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A JOURNEY TO COMPASSION

CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR, AUTHOR FELIPE MERCADO LAUNCHES A JOURNEY TO COMPASSION

New book details share insights how compassion can help those become their authentic selves

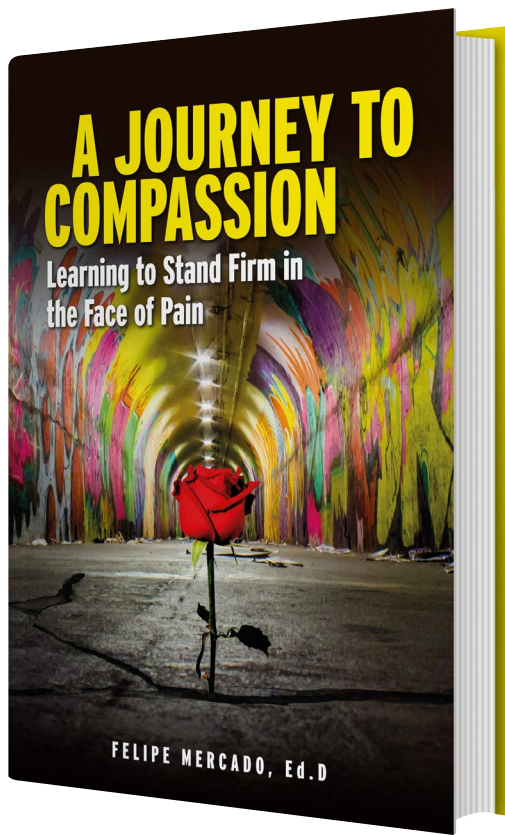


(Fresno, California) Feb. 24, 2023—When Felipe Mercado, Ed.D, a California State University professor in its Social Work Department, looks back at his life, one constant ingredient has helped him overcome many personal challenges: compassion.

He illustrates this in his moving and powerful new book called "[A Journey to Compassion](#)" which takes readers into various stages of his life as a Latino, sharing raw and authentic experiences from his childhood that have shaped his adulthood. These experiences provide insight into how individuals of color and poverty struggle adversity, lack of self-compassion, and cultural appreciation while growing up in a traumatic environment and community.

By introducing compassion and the concept of "seguir adelante" as a way to discover and sustain our authentic self in a world that often tells us to conform, Mercado hopes to relate his experiences with people of color or in poverty and share how these personal life chapters can be challenging for individuals and groups to embrace their culture, uniqueness, and become their authentic self.

Mercado's intention for writing his book is to share knowledge and wisdom he wished he had growing up in a tumultuous and chaotic life in Sanger, California. His experiences with his late brother Sammy and his late best friend David gave him the spark to write this work.



As a young teen, Mercado recalled being part of a graffiti crew called Wise Soul with the vision for themselves to grow into wise souls as adults. Each member had specific names and numbers for their identities. Mercado's name was Epic, David's name was Firm and number was 26K.

"The title 'A Journey to Compassion; Standing Firm in the Face of Pain' honors these experiences and highlights the wisdom I wish I had to share with my brother Sammy and the message I share with all youth and adults today," Mercado said. "To be a person of color, who dealt with all that I have in life and to be here to share my story, it felt like my obligation to honor my brother, best friend, and all the youth, families, and communities that I see struggling and believe there may not be hope for people who come from Poverty 4x."

Mercado presents his life path that included poverty, homelessness, drug addiction, a stay in juvenile hall, fatherhood at a young age, and acceptance to college, making sense of this all with compassion.

"For me, growing up with these experiences was like society wanted me to be ashamed of what I lived through, but as I learned compassion and embraced who I was, I realized that my story, my culture, and my quest to find compassion was the biggest strength that I had," Mercado said.

He talked about learning about compassion in 2018 by enrolling in a course with the Compassion Institute. It changed his outlook on life and how he could help others in his position as an educator.

"When I finished my year's journey to become a certified compassion teacher with the Compassion Institute, I felt compelled to make changes in my life, because the way that compassion was having me see myself, my past, and the world around me enlightened me in a way that I had been searching for my whole life," he said. "By feeling firsthand what compassion could do for a human being, I felt obligated as a social worker, counselor, and educational leader, to create spaces that we could share as human beings and possibly begin to heal the hurt we see in our world today."

"A Journey to Compassion" is available on [Amazon](#).



ABOUT FELIPE MERCADO

Dr. **Felipe Mercado** is a distinguished leader and expert in education, counseling, and social work. He is currently a professor at California State University, Fresno, where he shares his expertise with students in the Social Work Department. As the founder of Wise Soul LLC, Felipe has been able to apply his philosophy of compassion, leadership, and inquiry to support individuals and communities, making a lasting impact on countless lives. With over a decade of practical experience, Dr. Mercado has worked in a variety of roles including as an elementary principal, deputy principal, vice principal, social worker, cultural broker, and counselor. He holds an Ed.D and MSW, which he has leveraged to blend best practices from different disciplines, creating innovative ways of being human together and being productive.

In addition to his impressive work history, Dr. Mercado is a new and upcoming author who has written his first book, *A Journey to Compassion: Learning to Stand Firm in the Face of Pain*. This book addresses topics such as poverty, compassion, social work, education, and mental health and has been praised for its insightful and practical approach. Dr. Mercado's extensive experience and expertise have earned him numerous awards and recognition for his contributions to education, counseling, and social work. He is a Certified Compassion Cultivation Teacher with the Compassion Institute and a Mindfulness and Happiness Coach with The World Happiness Academy. Dr. Mercado also has training and experience in Dare 2 Lead, Emotional Intelligence, Trauma-Informed Healing, Compassionate Leadership, Social Work, Counseling, Education, and Administration, which he uses to inform his innovative approaches to teaching, leadership, social work, and counseling. Dr. Mercado's inspiring pedagogy has motivated countless students, professionals, and individuals, making him a sought-after speaker, coach, and consultant. With his extensive knowledge and passion for helping others, Dr. Mercado is sure to continue making a positive impact in the fields of education, counseling, social work, and youth.

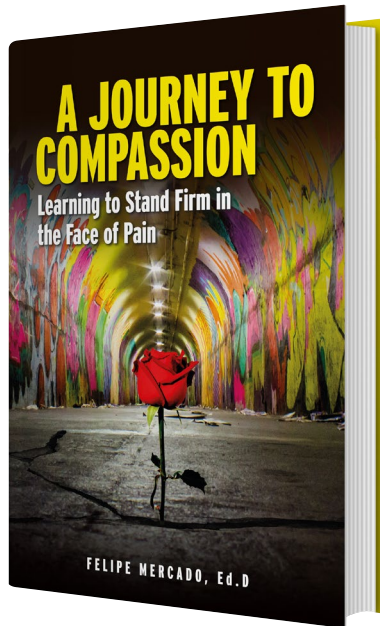
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ABOUT A JOURNEY TO COMPASSION: LEARNING TO STAND FIRM IN THE FACE OF PAIN:

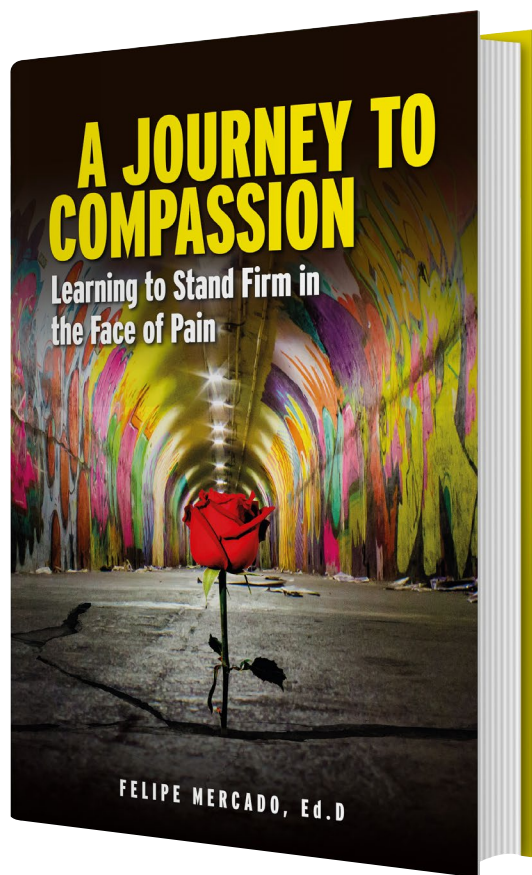
In *A Journey to Compassion*, Felipe Mercado takes a deep dive into various stages of his personal life, sharing raw and authentic experiences from his childhood that have shaped his adulthood to provide insight on how individuals of color and poverty experience racism, systematic oppression, and a lack of self-compassion and cultural appreciation while growing up in America.

By introducing compassion and the concept of “seguir adelante” as a way to discover and sustain our authentic self in a world that often tells us to conform, Felipe hopes to relate his experiences with people of color or in poverty and share how our experiences can be challenging for individuals and groups to embrace their culture, uniqueness, and become their authentic self.

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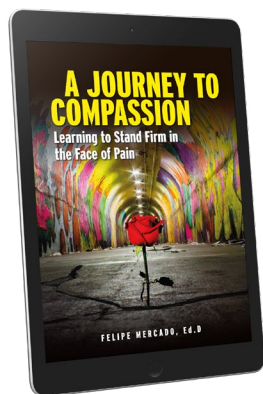


PAPERBACK:

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HARDCOVER:

- **Publisher:** Fig Factor Media Publishing
- **Publication Date:** February 8, 2023
- **Language:** English
- **Page count:** 262
- **ISBN-13:** 978-1-959989-01-1



EBOOK (COMING SOON)

- **Publisher:** Fig Factor Media Publishing
- **Language:** English
- **ISBN-13:** 978-1-959989-04-2

BOOK FACT SHEET

Author presents readers his journey to compassion: As a young Latino, Felipe Mercado grew up in poverty in the small town of Sanger, California knowing that the odds were against him. His family life was defined by chaos due to his parents' mental health and drug issues and the prevalence of gangs. For most of his teen years, he was homeless, fell prey to drug addiction, became a father at 20 and saw loved ones die. In his new book *"A Journey to Compassion: Learning to Stand Firm in the Face of Pain."* Mercado said these events pushed him to a place where he became more compassionate, and less driven by his hate, ego and pain. Mercado, who is a MSW and a professor at California State University, Fresno in its Social Work Department and founder of Wise Soul LLC, wants readers to understand his personal insights on how individuals of color and poverty experience racism, systematic oppression, and a lack of self-compassion and cultural appreciation while growing up in America and become their authentic selves.

Finding Compassion and Happiness in a Turbulent World: Felipe Mercado, Ed.D, MSW and PPSC., is the author of *"A Journey to Compassion: Learning to Stand Firm in the Face of Pain"* and founder of Wise Soul LLC which provides facilitation and evidence based practice to help clients with embracing challenging relationships and managing the stresses of modern society. As a certified Compassion Cultivation Teacher with the Compassion Institute and a Mindfulness and Happiness Coach with Happiitude, his mission with both his book and his practice is to increase compassion and happiness. Mercado explains that compassion can serve as a super power for human beings and our ecosystem, can help heal individuals' past experiences, eliminates their egos and reveals their authentic selves.

Presenting Mental Health From a Cultural Viewpoint: Felipe Mercado's mission as a social worker, counselor, and educational leader is to promote the development of a culturally, linguistically, and healing-responsive mental health system that transcends national borders. His visionary approach centers on a thorough understanding of the systemic oppression that has historically perpetuated poor mental health outcomes, particularly for people of color and those living in poverty within Western societies. Dr. Mercado contends that traditional clinical training tends to focus on categorizing individuals and designing treatment regimens to address their immediate symptoms, rather than recognizing and addressing the underlying environmental and historical conditions that have given rise to these symptoms. As a result, he seeks to reshape the mental health landscape by advocating for a more holistic and contextually informed approach that situates individuals' symptoms within a broader social and historical framework. Through his work, Dr. Mercado aims to promote greater awareness and understanding of the role that culture, language, and healing practices can play in supporting mental health and well-being, while simultaneously challenging oppressive systems that perpetuate mental health disparities.

- Tell us about yourself and Wise Soul LLC.
- What prompted you to write this book and what was the process like to do this book?
- What is your goal with this book?
- You paint a difficult and painful picture of your personal life. Can you tell us how you dealt with these situations?
- At what point did you transform your life for the better? What was the breaking point?
- What are some examples that you are seeing of racism and oppression that people of color still experience today?
- What are the problems that you are seeing when it comes to mental health treatment and people of color?
- Why is compassion so important to have in life?
- What is the concept of “seguir adelante?”