinds of challenging people. While we have all wondered why people are so difficult, have you ever considered that YOU might be somebody else’s difficult person? Discover how people’s reactive styles(including your own) affect challenging situations. Explore new ways to respond to this stress, and become more effective team players and lifesavers.

## III. Expand in Compassion: Practicing Cultural Competence to Better Help People & Pets



*Cultural Competence* is essential to every animal-helping organization. Clients’ experiences in keeping their pets healthy and happy affect how they feel about themselves, their animal companions, and the field of veterinary medicine. Practicing cultural competence - *the desire to engage with and provide a welcoming environment for people with all different beliefs, backgrounds and behavior* - bring fresh ideas and new connections to any organization. An atmosphere of acceptance helps to minimize the negative effects of social media. This session will explore three practices, innate to compassion, that help create an inviting atmosphere: **Listen, Let Go, and Learn**. In addition to benefiting clients, these everyday tools promote individual well-being and boost team morale and cohesiveness. Cultural competence naturally expands the flow of compassion as veterinary practices become an exemplary source of support and strength for animal lovers in their community.

**About the speaker:** Linda R. Harper, Ph.D. is a lifelong pet owner and animal lover; she has been a clinical psychologist in the Chicago area for 35 years. As the founder of Blessed Bonds, a foster-based program that keeps people & pets together, she understands the physical, mental, and emotional stress that comes with this heart-driven work. Linda speaks at animal welfare and veterinary wellbeing conferences and gives workshops locally and throughout the country. She facilitates the pet loss support group sponsored by the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association. She is author of four books including *The Power of Joy in Giving to Animals* (foreword and contributions by Faith Maloney).



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