

## Guided Meditation: The Pleasure of Goodwill

**Gil Fronsdal**

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Hello, everyone. I offer my warm greetings from IMC and I'm delighted that you're there to participate here with this. And the delight I feel and my warm greetings to you all speaks to something that I want to emphasize today, that there are things we do for others, attitudes we have, activities we do for others, that benefit ourselves, that is good for us. So if I sit down here and say good morning and warm greetings, it just feels like that's giving expression to a warmth, a delight, a joy, a joy, a love that I have that feels really nice here that's in relationship to you participating here with this YouTube event that we have together. And that when we're looking at loving-kindness, love, one of the reference points for it, but it's definitely not the sole reference point, is that it benefits us to love, it nourishes us, the love has a good feeling. Whether the love creates the good feeling, or whether the good feeling is first, or comes simultaneously with the love, it's an interesting question. I kind of prefer the latter.

But that, and the reason this is important, is there is a principle that's most commonly or emphasized by the Dalai Lama, that if you want to be happy, have compassion for others in his language. Care for others. But it's more broad principle than that, that if you want to be happy, it might be richer, if you can, to do so, have your happiness arise out of a love for others, a goodwill for others, an appreciation for others, respect for others, a resonance with others, the trustworthiness that we can develop together. That if we are trustworthy, it feels good for we. It feels good for me. And so this mutuality and this kind of reference point that something is growing and maturing, developing within ourselves as we love is maybe not a message that we often get because the focus is on others.

It's all about them. It can't be about ourselves. It's not about ourselves. And it's also not so healthy to be all about ourselves and not about others. But there's something magic, something very special in the alchemy in that relationship between self and others, where when

that relationship resonates in a good way, when there is care and when there is love that we offer others, we have for others, we're uplifted. It feels warm. It feels lightening and delightful that I like to represent with the simple word yes.

So many different ways that yes can be said. They can be like a dictionary of all the meanings of yes. But it can also mean love, appreciation, respect, residence, goodwill, trust, and affirmation of yes that just opens the heart, delights the heart, and say yes to loved for another, yes to that person, yes in our appreciation. You know, it's clearly a kind of opening to the person, but what opens in us just feels delightful, feels joy or happiness or inspiration or goodness. And without that, maybe the love, the care, the compassion, maybe it's very partial. Maybe it's truncated in some way.

So to assume a meditation posture and to... And as I keep saying, that to some degree the posture that you assume, rather it's sitting, lying down, standing, whatever it is, whatever way you need to be for your body, that you have it be a posture that is intentional. There's some engagement with a body. So it's not a completely passive posture because you think you're supposed to just completely relax. There is a kind of some intention there around which there can be relaxation. And if you're sitting, some uprightness, some alertness in the posture with the spine, the chest.

Even the arms are placed carefully in a position that for you represents being here, grounded, present. The arms and hands are not an afterthought. They're integrated in a posture of attention. Gently close the eyes, and then gently, as a good friend to yourself, begin roaming around within. Just check in. How are you?

And can you do it as a friend who does it non-judgmentally, non-reactively? Just cruise around your mind, your heart, your body to say hello. Check in. How are the different parts of you? As if you're allowed to be as you are. And you're on a journey of discovery.

This is how it is. And then can you in some way find the middle of it all, a settling place, a grounding place, the center of gravity. And as you exhale, relax into that place, taking a little bit deeper, fuller inhale, feeling broadly the whole body in whatever way is easy, and softening on the exhale, softening the body. As you exhale, softening the mind, softening around your thinking. And then for a few breaths, centering yourself with breathing, giving yourself over to the breathing, the body breathing, as if the breathing is here to reassure you, to invite you more fully into the present.

And then now, bring to mind some person or people for whom it's easy for you to have goodwill, to wish well, people you might love or have a lot of friendship for, someone you have

delight and joy in knowing. It doesn't have to be someone you know personally, but someone who, for whom your heart says yes, that they're even alive, something inside changes for you in relationship to this person or people, that it has a good feeling, a warmth, a joy, an inspiration, a goodness, a pleasure, that you know them, that you somehow know them enough to be inspired, appreciative, and the goodness you feel that might be very subtle, could be anywhere in the body, chest, the heart, the arms, the face, the head, the belly, all of those areas. And however it is, subtle or not, see if you can accompany those feelings with your breathing. Keeping this person in mind, as if breathing are like the gentle waves washing up onto the sand, being absorbed in the sand, some of it washing back out to the ocean, so your breathing washes through whatever good feelings you have for knowing these people with a quieting of your thinking mind so you can be more intimate with the feelings in your body, the feelings in your mind of this goodness.

And as you breathe, maybe in the rhythm of breathing, have simple thoughts, simple attitudes of goodwill, well-wishings, where your delight, your appreciation, respect, resonance, goodwill is like a warmth or a light or a gentle wind that spreads from you towards these people. And as you breathe, maybe in the inhale, maybe the exhale, offer a word of care, of love, maybe saying the word happy, or safe, or free, or maybe the word yes. Yes, may they be happy. And as you offer them goodwill, *mettā*, imagine they're taking it in. They're receiving it. While you also take in the goodness, the pleasure of having such love, having such attitude of yes, maybe with a small smile, may they be happy.

And may you be happy with your goodwill for others. It's a wonderful thing. It's a gift to have a degree of friendliness and goodwill, love for others. Allow yourself to share in that goodness as you have *mettā* for others. What can open in you so that you radiate or can offer kindness? What can you trust in yourself that you can offer goodwill?

What pleasure is there in love that is not about wanting something for yourself, but a love that wants the best for others? And as we come to the end of the sitting, to again check in with yourself, let your attention be. Move freely, roam freely around you inside to feel your body, your mind, your heart. How are you now that's different than when you started? Is there any kind of way that you are now calmer or more settled, more open that predisposes you to being kind, friendly, loving? And does that disposition have a pleasure in it? A satisfaction, and to open up your attention, your gaze out across the world.

To take the pleasure, the goodness of your ability to care for others, to spread and expand your goodwill in your thoughts, in your heart, in your mind, in your vision, out across the lands, sending the light, the warmth of your care, may all beings be happy, may all beings be

safe, may all beings be peaceful, may all beings be free. And may we all together contribute to making this possible. May our collective efforts today make a difference in this world. Thank you.