



5 Skills We Need for the Year Ahead



Humility- In 2020, we were humbled by the coronavirus. Humility makes us question our assumptions and opens us up to other people's ideas. It is a first step in self-compassion; when we have a modest view of ourselves, we see our flaws more easily and can judge ourselves less harshly. This can be helpful in dealing with personal setbacks. Gratitude and a greater sense of connection with others can follow.



Compassion- Around the world, COVID-19 brought tremendous suffering, and we felt the pull of compassion: a sense of empathy and desire to take action. We were inspired by essential workers and first responders moving toward danger to help. To feel compassion, one must witness the suffering of others—and that simple acknowledgement is a humanizing act. In 2021, we can rely on compassion as a source of inspiration and energy to move forward.



Awe- Awe is the feeling we get in the presence of something vast or beautiful that challenges our understanding of the world. In 2020, those special vacations didn't happen, contributing to the sadness many of us experienced. Awe makes us feel more alive, more humble, more generous, and less self-centered. Awe can be cultivated simply by walking slowly and looking more carefully at the surroundings for wonder and beauty. An "awe walk" in nature can generate positive emotions and greater sense of social connection.



Purpose- Purpose is an intention to achieve a long-term goal that is personally meaningful and makes a positive mark on the world. In 2020, many of us found purpose in teaching our kids or caring for neighbors or in political and social activism. Living with purpose requires stating our purpose. When the purposeful work we do becomes routine, we can fail to appreciate it. We all need reminders of why we do what we do, and what larger values it serves. If the pandemic has given you a deeper sense of what's important, now is a good time to think about how you can serve those interests moving forward.



Love- One of the few bright sides of 2020 was the greater sense of shared humanity that many of us developed—and, a deeper concern for others and awareness of our need for connection. We can advocate for what we now know—that an open-hearted, connected world is a healthier one. Love as defined by researcher Barbara Fredrickson is a moment-to-moment experience of warm, mutual caring that we feel with any person—even strangers—in everyday interactions. According to her research, our brains are wired to look for this love and if we have this mindset, we can see the world as a source of expanding connectedness and well-being.

Source: **Dr. Leif Haas** of the [Greater Good Science Center](#)

