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Reductive explanation of Nussbaum's compassion: Transformative moral technology

Alfonsus Marianus Kosat*, Naupal, Fristian Hadinata

Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia, Kota Depok 16424, Indonesia

* **Corresponding author:** Alfonsus Marianus Kosat, almacostaa@gmail.com

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Abstract: This paper explores how compassion can be defined as a transformative moral technology through analysis of Martha Nussbaum's idea. Nussbaum contends that compassion goes beyond just feeling pain for others' suffering; it also involves acknowledging the severity of suffering, understanding that it is not solely the victim's fault, and recognizing the suffering individual as one of our most important goals and projects. Through a literature review that considers reductive explanations, we establish that compassion encompasses cognitive, affective, and conative capacities that are crucial for moral reasoning, knowledge, and judgment, all stemming from the experience of human suffering. These capacities of cognition, affection, and conation are supported by the system of reasoning and moral perspective known as *techne*, *episteme*, and *oikeiosis* as systems of reasoning and morality perspective. We argue that compassion is more than just an emotion or feeling, it is catalyst for moral action, as its essence lies in "suffering with; suffering together."

Keywords: compassion; moral technology; suffering together; transformative ethics

1. Introduction

Compassion is a topic in ethics that has been discussed for many years. Unfortunately, discussions of compassion are often associated with care and pity, creating a divide between the sufferer and the caregiver. Compassion is also linked to medical ethics, which provides specific guidelines on how we should care for those in need. It is seen as a tool for considering action without moral obligation, as well as a form of sympathy. In reality, compassion is intertwined with suffering and underscores the common vulnerability of all human beings. Therefore, discussions about compassion cannot be separated from discussions about human suffering. This research proposes that compassion is both a moral virtue and a moral obligation, which should be nurtured in response to the complexity of suffering. Of course, suffering is an intrinsic and unavoidable aspect of the human condition (Barasch, 2005; Nussbaum, 1996; Wuthnow, 1991). It arises from the anticipation of the future (Lennerfors and Murata, 2019), from emotional upheavals and social conflicts that cause physical and psychological pain (Brady et al., 2020), and from inequalities in economic, educational and social systems, misery and injustice that affect life goals (Bruun et al., 2022). Beyond the various types of suffering defined above, we argue that we have the capacity to prevent and alleviate suffering for ourselves and others. As mentioned by Kotilainen (2020), compassion towards suffering is a human culture. However, compassion as an obligation to alleviate the suffering of others was only emphasized during the enlightenment. Today, technological advances have made it easier to accomplish everything in our world. However, we often fall into the trap of selective

morality, overlooking universal humanitarian values to justify violence, war, and other crimes. Therefore, this research aims to propose compassion as a ‘transformative moral technology,’ drawing on Nussbaum’s ideas of evaluative judgments, seriousness, desert, and the possibility of self-suffering. This study presents compassion as a moral technology, defined as moral systems, guidelines, norms, and frameworks that guide moral action based on the recognition of human suffering. According to researchers, human suffering primarily stems from specific phenomena involving the recognition of pain and misery, followed by attempts to prevent and alleviate it. The experience of pain and suffering enables individuals to discern logical truths and moral justice. Ultimately, human suffering within the context of an individual as a person or human existence, consist of a fundamental dichotomy: the body and the soul or mind (Bueno-Gomez, 2017). According to Nussbaum (2001, p. 83), suffering is the basic experience of human life, characterized by ambivalence of emotions. Suffering creates a certain turmoil that affects structure, purpose, hope, and sometimes paralyzes life. Nussbaum emphasizes that the experience of suffering is the starting point for learning about the interconnectedness of thoughts and feelings. This study posits that Nussbaum’s assessment is consistent with the imaginative reconstruction of suffering, such as disasters, wars, massacres, and events that evoke emotions such as grief, anger, and fear. The imaginative reconstruction is achieved by considering the happiness and misfortune of others as a motivation for the individual’s moral behavior and the urge to experience compassion in suffering. The presence of compassion allows one to identify directly with the suffering of others in order to realize unselfish behavior. By conceptualizing pathos as experience, sorrow, grief, and affection, Nussbaum presents a dialectic of cognition and emotion in the context of suffering. According to Nussbaum (1986, p. 47), emotional fluctuations are shaped by memory and reason through the examination of pathos.

In some of her most important works, we have found that Nussbaum establishes compassion as a connecting discourse between emotion and moral reasoning in human life. This involves the presupposition of judgment regarding the seriousness of suffering, the deservingness of others to suffer, and the possibilities of similar suffering for oneself. Therefore, compassion is still considered the primary emotion that links an individual’s imagination with the well-being of others, making them the subject of intense concern. In Nussbaum’s view, compassion is both an emotion and a way of navigating human existence, allowing imagination, knowledge, and practical wisdom to grasp the nuances of suffering and cultivate ethical understanding (Nussbaum, 1986). Compassion is a quality that helps expand ethical awareness by understanding the meaning of humanity as it relates to human well-being, it holds value for achieving goals and shaping behavioral intentions (Nussbaum, 2001, p. 333); cognitive evaluative process of emotion; a set of evaluative judgments and thoughts with imagination about the sufferer followed by a desire for action as it relates to human well-being (Nussbaum, 2001, p. 306). Since evaluative judgments are related to the self-concept, Nussbaum promotes the examination of life through three different capacities: the critical capacity to examine the self and its traditions, the capacity to see oneself as part of a whole, and the narrative imagination. Narrative (1997, p. 90) imagination is a crucial aspect of moral interaction and a key component of compassion because it helps cultivate an awareness of shared vulnerability.

According to the researchers, an examined life includes the ability to organize individual relationships with others and to create justice in recognition of humanity. Nussbaum argues that compassion is the foundation of human connectedness through law enforcement, which enables the maintenance of human dignity and integrity. Emotions serve as a fundamental reminder of our common humanity. Therefore, compassion is a universal element that must be applied to respect human diversity. This includes critical thinking to address the complexity of crises and treating all individuals equally before the law, without exploiting human vulnerability. In this context, compassion is a rational emotion that involves thinking about oneself and others who share similar potentials and weaknesses (Nussbaum, 2004, p. 49). In our view, this idea is transformed into moral potential by enabling individuals to act in ways that allow compassion to be applied equitably and inclusively to all. Thus, compassion becomes a fundamental human capacity, akin to the capacity to lead a healthy life, to receive an education, and to engage in social and political activities. In particular, Nussbaum emphasized that compassion is a fundamental skill that needs to be emphasized. This is because the world is full of complexities related to self-interest, and therefore we need emotions of compassion and solidarity (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 180). In our view, compassion serves as the driving force for human beings to look beyond themselves and consider the tragedies and causes of the suffering of others. By understanding the emotion of fear, people can come to recognize and accept their own mortality and fundamental equality. This recognition and awareness can foster compassion and reciprocity, creating a mutual relationship between one and another to suffer together. Through compassion, people can come together to support and protect each other from the ongoing struggles of hunger, disease, and war. Therefore, within the complexity of suffering, compassion is a skill that is developed when individuals recognize the suffering of others and understand that it is inherently negative. It becomes clear that it would be beneficial to prevent, alleviate, and ultimately eliminate suffering. According to Nussbaum (2018), compassion is an individual's ability to overcome fear and embrace suffering in order to understand why others suffer. The authors acknowledge that in some of her important writings, Nussbaum provides a basic explanation of the relationship between pathos as emotion, cognition, and motivation or conation. However, they argue that when pathos is understood as suffering and experience rather than just emotion, it becomes clearer how reason, emotion, and desire are interrelated to establish compassion as the core of human morality.

Therefore, this research argues, when compassion is characterized as a fellow-feeling, it is incapable of virtue, obligation, and moral responsibility. Another explanation is that, according to its etymology, compassion is not a sensation or feeling, but rather an active action that clarifies human vulnerability, how humans can coexist with pain, how suffering can be experienced collectively, and how it is possible to recognize one's own suffering. Based on Nussbaum's explanation of compassion, we create a diagram to illustrate how compassion provides a cycle of learning from reality, especially suffering, to manage moral action. This cycle begins with an awareness of our fragility and culminates in moral action. You can see from the following **Figure 1**:

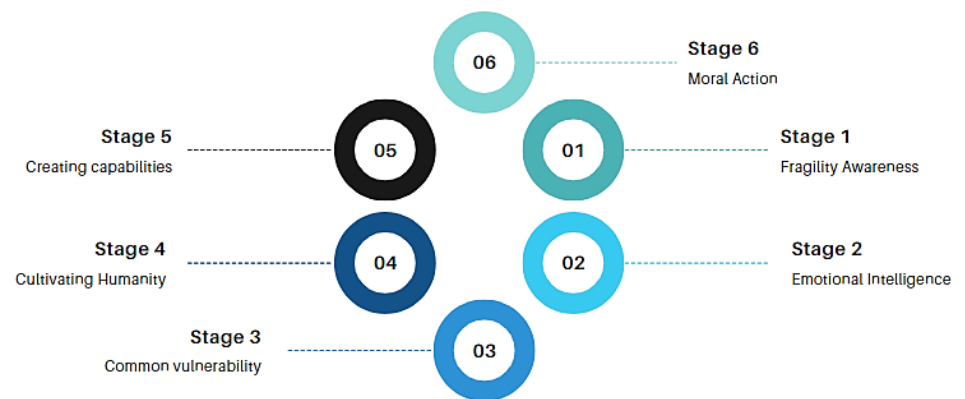


Figure 1. Compassion learning cycle.

Source: defined from the analysis on Nussbaum's important works.

This diagram explains that compassion consists of a moral cycle initiated by an awareness of human fragility. Such awareness requires emotional intelligence to understand our common vulnerability. When we understand and reflect on our vulnerability, we are motivated to cultivate human capabilities, followed by efforts to create such capabilities. Finally, human capacities are enacted through moral action. This unified process also suggests that compassionate moral action originates in the mind, is realized by the heart, and is driven by the will. Therefore, compassion cannot be located solely as an emotion, but is related to cognitive and conative capacities.

We build on some previous research on compassion, drawing on Nussbaum's ideas to determine whether compassion should be defined as more than just sympathy, or whether it should still be considered solely as an emotion. The entire research is based on the assumption that compassion is the link between the ethics of care and justice (Vanden, 2004); social ethics, participatory knowledge that encourages people to enter into suffering and sharing with others, reaching out to the perspective of the suffering and leading to transformative practices through the movement against unjust situations that cause the suffering of the poor, displaced and marginalized (Kim, 2012); a central element of medical care, an integral part of medical ethics; humble, powerful, and subversive as it avoids hierarchy, optimizes privilege, and contradicts libertarian and present-oriented industrial medicine (de Zulueta, 2015); pain of inadequacy and inequality, emotional identification and placement of self in the situation of others to manage difference; maintaining, promoting, and protecting equality (Brewis, 2017). In addition, Deane-Drummond (2017) states that empathy associated with compassion increases the responsibility to address all forms of suffering in order to support human flourishing. Compassion can provide ideas and information for institutional goals based on a capability approach guided by three crucial assessments: seriousness, responsibility, and concern for others (Sławiński, 2018). Compassion is closely related to vulnerability to others because it lies in three distinct domains: fragility, emotion, and transcendent experience (Orphanopoulos, 2019). We argue that previous research on compassion, based on Nussbaum's thought, still separates cognitive, affective, and conative capacities. Each researcher takes a different perspective to support Nussbaum's assumptions. However, this research critiques the separation of these three capacities by emphasizing the interconnectedness of reason, conscience, and will as capacities for moral action. In our view, understanding the dynamics of these three

capacities can help explain the essence of human existence through the core human value of compassion.

After reviewing Nussbaum's thoughts and previous research on compassion, the researchers identified a gap in the existing literature regarding the philosophical understanding of compassion. Specifically, there is still an effort to separate human moral capacities that lie in the mind, heart, and will. Some views show that compassion is categorized as either an emotion, a cognition, or a desire for moral action. This study also found that compassion is often associated with pity, sympathy, and empathy because it involves both emotional and cognitive elements in understanding the experience of pain. Nussbaum argues that compassion is a crucial moral emotion that shapes human interactions. However, she also recognizes the shortcomings of compassion, especially in the face of widespread injustice and violence. This research proposes a specific human moral capacity for compassion. We argue that cognition, emotion, and conation are a moral capacity based on the assumption that motivation constitutes a specific category of cognition (Kruglanski, 1999), emotion creates a specific awareness and understanding of the object (Starkey, 2008), and cognition can combine motivation and emotion to understand what Aristotle emphasized as intellectual virtue (Liu, 2012). Moreover, as Socrates explained, the highest realms of thought can be reached by first gaining an understanding of compassion. We have also found that placing affective capacities within their limits can affect moral reasoning, especially with regard to suffering. This is because emotions are reactive states that require motivation and reason to provide a better understanding of reality.

Based on the identified research gap, this paper aims to explore the interconnectedness of cognition, emotion, and conation as moral faculties through the consideration of pathos as suffering. By situating pathos as suffering, while still acknowledging its role as emotion and experience, this paper aims to demonstrate that compassion is intrinsically linked to suffering that highlights our vulnerability, the human capacity to live with pain, the collective experience of suffering, and the potential for individuals to recognize their own suffering. We argue that compassion can serve as an internal human moral authority, beginning with an awareness of human vulnerability, leading to an understanding of suffering, and ultimately culminating in the management of values in response to suffering. The internal moral authority of compassion represents a shift that combines ethical knowledge with humane action, using human cognitive, emotional, and behavioral capacities, making it a source of moral strength. This moral strength can be applied to various aspects of human life, including knowledge, understanding, reasoning, and moral action. Moreover, compassion as a moral technology aims to leverage human capacities such as *techne*, *episteme*, and *oikeiosis* to overcome the limitations of compassion, in line with Nussbaum's suggestion that a more empathetic society can be achieved through the cultivation of compassion and moral development.

2. Method

This paper considers a reductive explanation and critical studies approaches. Reductive explanation involves analyzing a general feature of a concept, simplifying the process of explaining a phenomenon in order to strengthen ethical arguments

(Baggini and Fosl, 2010). The reductive explanation of compassion was established by focusing on crucial evidence from Nussbaum's philosophy, explaining and reducing underlying assumptions, and finally demonstrating its coherence in actual implementation based on rational reconstruction. This type of reconstruction began with the integration of cognition-emotion-conation, and then followed with the integration of *techne*, *episteme*, and *oikeiosis* to enhance the capacity for compassion. According to Kaiser (2015), in order to construct a coherent account of reductive explanation, one must identify common claims and determine which ones should be included in the specific account and which ones should be dismissed as incorrect, odd, or inadequately explained. To further support the reductive account, we conducted a critical study of philosophical accounts of compassion. The critical study aimed to sift through the various definitions related to compassion and distill it down to its primary meaning, emphasizing the connection between compassion and suffering.

Consequently, in order to understand Nussbaum's notion of compassion, which derives from *pathos* as an emotion, a reductive account begins by defining compassion etymologically and associating *pathos* with suffering. This study considers the reductive account as a logical reconstruction of compassion, focusing on its cognitive, affective, and conative qualities, with the objective of developing a transformative moral technology. Compassion as a transformative moral technology is constructed through an analysis of *techne*, *episteme*, and *oikeiosis*, which Nussbaum discusses separately. This analysis aims to substantiate the argument that compassion enables individuals to recognize their own vulnerability, enhance their capacity to respond to the suffering of others, and optimize their internal capacities for behavioral transformation.

Defining compassion

We note that Nussbaum defines compassion as a fellow-feeling, an emotional upheaval that is considered as moral evaluative judgment, and a desire for action. (Nussbaum, 1996, 2001). Following Gallagher, Nussbaum defines fellow-feeling as a combination of emotion and cognition (Gallagher, 2009). This study defines fellow-feeling as derived from *sympatheia*, which consists of mutual dependence. *Sympatheia* is a Stoic concept that holds that all parts of substance are somehow related and interwoven, and therefore have a natural sympathy for one another. On the other hand, according to Aurelius, compassion is a competence that can be worked from providence to live in the present. There is an idea of *oikeiosis* (*oikeiotes*) which means integration, belonging and affinity. We assume that to put compassion as a fellow-feeling degrades its competence as a dynamic of thinking, feeling and striving. What Nussbaum offers here is a point of concern for us. Nussbaum lays out what we want to explore and strengthens or even criticizes her arguments. Nevertheless, there are some views that say that compassion is controversial and cannot be relied upon to make judgments about right and wrong. It is seen as a direct determinant of prosocial actions when it comes to altruism, representing the suffering of others. Compassion is described as a combination of sadness and love, as part of loving kindness, and as a form of emotion (Goetz et al., 2010). Compassion is also seen as an active action, emphasizing the importance of prioritizing humanity in the presence of suffering

(Casell, 2004); a call to humanity arises from the awareness that suffering alienates people from their existence, destroys self-control and the joy of human life (Hooft, 1998, p. 16). Compassion is considered to be a language that activates action or conceptualizes human action because it is related to the concept of agency, which is the ability to act immediately (Casell, 2004). According to researchers, Nussbaum has highlighted an indication of the capacity for compassion, but she breaks it up when explaining the basic social emotion. We argue that because compassion is a product of culture and society, it has never been a purely moral capacity due to its limitations in the emotional perspective. Since compassion is inherently derived from suffering, there must be a balance between self-awareness and social awareness, reasoning and understanding of suffering, and desire and motivation to alleviate suffering. On the other hand, other scholars have defined compassion as a combination of reason, emotion, expression, reaction, and action separately. This research carefully examines each perspective to define the cognitive aspect of compassion as well as emotion and conation.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to restore compassion to its etymological meaning. Compassion comes from the Latin word “patior, pati, passio” meaning “to suffer” and the Greek word “pathos-páschein” which includes suffering, anguish, experience, disturbance, manifestation, and feeling. Combined with the Latin prefix “com” meaning together and “passio” meaning to suffer, compassion is defined as “to suffer with, the act of suffering with, and being with suffering”. It is often considered an ancient concept that forms the basis of ideas about virtue. In different traditions and cultures, compassion is seen as an active action that is intimately connected with suffering, rather than as mere emotion, pity, or affection. Therefore, compassion should be recognized as the core of humanity (Lilius et al., 2011). Compassion consists of the ability to recognize suffering, understand the universality of suffering, have emotional resonance, tolerate uncomfortable feelings, and act with motivation to alleviate suffering (Strauss et al., 2016). According to researchers, compassion, based on its original meaning, could be defined as the core of humanity. We argue that as a core value for humans, compassion represents suffering and vulnerability, which are considered inherent human conditions. Of course, human beings suffer and are vulnerable in order to interpret the meaning of life and realize human values. This process could yield the best outcome if our cognitive, affective, and conative capacities work in harmony specifically in response to suffering.

Recently, compassion has been the subject of studies in psychology, neuroscience, physiology, sociology, and organizational behavior. Each field has reached different conclusions, which are outlined below. Compassion is an attitude that recognizes the universal nature of pain in human experience. It involves the ability to respond to that pain with kindness, empathy, equanimity, and patience (Feldman and Kuyken, 2011); the quality of self that must be cultivated for oneself and others through social relationships that allow for openness of mind and heart; mind therapy through an ongoing, consciousness-based process to increase the potential for radical acceptance of self and others (Gosk, 2011); the most stable foundation for secular ethics because it transcends religious, cultural, and ideological boundaries (Ozawa-de Silva et al., 2012); a summary of critical analyses that examine the policy domain to identify variations in responses to human suffering (Collins et al., 2015); an important element

in the activation of brain functions that influence social regulation with respect to the specific realities that humans face, so that compassion can be the highest human ethic; a motivation and guide to overcome life's difficulties, and thus has the potential to become a "programmed" ethical compass; interventions to increase the capacity to suffer together, attributes that affect human physiology, so that humans can transform into more ethical beings (Kirby et al., 2017); a human psychological construct; an adaptive function that enhances the human ability to care for offspring, foster cooperation, and promote prosocial behavior (Novac et al., 2021); social emotions with highly efficient regulation of positive affect; an affiliative response to the suffering of others (Forster and Kanske, 2022); a fundamental element of innovation theory, an important prerequisite to be fostered in the organizational sphere for innovation to flourish; the activation of flexibility capacity for organizations in situations of uncertainty, contributing to improved performance and organizational learning (Spännäri et al., 2023).

Based on these studies, we believe that compassion is a potential in all spheres of human life, especially for individuals, social groups, and institutions. For individuals, compassion involves the mind, heart, and will. In social spheres, compassion becomes a driving force for social movements and serves as a foundation for institutional innovation. In psychology, compassion is a dimension that helps cultivate inner capacities to be, feel, and act. Meanwhile, this research is a philosophical analysis of compassion that aims to define the basic capacities of compassion, focusing on its moral learning dimension in response to human suffering. Therefore, the main philosophical argument of this research, compassion is the ability and consciousness to suffer together, grounded in the desire to pursue the meaning of life and achieve moral transformation. The capacity to suffer together includes elements such as perception, imagination, emotion, presence, and action toward and within suffering. Compassion is an intelligence-driven urge to act in support of humanity that arises from the integration of cognitive, affective, and conative capacities as a moral agency. Viewing compassion as an emotion akin to pity, sympathy, and mercy perpetuates biases and hierarchies between the strong and the weak, the sufferer and the more fortunate, or the caregiver and the victim. We argue that redefining compassion as the act of suffering together emphasizes experiential learning, presence, and a sense of responsibility to alleviate suffering. The focus on "suffering together" implies a willingness to empathize with others and a commitment to thinking, judging, and acting with human qualities in mind.

3. Result and discussion

3.1. Result

This research defines compassion as the capacity to suffer together and as a transformative moral technology. Moral technology is a dynamic learning system based on the moral faculty that involves the fusion of cognition, emotion, and conation to transform behavior. Behavioral change is possible because compassion contains the capacities of *techne*, *episteme*, and *oikeiosis*, which are derived as moral resources in affinity with suffering. Through suffering, our conceptions of the good, our knowledge of virtue, and our relationships with others enable us to engage in moral reasoning and

decision making. Compassion is then defined as the moral foundation of humanity because it provides a mechanism to knowledge of reality, and subsequently acquiring values for moral action.

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1. Compassion: Integration of cognition, emotion and conation

Actually, in ethics, Nussbaum deploy compassion as an emotion that provide evaluative judgment and become a foundation to cultivate humanity through education. But, in psychological view, she put compassion as a kind of emotion that has a developmental history with a narrative structure. It must be a basic emotion to implement equality before the law and an essential emotion in politics. Therefore, we assumed that Nussbaum, in her cognitivist perspective, essentially integrates emotion, cognition, and conation in all areas of her studies. This integration is reflected in the three assumptions of this study. First, she emphasizes that compassion is an emotion. Like emotional intelligence, Nussbaum highlights compassion as moral reasoning and judgment about one's own suffering that arises from the emotional and psychological turmoil caused by the suffering of others. We define moral reasoning and judgment as the cognitive capacity and process for evaluating emotions such as anger, sadness, worry, and fear in the face of a specific reality. Cognitive evaluation enables a person's action to overcome the fluctuation of thoughts and feelings encountered. Nussbaum asserts that emotions are not only physical impulses, but also have cognitive content. In her view, various emotions, including compassion, are based on the subject's beliefs, although these beliefs are not always expressed or can be expressed in propositional form. Basically, we have discovered that these beliefs can be rational or irrational, depending on the validity and accuracy of the judgment. For example, if the emotional upheaval is based on a narrative description, it will provide a different perspective on the mind of the reader. However, it would be the same if the readers were experiencing the same suffering. But for Nussbaum, emotions are actually cognitive phenomena, implying that the subject has certain beliefs and can be the object of proper rational judgment. For researchers, this view implied that emotion was an inherent part of cognition, since Nussbaum made cognition a prerequisite for emotion.

Second, Nussbaum's compassion has a cognitive element. Cognitive ability is explained by three propositions of judgment about suffering: the seriousness of suffering, the worthiness of others to suffer, and the possibility of personal suffering. We define that seriousness, worthiness, and possibility provide a cognitive way to understand suffering because compassion denotes the similarity between self and others, who have a common vulnerability to pain through imagination as well as a common response to misery. Thinking about the value of suffering enables people to answer Socratic questions about the meaning of life in the process of being, becoming, and acting. Nussbaum's optimization of cognition to elaborate the phenomena of suffering becomes a therapy for the meaning of life. She also emphasizes that suffering requires the intervention of logos so that suffering can be critiqued, analyzed, and overcome. The therapy of suffering is compatible with Hadot's discourse of spiritual exercises to gain wisdom from life phenomena. According to Hadot, in the world dominated by passions, fears and lack of freedom, spiritual exercise is possible to

achieve a change of perspective and elevate the soul to a universal vision of things. We found that there are two lists of spiritual exercises, which do not completely overlap, but provide us with a fairly complete panorama of Stoic-Platonic inspired philosophical therapeutics that required daily or continuous repetition of practices. First, research (zetesis), in-depth investigation (skepsis), recognition (anagnorisis), listening (akroasis), attention (prosoche), self-control (enkrateia), and indifference to indifferent things. Second, reading, meditation (meletai), therapies of the passions, remembrance of good things, self-control, and the fulfillment of duties (Ding and Yu, 2022). The therapy also connected to Foucault's proposal about the care of the self. Foucault focused on maintaining the very idea of praxis as an ethical process of self-transformation. For Foucault, in addition to the techniques of power and knowledge, there is a technique of the self or technologies of the self. This technology allows individuals, by their own means or with the help of others, to perform a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, behaviors, and ways of being, so as to transform themselves in order to achieve a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality (Cremonesi, 2015). This study states that spiritual exercise and care could be specific training for the mind to recognize human vulnerability and capacity for suffering. Thus, vulnerability and suffering are part of human nature that enriches our moral knowledge. This assumption supports Nussbaum's description of the cognitive side of emotions, which is related to the subject's efforts to cope with pain, to care for self and others, and to make incremental evaluative judgments about reality. In the upheaval of emotions, Nussbaum explained that people judge situations based on positive or negative feelings, determining whether they are beneficial or harmful in relation to their most important goals and objectives. Nussbaum emphasizes that emotions are eudaimonistic in nature, reflecting judgments about the goodness of certain external objects (such as people, situations, or objects) for one's happiness or development. Therefore, emotional intelligence is also rational because it is closely related to the subject's cognitive evaluation of others through the experience of suffering. It is assumed that emotional movements require cognitive intervention in order to accurately assess reality; emotion becomes a prerequisite for the mind to effectively define the meaning of suffering or other phenomena.

Third, Nussbaum emphasized compassion as a conative capacity. In her work, Nussbaum explained that compassion becomes the basis for human action and movement in response to suffering and life experiences. Nussbaum emphasized desire, motivation, and preference. The conative capacity appears in the complexity of practical actions to shape oneself based on learning from the facts of life, including suffering. Although the term "conative" is not explicitly used by Nussbaum, it is clear from some of her works that the conative capacity appears in the desire or will to act. This study found that conatus appears in Spinoza's Ethics. According to Spinoza, human suffering can be overcome through understanding, the act of bringing the mind and body into suffering. Such an action could be done through conatus, which means the desire to know and understand suffering. Spinoza explained that the essence of every human being is conatus: the motivation to survive and thrive (Goldstein, 2022). Motivation or desire, influenced by emotion, anticipates moral choices and plays an important role in value inquiry. Petit stated that desire implies an activity in relation to

the environment, it integrates a conative dimension that is clearly intended to change ourselves (Petit and Ballet, 2023).

According to the researchers, motivation and desire can be defined as the willingness to endure any challenge and strive to improve life through planning, attention, and the realization of our inner capacities. Researchers believe that Nussbaum's focus on conative attributes such as desire, motivation, and preference give logical validity, intellectual coherence, and truth about reality to emotions and cognition. This emphasis can be seen in the role of compassion in moral judgment, which can lead to actions driven by the desire to help others. Compassion is a conative ability that relies on cognitive and affective excellence to understand the seriousness and value of the suffering of others. This connection is essential to understanding how compassion can drive moral behavior. We argue that a balance of cognition, emotion, and conation enables a community to take responsibility for its life stories, thoughts, and actions. Based on the analysis of Nussbaum's thought, we have identified an argument that compassion is the synthesis of cognition, emotion, and conation in the process of reasoning, judgment, and decision making in addressing the reality of suffering. We argue that compassion also involves theoretical and practical deliberation.

This study argues that through the synergism of cognition, affection, and conation, compassion means being with suffering, feeling suffering, and suffering together. First, the assumption of compassion as "being with suffering" reflects a complex process of human cognition. It requires us to be aware of our vulnerability to pain, while at the same time having the capacity to respond to, prevent, and alleviate suffering. This assumption could be compared to what Viktor Frankl put forth in man's search for meaning. He describes the process of experiencing suffering as something that is inevitable in human life. Suffering enables the individual to find the meaning of life and the meaning of sacrifice, a way to organize life and discover the transformation of life with the fact that all human beings are mortal, so that human actions can be responsible. Frankl (1963) emphasizes his assumption by quoting Nietzsche, who has a reason to live, can survive at any cost.

Second, compassion, defined as "to feel suffering with," can be considered a form of emotional intelligence. This intelligence is enhanced by social connections between oneself and others, enabling individuals to be present with those who suffer. Nussbaum argues that emotions provide practical knowledge; for example, the experiences of grief and love provide insights into the interconnectedness of self and others. So, it could be said that "to feel suffering with" is the ability to empathize with others who are suffering. It can provide insight into the moral standards of humanity. It allows us to reflect on moral dilemmas in life, rather than relying solely on the moral calculations of utilitarianism or the legitimacy of moral rules and principles such as Kant's universalism. Feeling suffering with" brings awareness through emotional upheavals such as grief, anger, and upset, which must be carefully evaluated to determine an appropriate response to suffering. This ensures that our reactions and actions are genuine and not driven by external calculations or unclear moral obligations. Nussbaum (1986) has already noted that the experience of suffering leads reason to contemplate the ultimate meaning of life and the undeniable variety of goodness. Therefore, we define responding to suffering with emotions such as pity and sympathy

as a guide to rational and compassionate action.

Third, compassion, defined as “to suffer or to suffer together,” is the conative power of realizing cognitive and affective capacities by engaging in the suffering of others. Nussbaum explains that emotions and desires serve as motivational tools that guide individuals toward acts of kindness. They are also cognitive in nature, as they provide insight into the presence of goodness and beauty, and are well developed in terms of recognizing value (Nussbaum, 1986). In our view, Nussbaum’s definition of compassion as a component of evaluative judgment creates a precondition for our desire to act by emphasizing the seriousness and worthiness of suffering. These elements have the potential to transform individuals by encouraging them to reflect more deeply on suffering and to be motivated to act out of recognition of the possibility of experiencing similar suffering in the future. Accordingly, our compassion for another’s misfortune is the distress and unhappiness we feel in response to that person’s apparent distress and unhappiness or to circumstances that lead us to imagine their suffering (Deigh, 2004). We argue that compassion, as an integration of cognition, affection, and conation, emerges from experiences of suffering. Compassion enables us to transform ourselves and our communities by recognizing the vulnerability and fragility of humanity. It compels us to tap into our human consciousness and ignites a passion for practical wisdom. This idea is consistent with Nussbaum’s view that if we believe that malice, ignorance, and indifference may be behind the suffering we witness, then this means that there is hope for change. Such hope is realized through movement and voluntary action through an ethical stance toward world phenomena, including suffering (Nussbaum, 1986). We affirm that the capacities of cognition, emotion, and conation work together to engage the world. This process begins with the intervention of cognition through knowledge, perception, and imagination of reality. The various sources of knowledge can lead to emotional upheavals that stimulate desires, motivations to react, manage and respond to reality. This study offers a description of how compassion as a moral source influences cognition, emotion, and conation in dealing with suffering, as seen below in **Figure 2**:

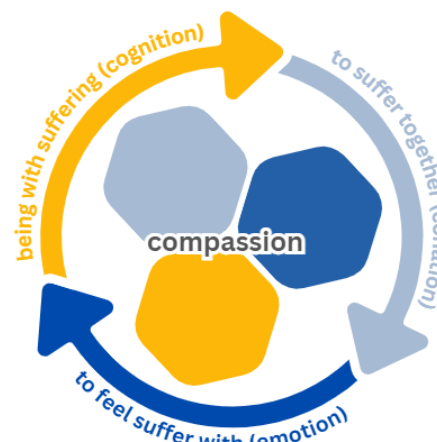


Figure 2. Compassion as integration of cognition, emotion and conation.

Source: processed based on the analysis of compassion and suffering.

This study confirms that compassion enhances our abilities in times of suffering. Therefore, compassion requires additional qualities to strengthen its moral capacity.

Compassion, as a combination of intellect, emotion, and motivation for action, involves the ability to be present and responsible in the face of suffering. It is rooted in the natural human condition of being both responsive and vulnerable. We found that these capacities can reveal internal tensions resulting from the experience of suffering, a concept supported by Nussbaum through her capabilities approach, which emphasizes the importance of valuing life. According to Nussbaum, the capacity to respond is related to efforts to respect human dignity, especially in the midst of suffering (Formosa and Mackenzie, 2014). While the capacity to feel vulnerable is included in one of the three qualifications that Aristotle established as elements of compassion for evaluative judgment, which are cognitive capacity, autonomous, and similar possibilities (Nussbaum, 2001). Although common vulnerability is not always acknowledged in response to suffering or misfortune, Nussbaum suggests that human flourishing is a common possibility and essential to fostering compassion (Deigh, 2004).

According to researchers, compassion can be a unique moral capacity to explore, acknowledge the causes of suffering, and act to minimize suffering if we optimize our capacity for responsibility and our capacity for presencing. We explore Levinas's thoughts on responsibility and Scharmer's idea of presencing to draw moral strength from compassion. According to Levinas, the capacity for responsibility, which consists of the ability to respond and the ability to be vulnerable, derives from sensitivity to the face. This sensitivity, according to Levinas, is a reminder that individuals become subjects when they are able to take responsibility for others. Levinas emphasizes that human beings are able to achieve a genuine inner sense of dignity when compassion is placed at the center of subjectivity. Therefore, the ethical value of response is inspired by the need and recognition of the suffering of others, because there is a useful suffering, namely compassion. Compassion is suffering in the suffering of others, the nexus of human subjectivity, the intersection of responsibility and subjectivity, a supreme ethical principle; compassion embodies hope and serves as a guiding principle for practical discipline toward others (Levinas, 1998). In suffering, there is an ability called "response-ability" which comes from affection and sensitivity. This ability to respond actualizes a priority of response through action, effort, desire, need, love, and compassion. Compassion is seen as a form of useful suffering. Levinas' concept of useful suffering asserts that individuals with compassion are able to make crucial choices through self-transcendence. Such a response could be defined as an action that aspires to life (Levinas, 1998). According to Levinas, responsibility is the fulfillment of action beyond the purpose that comes from the subject's being. Such action is capable of generating crucial discourse and serves as a means for human beings to survive in their existence (Levinas, 1998, p. 60). Based on Levinas' idea, we argue that compassion is not only a form of useful suffering, but can also be described as wishful suffering. By wishful suffering, we mean that people have the capacity to imagine suffering because of their common vulnerability. In this perspective, the face of the other offers an interhuman gaze that transcends the relative nature of suffering and brings it back to the fundamental level of meaning known as the awareness of shared vulnerability. This is what Levinas called a prerequisite for the human condition as an ethical subject. We believe that the realization of responsibility through compassion is a moral disposition based on individual freedom and awareness,

recognition of common vulnerability, and the desire to realize moral action. In our view, compassion as the actualization of such a responsiveness requires an inner-self presence.

Therefore, in order to enhance moral responsibility, it is necessary to explore Scharmer's concept of "presencing" and create a "compassion learning model" for transformation. Presencing, as developed by Otto Scharmer, refers to the ability to be fully present or connected to the deepest source of self in the present moment, allowing inner knowing to emerge. This concept equates inner knowing with cognitive dynamics, reflection, intelligence, knowledge, information, and consideration, allowing knowledge to emerge from the deepest level of understanding (Scharmer, 2008). Presencing is based on learning about the future through openness of mind, heart, and will, which supports action skills in addressing the changing dynamics of society at the individual and collective levels (Scharmer, 2008). This study suggests that optimizing the mind, heart, and will enables the "process of becoming" to serve as a mental model that influences the behavior of individuals, communities, and institutions. Because of the presencing initiated by Scharmer and the dynamics of cognition, emotion, and conation, according to Nussbaum's theory, consciousness is a process of becoming aimed at achieving a habitus of thought and action. This habitus can only be achieved when we acknowledge our interconnectedness with others within the framework of responsibility. In our view, developing a habit of responding to suffering through thought and action is crucial because human life is unpredictable, uncertain, and constantly evolving, requiring continuous learning. However, learning can only occur when cognition, emotion, and action merge into a single ethical faculty in the form of compassion, leading to behavioral transformation.

3.2.2. Compassion as learning system and moral reasoning

This study confirms that the integration of cognition, emotion, and conation can promote life transformation through a learning system and moral reasoning. The transformation begins with epistemic conditions such as knowledge, reasoning, and moral understanding acquired through learning from suffering, and leads to concern for human welfare resulting from sensitivity, presence, and realization of moral actions. It becomes apparent that human beings share a common moral roadmap consisting of honesty, justice, care, love, peace, and other virtues. These values suggest a universal moral principle of not harming or causing suffering to others. However, as the world progresses, the development of morality is often limited to concepts of good and bad, right and wrong. Moral reasoning and learning are hampered by critical questions about morality, which are often influenced by external forces such as norms, law, culture, tradition, and even religion. This study argues that reliance on external authorities can lead to moral actions based on premature claims or compromises about particular values, rather than emphasizing the qualities of humanity and compassion as moral imperatives that should serve as the basis for moral reflection and action. As a result, the internal impulse to ask what is good ends up with what is considered good in defending moral choices or logical justifications that determine actions, rather than reflecting on how "ought" should be defined (Aiken, 1953). In this context, compassion is affirmed as a system of moral learning and reasoning associated with philosophy's focus on natural human moral reasoning and judgment. To clarify why

internal moral force is more important than external values, we elaborate on compassion from the perspectives of *techne*, *episteme*, and *oikeiosis*. This account also addresses the need for contemporary moral guidance in the form of transformative moral technology.

This study presents important arguments about the capacities of *techne*, *episteme*, and *oikeiosis*, drawn from Nussbaum's exploration of Aristotle's philosophy. It seeks to uncover the primary rationale behind compassion as the cornerstone of human morality. We discovered that compassion is closely linked to Nussbaum's views on art and education in the moral development and cultivation of humanity. Nussbaum defines *techne* as an art, a capacity for action that saves human lives; knowledge and practical wisdom, judgment and deliberate action based on human awareness of the world (Nussbaum, 1986). *Techne* is the capacity of knowledge and skill to translate ideas about the good into action. It enables the acquisition of compassionate skills that can be cultivated through literature, drama, and history. The goal is to enhance the capacity of the imagination to participate in moral action in social life. In addition, Nussbaum explains *techne* as a means of controlling intervention to avoid confronting internal volatility. By exercising rational control over moral life, it demonstrates the relationship between responsibility and the ability to act (Weigelt, 2019). In Nussbaum's explanation, *techne* is an element of the mind that can control uncontrollable events such as fate and luck. *Techne* serves as a "cure" for human vulnerability, navigating the complexity of values in life and the power of desire, ambition, and the need to negate practical planning; a strategic choice to address various problems related to fragility and recklessness toward phenomena. Following Socrates, Nussbaum defines *techne* as the ability to save human life by organizing the choice of action (Nussbaum, 1986). *Techne* is associated with practical wisdom (*sophia*), which involves forward-looking thinking, planning, and forecasting. It requires the deliberate use of human intelligence to face the world and manage *tuche*, to manage needs, and to deal with future contingencies. Essentially, *techne* is a mental resource that provides the ability to support one's existence in new experiences (Nussbaum, 1986). Nussbaum also cites Aristotle's idea that *techne* is productive knowledge, which distinguishes *techne* as a technical skill from scientific knowledge, or *episteme*. This study found that through *techne*, moral knowledge and the concept of practical wisdom are acquired and used to achieve the goal of goodness. *Techne* as an element of intellect requires *logos* as reasoning, deliberation, and understanding. The optimization of *logos* is found in Nussbaum's cognitivist view of emotions, especially compassion, which explains that compassion involves understanding and judging the suffering of others. Such understanding and judgment are based on a recognition of the seriousness and importance of suffering. This is consistent with the idea of *logos* as reason and understanding, where compassion is a form of moral reasoning that directs our actions and judgments toward the reality of suffering. Nussbaum asserts that compassion involves recognizing the suffering of others. This recognition enables us to understand that we have something in common with others who experience undeserved misfortune (Nussbaum, 1997). We argue that such recognition can be achieved by optimizing *techne* and *logos* as learning mechanisms for compassion. Thus, compassion as a moral technology implies a system, principles, and guidelines for learning about the realities of life that enable us to put various

virtues into action. The moral technology of compassion is based on the dialectic of reality, learning, and managing values. This dialectical process is necessary for the moral development of individuals and communities because compassion enables the cultivation of moral skills (*techne*), the application of reason, knowledge, and understanding (*logos*) to implement moral action.

In line with the assumption of this study, Mark Alfano mentions moral technology as a third branch of moral capacity development. This concept expands the boundaries of normative ethics by incorporating elements of moral psychology. Alfano initially used the term moral technology to bridge the gap between moral psychology and normative theory by recommending ways in which we, as described by moral psychology, can become more like we ought to be, as prescribed by normative theory. According to Alfano, if moral education aims at inculcating virtues directly in the stages of moral development, moral technology aims at more than that, i.e., act in accordance with virtues; guidance and control of actions from a moral standpoint. It involves factual virtues, invented ethical behaviors, intellectual reasoning, learning of virtues, social expectations and the internalization of appropriate contextual features. He then added that moral technology involves elements of thoughts, emotions, and consideration of moral principles. This leads to the generation of specific types of thoughts and emotions through appropriate cognitive processes (Alfano, 2013, pp. 09,12,13). We argue that moral technology, which refers to the dynamics of cognition, emotion, and motivation for action, also entails a commitment to understanding human values that determine humane action. This study also affirms that moral technology emphasizes norms in the form of imagination as found in Plato's *Republic*. In essence, moral technology is a guide for thinking about the nature of the world, oneself, and others. This framework provides knowledge about how to manage feelings of connection with others and how to communicate with and about others. Compassion as a moral technology is rooted in an imagination based on the capacities of *episteme* and *oikeiosis*, which enhance ethical meaning through the capacities of responsibility and vulnerability (Nussbaum, 2001). We argue that compassion as a moral technology resides in our inner selves. It emerges from a sense of self, as Nussbaum emphasizes, through narrative structures that provide opportunities for moral learning and development. In this context, our moral actions are never justified solely by external forces such as the concept of the *panopticon* or an observer. Rather, our moral actions stem from our knowledge, our emotions, and our desire for the good.

As noted above, moral technology is based on epistemic capability. We define this based on Nussbaum's view that epistemic capacity begins with the recognition of vulnerability. This recognition then becomes the epistemological basis for compassion in human life. Epistemic capacities enrich our understanding of the suffering of others through emotional experience and the cultivation of compassion (Nussbaum, 2001). Compassion as a moral episteme consists of three cognitive elements: judging the suffering of others, evaluating the causes of suffering for oneself and others, and *eudaimonistic* judgment. Nussbaum (2010) also emphasizes narrative imagination as the basis for understanding suffering, as narratives are constructed from real events, ranging from universal face-to-face encounters to intimate engagements with reality. According to Nussbaum (2001), it is through tragedy, or narrative tragedy, that human beings encounter the paradox of joy, learning about oneself that can be interpreted

through knowledge. Nussbaum emphasizes the importance of rational knowledge in morality by highlighting the role of emotions, imagination, and critical thinking in the concept of care. According to her, caring is at the core of our ability to empathize and understand the limitations and vulnerabilities of others. Through compassion, individuals are able to recognize and respond to the suffering of others (Nussbaum, 1993). Based on the overall analysis of Nussbaum's thought, this study posits that the moral episteme of compassion encompasses scientific knowledge about morality. The development of moral knowledge is accompanied by continuous observation and analysis of human suffering in order to strengthen moral judgments and reasoning. We assume that moral knowledge progresses logically through propositions to conclusions that involve decisions to act in accordance with the idea and reality of suffering. From this perspective, compassion becomes an intellectual intervention through the ability to choose morally, since ethical disturbance of the mind is always a prerequisite for logical action. We argue that morality is more than the basic concepts of good and bad, right and wrong. It requires logical discernment in order to take logical actions that increase happiness and minimize suffering. The epistemic aspect of compassion involves thinking critically about how we can be morally good and what needs to be done as human beings to achieve our common goal of alleviating suffering. This epistemic exercise can be accomplished through interactions and connections, as emphasized by Stoicism, especially *oikeiosis*.

This research substantiates the assertion that Nussbaum frequently interlinks ethical concepts from the classical tradition with contemporary issues in her copious writings. *Oikeiosis*, in its essence, is connected to human cognition and nature as a rational being that progresses gradually from an initial focus on self-preservation to a comprehensive comprehension of the moral order in accordance with the self's constitution. In Nussbaum's view, this understanding enables the self to situate the other, even the unknown, at the core of the self's existence (Nussbaum, 1986). The authors explicitly identify *oikeiosis* in the concept of a cosmopolitan community, where human beings exist in a realm of interconnectedness and mutual concern, with the value of reason (Nussbaum, 1994). Nussbaum posits that reason is a foundational aspect of the internal divinity of human beings. She argues that by being rational and moral, all individuals possess infinite moral value regardless of gender or social status. Therefore, the dignity of reason deserves respect. *Oikeiosis*, defined as human kindness derived from a life that is controlled by reason and guided by the universe, is a circle of social and natural connections between people that fosters mutual understanding, care, attachment, and alignment. This circle serves to reinforce *oikeiosis* as the affective foundation of interpersonal relationships. In Nussbaum's perspective, *oikeiosis* is analogous to passion, which encompasses enthusiasm, desire, and a commitment to upholding human life based on reason and emotion through perception, reasoning, and sensitivity to ethical divergences with an orientation towards the greater good (Nussbaum, 1994). Another study defined *oikeiosis* as a capacity that encompasses both affective and cognitive elements, which serve to reinforce the motivation for prosocial actions (Søvsø and Burckhardt, 2021). Nussbaum posits that attachment to the bodily pain of others represents a natural state of prosocial motivation, emerging from the emotion of compassion. The prosocial motivation to endure suffering alongside others is intrinsic to the *oikeiosis* perspective

on human interconnectedness. At a more profound level, the element of compassion is embedded in the concepts of humane respect and care, concern for humanity, and benevolence towards others (Nussbaum, 2002). As posited by researchers, the capacity of oikeiosis in relation to compassion commences with an endeavor to discern the suffering of others, subsequently followed by a concern for the necessities and well-being of others. Consequently, the identification and concern that arise from this process become a fundamental motivation to experience suffering together.

This study confirms that oikeiosis encompasses the following characteristics: affinity, connectedness, logicity, wisdom, human relations with the universe, human desire, the tendency to protect each other, and the maintenance of human freedom. Oikeiosis represents the intricate web of relationships between humans and the universe. By recognizing this interconnection, humans can manifest compassion in the dynamics of their existence (Pilling, 2021). One might posit that the performance of virtuous actions represents a dedication to reason as the primary motivating force behind human action. This dedication is cultivated through the stages of moral development, particularly through the development of empathy and concern for others who are suffering. Nussbaum posits that oikeiosis necessitates that human beings orient themselves towards goodness and adapt to the design of the universe, which in turn must lead to action. The stages of moral development, from childhood to adulthood, facilitate the navigation of the pursuit of happiness towards the objective of the human good (Nussbaum, 1986). In this dynamic, the order of life and morality, with an orientation towards the good, also develops, influenced by logical reasoning and virtuous action. The capacity for reasoning develops in tandem with the expansion of awareness, given the accelerated growth of the human mind. Consequently, the process of learning enables humans to reflect their own experience in order to cultivate habits, character, agreement, or understanding of the good, thereby combating forgetfulness (Nussbaum, 1994). In this context, oikeiosis is the understanding that all living things have a natural drive for self-preservation. In humans, this drive develops into a rational understanding and knowledge of “the good” (Klein, 2016).

The authors posit that compassion is grounded in three fundamental concepts: *techne/logos*, *episteme*, and *oikeiosis*. They contend that it serves as the primary source of moral learning and reasoning. The concept of *techne-logos* encompasses both practical and theoretical knowledge that can be utilized to comprehend and mitigate suffering. *Episteme* provides a framework for moral reasoning and deliberation, offering guidance on how to respond and assist in navigating vulnerability in order to make moral decisions. In conclusion, *oikeiosis* represents a desire to act, a motivating force that drives us to actualize our potential for collective suffering. This capacity is shaped by our understanding of the common good and the actions required in our interconnectedness with others.

3.2.3. Compassion: Transformative moral technology

This paper presents an initial assumption based on Nussbaum’s thought and other views regarding the explanation of moral faculty, moral learning systems, and reasoning. It then goes on to describe compassion as a transformative moral technology. The moral technology of compassion represents an ethical system that integrates the principles of *techne*, *episteme*, and *oikeiosis* to enhance cognitive,

emotional, and behavioral processes through an awareness of suffering. The capacity for responsibility and the willingness to be present in suffering are identified as key factors for moral learning. The conjunction of these faculties constitutes the basis of this moral technology, functioning as the “engine” for interpreting suffering, self-assessment, and attaining the pinnacle of intelligence, or nous. This model highlights the significance of compassion in moral development and emphasizes the necessity of a comprehensive approach that integrates diverse aspects of learning and understanding into human life.

The concept of “nous” can be defined as the foundation for human actions based on its original explanation. This is because nous is a source of truth from the universe, connected to human existence and mental state. It enables humans to organize their perceptions, judgments, and experiences through cognitive, affective, and conative capacities. In classical philosophy, nous is the faculty of the human mind that is necessary for understanding truth, reality, and the actions of goodness. In his work, Aristotle defines nous as an intellectual faculty, or the capacity for reason, which is a component of the soul that is capable of knowledge and understanding. He differentiates between nous and the faculties of sense perception, imagination, and rationality, although these are closely interrelated. Plato posited that nous, or reason, was a faculty of the human mind that could attain a grasp of the intelligible world (Menn, 1995). This study revealed that Nussbaum does not delve into the concept of nous in any substantial manner. In her significant work, *The Therapy of Desire*, Nussbaum posits that our intellectual journey must contribute to the resolution of the most painful problems of human life and to the advancement of humanity. Nussbaum referenced Aristotle’s perspective on practical wisdom as an intellectual virtue (Nussbaum, 1994). One may portray Nussbaum’s perspective as a foundation for nous and elucidate the significance of learning from suffering as an intellectual journey to practical wisdom. This study examines the notion that attaining nous, as postulated by Nussbaum, necessitates the cultivation of individuals who are capable of discerning meaning in life through their capacity to comprehend and interpret the world (Nussbaum, 1986).

This study considers the role of nous as an important intellectual element of compassion. The concept of compassion encompasses knowledge, emotion, and motivation to suffer together, all of which are sourced from an intellectual movement. This movement has its roots in nous, as it encompasses knowledge about suffering, emotional responses to pain, and a desire to take action to alleviate suffering. The association between compassion and nous demonstrates that suffering is an intelligible phenomenon, one that can be understood by the human intellect and imbue life with meaning, as well as determine the appropriate course of action as a moral agent. It can thus be stated that nous represents the fundamental capacity of reason, emotional intelligence, and motivation, enabling the acquisition of knowledge from suffering, the attainment of self-awareness, and the performance of moral actions. This is demonstrated by the conceptualization of compassion as a moral technology, as **Figure 3** illustrated below:

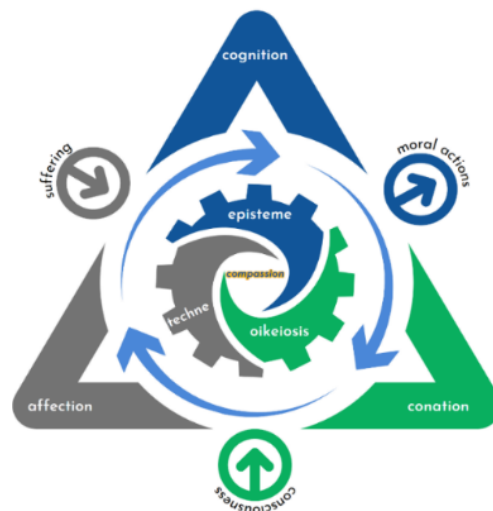


Figure 3. Compassion moral technology.

Source: This diagram defined based on the result of the research.

This research proposes that compassion moral technology acknowledges the reality of suffering, represents inner knowing, and defines moral action as an outcome. The involvement of cognition-affection-conation in the experience of suffering serves as a catalyst for cognitive processes, emotional responses, and behavioral actions, with the objective of transforming individual conduct in order to alleviate distress. Moral technology is centered upon compassion as nous, which represents the core of the learning process. Compassion serves as a foundation for attaining knowledge and wisdom, including scientific knowledge (episteme), theoretical wisdom (sophia), practical wisdom (phronesis), and skills or arts (techne), with the objective of comprehending the root causes of suffering. The compassion moral technology comprises three principal phases: firstly, the recognition of the reality of suffering; secondly, the initiation of a learning process; and thirdly, the development of efficacious management strategies.

The process of recognizing reality commences when humans are confronted with suffering. They then proceed to gather as much information as possible, with the objective of achieving factual knowledge. The recognition of suffering enables individuals to establish a connection with the emotional aspect, thereby facilitating empathic understanding of the pain of others through the imagination. Others may prompt individuals to examine a range of portrayals of suffering in their thoughts and emotions. The deliberate use of imagination is a crucial element in the process of logical reasoning, which in turn informs appropriate action. Secondly, the process of learning commences with the act of “presencing” in the context of suffering. The act of being present in suffering facilitates an understanding that humans should not be subjected to unnecessary pain and that others may suffer in the same way. The presence of suffering provides an opportunity for individuals to engage in introspective reflection and examination, thereby enhancing their capacity for action. As neuroscience demonstrates, brain structures such as the amygdala and the prefrontal cortex play a pivotal role in regulating actions and optimizing cognitive function. In periods of distress, individuals and communities can leverage their cognitive faculties to envision alternative scenarios, engage in creative thinking, reflect on past

experiences, anticipate future outcomes, and address psychological obstacles such as anxiety and self-criticism (Kirby and Gilbert, 2017). Thirdly, moral action is driven by the desire and intention to alleviate suffering and promote human welfare. This impulse has its genesis in internal potential and is directed by value management. This entails the selection and prioritization of actions that are suitable for the context, conditions, and progression of others' suffering. However, moral actions may be misaligned with the context of suffering, which can result in further distress for individuals and others. Once the values have been crystallized, the conative power is activated, resulting in compassionate action. These actions are undertaken by individuals who have consciously chosen to do so, based on personal values that are not necessarily aligned with moral, legal, spiritual, or socio-cultural guidelines. Accordingly, the capacity for compassion for all inherent human elements has the potential to evolve into a transformative ethical framework, a moral arc with the following moral learning model, as shown in **Figure 4** below:

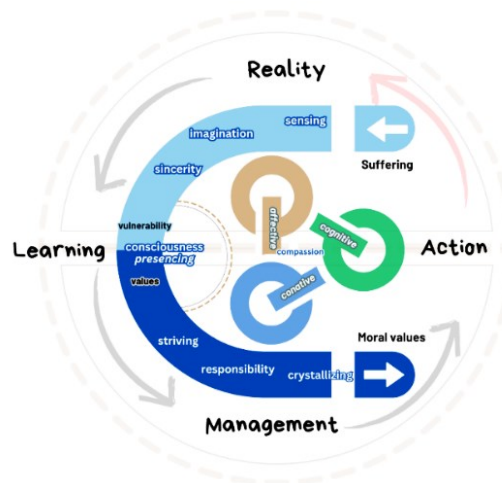


Figure 4. Compassion as transformative ethics.

Source: This diagram defined based on the result of the research.

We maintain that compassion as a transformative ethical practice can be understood as a learning methodology that emerges from the experience of suffering. This learning is followed by a willingness to endure suffering alongside others, ultimately leading to action aimed at alleviating suffering. This process is grounded in three fundamental concepts: *techne*, *episteme*, and *oikeiosis*. These form the basis of consciousness towards the highest human intellect, which is called *nous*. The argument is that suffering does not diminish human worth; rather, it enables individuals to translate the idea of goodness into practical wisdom through action. The term “compassion” is defined as the act of suffering together or the capacity to endure suffering collectively. This approach is grounded in intelligence, emotion, and passion for human values, which collectively stimulate our attention and drive to uphold the highest values of life. Moreover, the concept of compassion as the ethical practice of suffering together is regarded as a transformative force that motivates moral action. The integration of cognitive, affective, and conative capabilities as a form of knowledge and “technology” facilitates the realization of moral wisdom through the experience of suffering together. This process optimizes attention to oneself and others,

ultimately leading to change. The objective of this research is to present a moral learning framework that can be utilized by individuals, communities, and institutions to facilitate ethical development. We posit that through continuous learning and compassionate action, individuals can contribute to the development of a more harmonious and virtuous society.

The researcher puts forth the argument that moral compassion technology has the capacity for transformative action through two key components: deliberative imagination and ameliorative actors. In his writings, Aristotle distinguishes between two types of mental imagery: sensitive and deliberative imagination. He asserts that all animals possess a sensitive imagination. However, deliberative imagination is a distinctive human capacity, as it entails intellectual or cognitive processes. Aristotle posited that this type of imagination is rational imagination (*phantasia*), which has the capacity to integrate empirical sensations. Such imagination facilitates moral decision-making, not only in analogous circumstances, but also in the formulation of prospective solutions based on prior experiences (Barnes, 1984). This study identified deliberative imagination as the most effective mechanism for moral reasoning, based on the evaluation of suffering and the formulation of logical decisions to act. This necessitates the performance of emotional assessments with due consideration of individual differences. Deliberative imagination allows individuals to delve into their own inner experiences while also gaining insight into the suffering of others, which is crucial for experiencing shared pain. Ameliorative actors are individuals who engage in activities aimed at reducing suffering and fostering compassion within society. The potential for moral compassion technology to significantly enhance empathy and address human suffering is considerable, particularly when deliberative imagination is leveraged and ameliorative actors are engaged.

This text presents the concept of ameliorative actors. Ameliorative actors are individuals who utilize their full capacity, encompassing self-awareness and empathy for others, to gain insight from adversity and instigate constructive behavioral alteration. These individuals accept suffering and pain as inevitable aspects of life, viewing them as potential avenues for personal growth and development. Ameliorative actors are moral agents who not only accept and acknowledge suffering, but also utilize their mental faculties and imagination to promote moral action that is grounded in universal human values. By cultivating deliberative imagination, ameliorative actors seek to achieve an “open-integrated morality,” which refers to an inclusive and comprehensive moral view that recognizes human vulnerability and fosters compassion for others. Compassion has become a foundation for ethics in medical education. This is based on the premise that when one is touched by others’ misery, the otherness inside oneself is revealed (Leget and Olthuis, 2007). Compassion is a central and necessary element of good medical care. This is because it is embedded in a framework of reciprocity and shared meanings. Compassion is also underpinned by an ethic of virtue (de Zulueta, 2015). Compassion has become an important concept that has a place in both medical care and ethical practice (Fairchild, 2021).

Nevertheless, compassion can be applied to all aspects of life. In contexts of conflict, for example, compassion can function as a moral force for the resolution of disputes and as a source of inspiration for humanitarian action in the event of a catastrophic natural disaster. Researchers posit that compassion may assist students in

developing self-awareness, cultivating a culture of care through loving-kindness, and enhancing their capacity for introspective reflection within the classroom setting. In social and professional contexts, compassion can be exemplified by educating individuals about the reality that suffering and pain are inherent to the human experience. Those in political office who evince compassion may draw inspiration for new policies and philosophies that establish humane standards as the foundation of their new government paradigm. In light of the aforementioned qualities of compassion, this study posits that it can be regarded as a transformative moral technology. It is a learning mechanism, an absolute cure for human life, and a system for moral development. Its aim is to eradicate all forms of inequality, including the treatment of others based on just principles, recognition of our common beginning, vulnerability, and end. We posit that learning from suffering enables us to perceive others as integral to our lives. Consequently, compassion should be regarded as an integral component of moral knowledge, moral learning, and moral reasoning, and as a foundation for personal, social, and institutional moral development.

4. Conclusion

This study defines compassion as a moral concept that involves three key elements: an understanding of the reality of suffering, a consciousness of suffering, and a desire to find meaning in life. This process allows everyone to reach their moral behavior based on the understanding that learning from pain and vulnerability is essential for achieving harmony between reason, emotion, and action. It can be stated that acknowledging the severity of pain necessitates cognitive intervention; recognizing that suffering is not solely the responsibility of the victim can be defined as emotional intelligence; and striving to alleviate suffering can be characterized as a conative capacity. Because, compassion enables everyone to recognize each other as fellow rational and social beings in achieving human flourishing. Therefore, based on its capabilities, compassion can be defined as the ability to suffer together and it can also be defined as a transformative moral technology. In a world where human life is increasingly devalued through the complexity of suffering, we offer compassion as a moral learning framework based on common suffering and reinforces the importance of moral reasoning, knowledge, and action. Further research is recommended to investigate the role of compassion as a moral technology in practical contexts.

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