

## Lovingkindness Meditation for everyone

Make yourself comfortable on your chair or cushion, sitting with a relaxed but straight, posture, with your shoulders soft and relaxed. (Pause)... Allow your hands to rest comfortably in your lap. Gently close your eyes... (Pause)...

Becoming aware of the body...your posture...and breath.

**Checking in to your body** ...noticing what's here.

Open to whatever is to be experienced in the body at this moment... letting go of judgments ... just being with what is here for you now at this moment... having a sense of arriving at this moment

Feeling the sensation under your feet... the point of contacts with your cushion or seat...

**Becoming aware of the breath** in a way that is easy for you...noticing sensations at the nostrils as you are breathing slowly in and out .... Or the wave-like movements of the belly as you are gently breathing in and out... In this practice, we begin with the **intention to cultivate loving-kindness**. We may or may not have the feelings... but we can rest on our intention to pay attention with loving-kindness. We all have within us, this natural capacity for lovingkindness, but it is not always accessible. But we can always come back to our intention to practice lovingkindness for ourselves and others. We can cultivate this friendship that is unconditional and open...gentle...supportive.

Lovingkindness begins with the intention. It is a natural opening of a compassionate heart...to ourselves and to others. It's a wish that everyone be happy.



**We begin the practice by sending ourselves some lovingkindness**...allowing our hearts to open with tenderness to our own self. Now, allow yourself if you can to open up to your basic goodness... to your own good intentions. You might remember times you have been kind or generous. You might recall your natural desire to be happy and not to suffer. If acknowledging your own goodness is difficult, look at yourself through the eyes of someone who loves you. What does that person love about you? Or, you may recall the unconditional love you felt from a beloved pet... It may help to use the imagination and to picture yourself as a young child standing before you...perhaps 4 or 5 years of age... if that allows tender feelings of kindness to flow more easily towards yourself...

And, as you experience this love...notice how you feel in your body. Maybe you feel some warmth...or heat in the face. Maybe you can smile within and gain a sense of expansiveness. This is loving kindness, a natural feeling that is accessible to all of us...always. Resting with this feeling of open, unconditional love for a few minutes ...(Pause) Letting yourself basked in the energy of lovingkindness...breathing it in...and breathing it out...inviting intentions and feelings of peace and acceptance...

So, **beginning now to wish yourself** well by extending words of loving-kindness to yourself.

You are welcome to change the phrases and to choose some other phrases that resonate with you, using whatever words express your wishes of loving-kindness toward yourself and others.

And now, offering these words to yourself...

*May I be filled with lovingkindness*

*May I be held in loving kindness...*

*May I feel connected and calm...*

*May I accept myself just as I am...*

*May I be happy...*

*May I know the natural joy of being alive...*

And, now repeating in the mind these words of friendship and kindness to yourself once again...

*May I be filled with lovingkindness*

*May I be held in loving kindness...*

*May I feel connected and calm...*

*May I accept myself just as I am...*

*May I be happy...*

*May I know the natural joy of being alive*

**Now you can open the circle of lovingkindness by bringing to mind someone who is dear to you.**

Someone whom you care about and who has always been supportive. Reflect on this person's basic goodness, sensing what it is in particular that you love about him or her. In your heart feel your appreciation for this dear one, and begin your simple offering...

*May you be filled with lovingkindness*

*May you be held in loving kindness...*  
*May you feel my love now...*  
*May you accept yourself just as you are...*  
*May you be happy...*  
*May you know the natural joy of being alive...*

**Now bring to mind a “neutral” person.** This is someone you might see regularly but don't know well...It might be a neighbour, a grocery store clerk  
Bring this person to mind now, and repeat the words of loving-kindness...

*May you be filled with lovingkindness*  
*May you be held in loving kindness...*  
*May you feel my love now...*  
*May you accept yourself just as you are...*  
*May you be happy...*  
*May you know the natural joy of being alive...*

And now, if it's possible for you, bring to mind someone with whom you've had a **difficult relationship**. Perhaps it's someone you don't like to feel sympathy or compassion for. Seeing if it's possible to let go of feelings of resentment and dislike for this person. Reminding yourself to see this person as a whole being...deserving of love and kindness. As someone who feels pain and anxiety...as someone who also suffers.

Seeing if it's possible to extend to this person the words of loving-kindness in your mind... resting on your intention to cultivate loving-kindness.

If you find that you cannot do this, that is okay, just choose someone else for whom it is easy to send some loving kindness.

*May you be filled with lovingkindness*  
*May you be held in loving kindness...*  
*May you feel my love now...*  
*May you accept yourself just as you are...*  
*May you be happy...*  
*May you know the natural joy of being alive...*

**Now, allow your awareness to open out in all directions...**yourself, a dear one, a neutral person and a difficult person...and of all beings...humans and animals living everywhere...living in richness, poverty, war, peace, hunger, abundance...Aware of all the joys and sorrows that all beings experience... Repeating...

*May all beings be filled with lovingkindness...*  
*May all beings be happy...*  
*May all beings awaken and be free...*  
*May all beings be happy...*

And now, bringing this practice to a close **by coming back to extend kindness to yourself**. Sitting for a while and basking in the intention and goodwill of loving-kindness that you may have been generating.

This handout was written by Marie Bloomfield, Clinical Psychologist, M. Psychol., MAPS. July 2019.

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