

Guided Meditation: Metta for Self and/or Easy Person

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Welcome and welcome to our guided meditation together here and continuing in this ongoing series on, right now, on *mettā-samādhi*.

And here it's to be, *mettā-samādhi* is to be immersed, absorbed, forest bathing, in bathing in the experience of goodwill.

And there's many component parts of goodwill that we've been talking about and of love that I've been talking about over these weeks.

And so hopefully some of these begin to come together into a wider field, a wider experience, with one part of it being something to settle into, and kind of starting to get absorbed in the specific, and so the whole comes along.

Today, this week, I'm going to talk about the categories to which the classic instructions do loving-kindness, do *mettā*, and I'm going to reframe them a little bit.

That the idea is to, the principle behind them is to start with where it's easiest, and then as it's easy, develop it there, and then to begin exploring how to have the same goodwill to where it's not so easy until that becomes easy, and then outward, outward to the difficult people.

And so it's a practice of keeping, learning to open the heart, learning to find a healthy way, to have universal goodwill for everyone.

So that's the direction it's going.

And classically it begins by doing goodwill, practice towards oneself, holding oneself in a lot of positive regard, holding oneself in well-wishing, wanting to support yourself and benefit yourself.

Even if you don't feel that you deserve it or something, part of you can wish you to be well, wish you to be safe.

And some people find it easier to do a friend or someone they have a lot of warm affection for.

And today I'd like to suggest a combination of the two.

And so you can choose doing it to yourself, doing it to someone who's really easy, or this new way that I do that I'll offer to you.

And that is to gently rotate, starting with one of those, self or the good friend, and do some rounds of goodwill towards them.

Radiate them, open your heart to them.

Kind of feeling the impulse of kindness, goodwill, the pleasure of it, the warmth of it.

Feeling the, knowing the thoughts and the phrases of goodwill that give expression.

And so do it to oneself or do it to anyone's easy, someone, and then switch, then do the one you didn't do.

So you might start with yourself, then someone else, or start with someone else, and then do you.

And then the third step is to do it to we, to do it in the relationship, how you are together.

And if the person is someone, you know, that's a public figure you don't know personally, it's still, you can imagine a rich kind of field of goodwill that can exist because probably the person you're thinking about has some capacity of goodwill too, or friendliness.

And so, may we be happy.

So, may I be happy?

May you be happy?

May we, as we live together and live in this world together, may we be happy.

We're the, the sum of the parts is greater than the parts.

That love is greater than the sum of the parts, I mean.

So to sit quietly in a meditation posture, a posture of alert repose, alert repose, alert relaxation in the body, relaxing the body on the exhale, emphasizing alertness on the inhale.

And then alert, repose with the heart.

Alert, like turning on the light for the heart as you breathe in.

Relaxing the heart center on the exhale.

And then for your mind, your thinking mind.

Gently turning on the light of alertness, of awareness.

On the in-breath, awakening the mind.

The clarity of mind.

And relaxing the mind on the exhale.

And then feeling into your body, to where the home is of goodwill, of kindness, of love.

And as you breathe in, turn on the soft light of clarity for where love usually lives in you, and soften that area as you exhale.

And in whatever area, where your love, your goodwill lives, your tenderness and gentleness.

Turn it either to yourself or to an easy person to love and spend some little while with goodwill, radiating, extending to that person, to yourself or the other.

Maybe with phrases, may you be happy and so forth, or maybe just with the word happy, safe, peaceful, free.

And then switch to the other person.

If you were doing yourself, now do the other.

The easy person.

If you started with the easy person, now do yourself.

And then switching to the we, to the both of you together, the relationship between you.

Wishing yourself both of you, may we be happy.

And then rotate through, in your own easy way, between self, the easy person and the we.

Massaging, watering your capacity for love and goodwill.

Staying with the goodwill and feeling the pleasure of it, the part of it that's good and pleasant.

And let that part, let the pleasure be part of the forest bathing.

And as we come to the end of the sitting, to turn on the light, the attention, to the we, the relationship, the connection between self and other, that has no clear location, no clear way in which it registers or is transmitted.

That exists somehow in the connection, the interchange, what happens in relationship to knowing the person, being known by the person, maybe.

And to allow your tenderness, kindness, to open to this indistinct, in kind of unlimited, indistinct field of relationship, an indistinct radiance, flow, glow between you and another, that can go outward and beyond into your relationship with all people.

It's not a one-way relationship.

It's also in some way you're an antenna for that relationship returning to you, how you receive them.

And in that rich world of interbeing, interconnection, wish all, all of us, the whole world, to be well, to be healed, to be safe.

No matter how big that task is and seemingly impossible, it's the heart's prerogative, it's the heart's ability to wish it all well.

May all beings be happy.

May all beings be safe.

May all beings be peaceful.

May all beings be free of suffering.

And in the we, may all of us together have the same aspiration, the same wish for each other's well-being.

May all beings be well.

Thank you.