

# Compassion in Action Facilitator Kit



Compassion in Action

**Compassion** = love your neighbor

**Action** = do something



Trac5, A Bold Path to Peace  
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**Compassion in Action** is a grassroots local outreach initiative of Trac5 where diverse communities of faith partner together and offer a tangible solution for a need in their community.

## **The Goals of Compassion in Action:**

- 1) To build meaningful relationships between people of diverse faiths
- 2) To recognize a need in the community and fulfill it together

***The final result is a physically, emotionally & spiritually revitalized community***

## **Examples of Compassion in Action (CiA) Projects:**

- Feed refugee families
- Create an ESL tutoring program for second language kids
- Day of service at the local mosque or church
- Put on a program at the elderly retirement home that blesses the residents
- Develop a food program for the homeless population
- Host a carnival for underprivileged kids
- Organize a food drive
- Host an Eid/Thanksgiving dinner for under-resourced people
- Clean up a park or public space
- Come up with your own—get creative!

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## **Partnership Development:**

Trac5 is involved in strategic partnerships with both Muslim and Christian organizations throughout America and the world. If you would like to get involved in your community with an organization of another faith affiliation—we can help get you connected!

## **Trac5 Ambassadors:**

Compassion in Action projects are typically facilitated by a Trac5 Ambassador who has been nominated and appointed to represent Trac5 in a particular local community. If you are interested in learning more or becoming a Trac5 Ambassador please contact us.

## **Contact Information:**

Direct all questions and enquiries to Mark Casey at [m.casey@trac5.org](mailto:m.casey@trac5.org)

## **Compassion in Action Process:**

### **Step 1- It starts with one person of peace with a vision for reconciliation**

Be the agent of change! It only takes one person who is willing to reach out across the religious divide and begin fostering friendships and building bridges of trust. This is the fertile seedbed where change begins to occur in the hearts and lives of individuals. The critical component to genuine friendships developing in this manner is—NO AGENDA! The individuals are not moving into these relationships with the intent of changing, converting or evangelizing the other; rather, they genuinely respect the faith of the other and enter into friendship with the desire to learn more about the other and build authentic friendship.

### **Step 2- Engage the broader community in the process**

As individuals from different faiths engage in genuine friendship, they begin to open their network of friends up to the other. As the camaraderie grows and expands in the circles of influence then there is a natural environment to work together.

### **Step 3- Establish working partnerships**

As the friendships develop look for receptive organizations and leaders that would be willing to partner for a CiA project. A CiA project could be as simple as a Muslim family and a Christian family uniting to do a project, or it could be a Mosque partnering with an Church to build relationships and work together.

### **Step 4- Choose a project that will bless your community**

Strategically come up with a project that will be a value-added blessing to some group in your community. Both the Bible and the Qur'an stress the importance of blessing the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the refugee; so this is a great place to start. It can be as simple as serving an elderly widow by cutting her grass and doing yard work, it could be cleaning up a public park and having a cookout afterwards for fellowship, or it could involve raising funds and feeding the homeless. Not only will some group in your community be blessed by your actions, but the diverse participants will be greatly blessed by working together in the process.

### **Step 5- Raising funds for your project**

After choosing your project and coming up with a budget, you need to come up with funding for the project. Maybe the supporting organizations (ie: church & mosque) that are partnering are in a position to contribute to the cause. If not, there are always individuals and businesses that are looking to give financially toward a tangible peacemaking project. Contact local business leaders and cast the vision for your project. Ask them to be a sponsor for the event at one of the sponsorship levels you determine. For example:

Gold Sponsor	\$1000
Silver Sponsor	\$500
Bronze Sponsor	\$250

By giving options, you don't give off the impression that you want them to support the whole \$5000 cause, and you also give them the framework to determine their level of commitment.

It is always a good idea for the partnering groups to share in the costs associated with the project. Split the costs and responsibilities down the middle so that both groups are involved in the entire process, and there is no animosity of one group feeling like they are carrying the whole load.

It is also a good idea to have the volunteers for the project share in some level of commitment and contribution. When we did a CiA project that provided food for refugees, we had the volunteers bring 10 predetermined canned food items as part of their service. The other fresh produce, meat and other items were purchased in bulk using the corporate sponsors funding.

\*\*\*Donations are given to Trac5 as a tax-deductible contribution, and the Trac5 Ambassador can expense up to 50% of the money raised to facilitate the event. So if you need \$1200 for your CiA event then you need to raise at least \$2400 from local sponsors. A \$1000 minimum needs to be raised per CiA project. This is what allows Trac5 to continue doing its peacebuilding work.

#### **Step 6- Develop leadership teams and divide responsibilities**

Identify the individuals on both sides who are leaders, administrators, and action takers and then turn them loose to plan and coordinate the event. Have them report up to you as the point of contact, and you will deal directly with a Trac5 Director.

#### **Step 7- Have an amazing event**

With the proper planning and implementation in place you can have a very successful and life-changing event for all involved. Make sure and focus your attention not only on the project vision itself, but make sure to cast the vision to all your participants to build friendships of significance with the other volunteers from different backgrounds.

#### **Step 8- Follow-up after the project**

After all the details have panned out and you had a successful event it is a great idea to launch a press release talking about the dynamic work that was accomplished. This is where you can mention the sponsors by name to repay their kindness as well as highlight the participating organizations and the project itself. Make sure to send group e-mails to the volunteers as well since these participants will be some of your biggest fans for future events and initiatives.

Sample CiA Press Release: <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2010/10/prweb4607104.htm>

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#### **Example of a Successful Compassion in Action Project:**

Trac5's Director of education and programs, Mark Casey, started the process towards a successful CiA Project one year prior to launching the project. It does not need to take this long, but the amount of time it takes is equivalent to the level of relationship developed. If you already have quality relationships formed across religious lines then you will be able to move more quickly.

Mark was out there doing the work of peacemaking when a wonderful friendship developed with some Muslim friends who had just started an organization designed to help solve the problems of systemic poverty. This new non-profit organization provided a unique opportunity to partner and get Muslims and Christians working together.

Trac5 acted as the organizational hub and linked up Christian volunteers from a local church with the predominantly Muslim volunteers of the relief & development organization.

The result was an amazing event that brought a community together in friendship, camaraderie and blessing others.

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## **Other Needs**

### **Documentation Required:**

As the facilitator for the CiA event, you are responsible to get a volunteer to take photos, shoot videos, and properly document the event. This may include launching press releases, submitting a story to a local newspaper, or posting the story on your website.

Trac5 requires that you share relevant pictures, provide a summary of the event by filling out the (CiA Event Report form), and help craft the CiA website update on the Trac5 website.

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For more information on Compassion in Action including coaching on how you can launch your own project contact:

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