

Lovingkindness Meditation

- Intro
 - Reflection on last week's practice
 - "Metta" meditation in buddhist tradition
 - "Heartfelt well wishing towards others and towards oneself"
 - "Softening of the heart"
 - Allows one to feel more emotion towards others and towards oneself, and "opens up the heart" in this way
 - "We will be practicing this cultivation of lovingkindness, starting with ourselves, and then moving outwards towards someone we know well, then someone we don't know as well, and then even broader towards the entire world. We will also be
- Sitting meditation
 - Get comfortable
 - Quick body scan
 - Dignified relaxed posture
 - Looking into ourselves
 - Create a place, set aside the constant "doing", "non-doing" = "being"
 - Stillness, Slowness
 - Awareness and Acceptance
- **Breathing**
 - **Awareness to breathing** and how it feels in the body
 - In different places
 - **Awareness of Attention (CRUCIAL) -- Satipaṭṭhāna (SA-tee-pa-TAH-na)**
- This practice does not involve either positive thinking or even pretending to be thinking positively -- we don't need to feel genuine love or even kindness towards someone who we are meditating around. Rather, we meditate on our intentions, and express our wishes for the well-being and happiness of ourselves or others.
- In metta practice we water the seeds of our good intentions. When we water wholesome intentions instead of expressing unwholesome ones, we develop those wholesome tendencies within us.
- **metta is more than conventional friendship, for it includes being open- hearted even toward one's enemies, cultivated perhaps from empathy or from insight into our shared humanity.**
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- Lovingkindness towards yourself
 - Through the breath, you can bring yourself in and hold yourself in your heart and mind, and imagine yourself there
 - This practice is very powerful, and so you don't need to have a perfect image of them, and any image that you have will be very powerful
 - **Wish yourself well, "May I"**
 - **Be safe and protected, free from inner and outer harm**
 - **Happy and contented**

- **Healthy and whole**
 - **Experience well-being and ease**
- Expand lovingkindness from yourself to an individual that you are very close to (family member, close friend or acquaintance), or someone you have great affection for. Hold them in your mind and in your heart, and generate a similar sense lovingkindness towards them that you hold for yourself.
 - Through the breath, you can bring them in and hold them in your heart, imagining them in your heart
 - Loving-kindness is also understood as the innate friendliness of an open heart. Its close connection to friendship is reflected in its similarity to the Pali word for friend, mitta.
 - **Wish them well, “May she, he, or they”**
 - **Be safe and protected, free from inner and outer harm**
 - **Happy and contented**
 - **Healthy and whole**
 - **Experience well-being and ease**
 - Linger in this moment of lovingkindness, and be in full awareness of what you are saying and the intention behind it ***REPEAT PHRASE***
 - [Pause] (3-4 minutes)
- Generate this attention towards someone that is more neutral, or someone you’ve only heard of second-hand (like a friend’s friend)
 - **Wish them well**
 - **Be safe and protected, free from inner and outer harm**
 - **Happy and contented**
 - **Healthy and whole**
 - **Experience well-being and ease**
 - Linger in this moment of lovingkindness, and be in full awareness of what you are saying (not mechanically, like mantra) and the intention behind it ***REPEAT PHRASE***
 - [Pause] (
 - If wandering or struggling, practice mindfulness, and tune in neutrally into what’s going on. Maybe refocus concentration. Including yourself in the lovingkindness and repeating and feeling these phrases.
 - [Pause] (3-4 minutes)
- Expand your lovingkindness towards someone who is problematic for you -- difficult past, or who have harmed you or you consider an obstacle or hindrance than a friend
 - This is not aimed at forgiving them or absolving them, but recognizing that they too are humans, have aspirations, and probably want to be happy and safe
 - Only to the degree that you feel ready or open to trying it, extend lovingkindness to them for all the difficulties that lie between you two
 - **Wish them well**
 - **Be safe and protected, free from inner and outer harm**
 - **Happy and contented**
 - **Healthy and whole**

- Experience well-being and ease
 - [Pause]
 - May all beings...
 - Be safe and protected, free from inner and outer harm
 - Happy and contented
 - Healthy and whole
 - Experience well-being and ease

- You can use this practice at any level or levels, and you can sustain this for as long as you want. You can direct loving kindness towards anyone, or just yourself.
 - Towards one person, or someone you know well, or people you don't know
 - You grow your sense of love to incorporate more maybe → Love is limitless
 - Neighbors and neighborhood, state, country, the world. Pets, wildlife, all life, or as specific as you want
 - Even public figures, who you may disagree with and even have ill feelings for. They too are worthy of lovingkindness.
 - Or all those less fortunate than yourself, all those you are at mercy of enemies, all those who are sick and dying, all those in chaos and violence and fear. They all want to experience these things
 - Sometimes you may notice as you are practicing this meditation, that people will accidentally slip in without your awareness. It is interesting in these situations to reflect on why and how this happened. Maybe your heart is bigger and wiser than you think.
- Concluding thoughts, breaths
- Reflection Questions
 - How was this practice, and how did it differ from other practices
 - Did you notice any difficulty (e.g around people you did not particularly like?)
 - Any interesting reflections on the process? Anything you would have changed?
 - Challenges? Triumphs?
 - Anything anyone would like to share?

<https://www.mettainstitute.org/mettaarticle.html>