Empathy is the ability to identify with the emotional state of another. You can feel someone else's pain.

Sympathy is about feeling pity and understanding what a person may be feeling but you don't feel what the person is feeling. There is certain distance from the feelings of the other, although you can cognitively understand. You are aware of the pain of another.

Compassion is not passive, acceptance is not the same as passivity. Compassion leads to some sort of action because you are doing what is within your purview to relieve suffering. It can be listening, holding a hand, but it can also lead people to start movements, call a senator, start a foundation, etc.

It is in recognizing and being mindful of who you are, awareness of what personal strengths you have that can guide you to take action. The main difference between empathy, sympathy and compassion is going one step further and taking action to relieve the suffering of another or yourself.

With compassion you feel the pain of another (empathy) or you recognize that a person is in pain (sympathy) and you do your best to alleviate the suffering. When a person is compassionate, they do not run away, or feel overwhelmed or pretend suffering does not exist. The person is able to be present with another while they are suffering. The simple act of being present with another or listening to another can help relieve their suffering and at same time regenerate the person that is being compassionate. Compassion is a constantly renewable resource.

Excellent resources to review first are noted in yellow highlight. Compassion theory and concepts are being studied, discussed and taught internationally with health care professions and in the business world. All of compassion concepts are related to emotional intelligence as well because mindfulness, acceptance of what is, not trying to change reality is a big part of being present. You also learn to recognize your own responses and learn that the only thing you can control is your response to a situation. If you keep wishing it to be different you cause yourself suffering.

**Websites:**

http://ccare.stanford.edu/research/
http://self-compassion.org/about/
http://centerformsc.org
https://heartsinhealthcare.com/
https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/
https://www.spiritrock.org/about
https://chrisgermer.com/meditations/
https://www.sharonsalzberg.com/
https://www.tarabrach.com/
https://jackkornfield.com/
https://www.dalailama.com/
Books:

1. Braving the Wilderness- Brene Brown, 2017
2. The Anatomy of a Calling - Lissa Rankin, 2015
3. Ageless Soul - Thomas Moore, 2017
4. Time to Care: How to Love your Patients and your Job - Robin Youngson, 2012
6. Counter Clockwise - Ellen J. Langer, 2009
7. No Time like the Present - Jack Kornfield, 2017
8. Self-Compassion- Kristen Neff, 2011
10. The Body Keeps Score - Bessel Van Der Kolk, 2014
11. The Mind Body Code - Dr. Mario Martinez, 2014
12. Journey to the Heart - Melody Beattie, 1995
13. The French Art of Not Giving a Shit - Fabrice Midal
14. Moving Inward the Journey to Meditation - Rolf Sovik, 2005
17. The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion - Christopher K. Germer, PhD, 2009
28. Whatever...Love is Love: Questioning the Labels We Give Ourselves – Maria Bello, 2015
29. Wouldn’t Take Nothing for My Journey Now – Maya Angelou, 1993
34. In Awe of Being Human: A Doctor’s Stories from the Edge of Life and Death – Betsy MacGregor, MD, 2013

Articles:
Allen AB, & Leary MR. Self –Compassion, stress, and coping. Sociol Personal Psychol Compass. 2010; 4(2):107-118


Stuntzner, S. Compassion and self-compassion: Exploration of utility as essential components of the rehabilitation counseling profession. Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling, 2014; 45(1), 37-44.