

Guided Meditation: Love For No Reason

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Hello and welcome. And as an introduction to today's topic, kind of a continuation and culmination of this week's discussion about love, that the Buddhist orientation towards life, to freedom, to love... is radically different than how most people live their lives. And some of the differences are that some people, naturally enough, have themselves at the center. Everything gets referred back to themselves. It's about themselves. And so if it's about me, myself, and mine, some people then are very concerned about my feelings, my thoughts, my beliefs, my experiences, my victimhood, my assertiveness.

And it's almost maybe unconscious how strong this orientation around self, me, myself, and mine can be. Other people put themselves aside, and they focus the reference point as others, and the needs of others, the preferences of others, and that's their orientation. And so the thinking mind is very much involved, right, in self-concern, very much involved with concern about others in some way or other. The *Dhamma* way is a third way. And for people who don't know this third way, it can seem insignificant, it can seem not valuable or even possible. And that is to let go of self-concern, let go of other concern.

And if anything, be situation-centered, to be realized that the whole world of our direct experience arises from a center that we inhabit. And that when we let go of selfishness, we let go of greed and hatred, envy, hostility, and jealousy, avariciousness, judgmentalism, comparing ourselves to others, judging others. There's this radical simplifying that there's a room then in that freedom for something profound to surface. And this is a love that may be best described as love that has no object or love that has no reason, that love that is not because of someone being lovable. It's not love that needs somebody to love. It's not someone including oneself.

There is a love that radiates. There's a care, kindness that radiates as a natural capacity. If you turn on a heater, a small little room heater, it radiates heat. That radiating of heat doesn't

need a person to be there to receive the heat. The heater has no consciousness, so it doesn't have any concern about itself. It just radiates.

A light bulb is the same way. And why these mechanical things maybe shouldn't be used as a metaphor similarly for human beings, I don't know another metaphor for this, that there is a way of being present that is not self-concerned, not other-concerned. If there's any concern at all, it's a concern to get out of the way for profound human functioning. That's inconceivable if we're tense, if we're afraid, if we are filled with desires, filled with ill will and hatred. But when all those subtle and we feel at ease, at home, settled... a peace where even our self-concern disappears. It's a new world we live in, and there can be a love for no reason, for no object, that is more satisfying than any other love.

So to assume a meditation posture, and with the idea that there's something very precious here, more precious than self-concern, more precious than concern about outcomes and life and futures and pasts. And it's here, centered here, where you happen to be. And to gently close your eyes and let attention reveal itself in your body. Let sensations, experiences, embodiment be a revelation that arises from within, the way the body, the vitality, the vibration, the aliveness of your body comes along independent of your desires and aversions, your fears. The emergent experience of being alive here in this body. Part of the emergence, what emerges, arises is breathing.

Probably for a good long part of your life, breathing has occurred without your conscious efforts to breathe. Breathing occurs without reference to me, myself and mine. In a loving way, maybe the breathing is a little bit like windshield wipers that clears the window, windshield of drops of water. Every inhale and exhale clears the drops of thoughts and self-concern. Clears away the way the mind gets caught in subject-object relationships. There's something deeper than that.

The emergent, the natural functioning of sensations, breathing, feelings, gently lovingly, clearing the window of awareness with every breath. And when new drops of thoughts arise, allow them to arise without taking them as me, myself and mine. Just drops on the windshield of life as breathing clears them. No need to interpret or explain or come to conclusions about anything. Allow simply experience to reveal itself from within, independent of your usual self-reference. Your self-concern can be put on rest.

That doesn't need to be here, as the deeper, emergent experience of life invites you to, invites a relaxation, a settling here and now. Chances are that self-concern is a form of agitation, stress, even if it's very subtle, even if it's about something good and inspiring. There is a place within of no stress, of no agitation, where there's a sense maybe of contentment,

at-homeness, peacefulness, maybe at the center of the emergent experience of aliveness. A place within that's quiet, that is not shaped or colored by thoughts and ideas, judgments, of me, myself and I, to trust, entrust yourself to this quiet, quietness that reveals itself deep within, and deep within, independent of me, myself and mine, not personal, not impersonal, just a life that lives through us. Can you find, recognize, feel something in the family of love?

And I'll offer some words. Maybe one of these words, or all of them, maybe characterizes an innate natural radiance of love deep inside, maybe very subtle, kindness, care, warm-heartedness, gentle friendliness, love, compassion, goodwill, tenderness, gentleness, warmth, wholeness. And with breathing as your anchor, breathing as your doorway, stay close to whatever natural, quiet, silent form of love that radiates from within you, that needs no object, needs no subject, that just is. And as we come to the end of the sitting, to imagine that like a heater that radiates warmth out beyond itself, so you radiate love beyond yourself out into the world. Maybe as a form of warmth, maybe as light. And imagine, feel, sense the warmth, the light of your love.

Reaching out into the world, touching everything with love. Anything that comes into awareness, anything you think about out in the world, gets touched with the warmth of your kindness, your goodwill, your care, compassion, a love which is not personal, but a natural radiance spreading into the world, carrying these sentiments with it. May there be safety for all. May there be help for all. May there be peace for all. May there be happiness.

May there be freedom. May there be love. May the natural capacity for human love be the way that we live together. And may each of us contribute to a world where a natural, simple care, kindness, and love is kept alive. A candle that keeps burning. We never allow it to be extinguished. Thank you.