

Guided Meditation: Elements of Metta Samadhi

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Hello and welcome to this meditation on goodwill, *mettā*, and the series right now is called *Mettā Samādhi*, where *samādhi* is settling down deeply into... Hello and welcome.

Yep. *Samādhi* is settling down and deeply being immersed in some activity, some area of attention. And it's also a kind of unification. It's kind of a gathering together either of all our capacities or a quieting of all the capacities, mental capacities, that keep us scattered, keep us preoccupied. And so, there are a number of factors to kind of be aware of with *samādhi* that supports this deep immersion or this deep continuity of practice, just staying there, staying there, staying there, where it feels like there's a wonderful, deep satisfying feeling of being present, being alive, being flowing, because the forces of distraction are not operating, because we're not pulled into the world of ideas and stories that give us all kinds of different impressions about what's important.

It is settling down like... and an absorption of what you're doing. It's a little bit like singing a song, maybe singing a song to other people who are, the whole environment is harmonizing, coming together of the different voices, and it's the wholeheartedness of being just there in harmony and unison in the voice. And we're not thinking about all kinds of things that are troubling or distracting or scattering of the mind. Ordinary thinking mind, conversational, the mind quiets down. And when the singing stops, there's something wonderfully still and quiet or peaceful or embodied because of the full participation of our body and mind, maybe heart in the singing.

So with this *mettā*... I have known people who sang *mettā* phrases in order to get concentrated. So there are these few different elements for entering a *samādhi* of *mettā*. One is choosing something as the primary place to rest or to stay present for, to surf on, to glide on, or settle into. And for some people, it's the phrases of may you be happy, may you be safe,

and so forth. Some people it's just simple word, happy, safe, peaceful. But it's the mind's ability to calmly, quietly say these words in a way that's soothing or settling or gathering.

There's something about the words that gives a focus to the mind, like singing a song. And... Other people, it's a feeling in the body, a warmth, a glow, radiance that they associate with kindness, goodwill, *mettā*. And they might be saying the phrases, but they're kind of pointing the mind to stay with a feeling, stay with a feeling. For other people, it's the image in the mind's eye or the kind of thought or sense of a person we're doing it for. For other people, it's the pleasure that it's there. There's a kind of pleasure in the good feelings.

And so we're doing all this, but it's the pleasure, which is the central focal point. We stay cruising with, staying with, coming back to, gliding with, sliding along with, exploring, connecting deeply with and hanging out there. And the other things, like the phrases, all the kind of the supportive cast for here, here, stay with us, stay with us.

So, to assume a meditation posture and to gently close your eyes and take some moments to settle into your posture. Maybe breathing deeply and relaxing. Maybe softening the body. Maybe softening the edges of your body. Maybe as you exhale to soften the heart, the heart center. Maybe feeling a little bit whether the mind, the thinking mind is activated, energized, excited.

And is there some way as you exhale to calm the thinking mind, relaxing the tightness or pressure in the thinking muscle? And then bring to mind someone for whom it's easy to have goodwill. Goodwill, love, kind of a delight in knowing them. Okay. Your heart smiles, you smile, just knowing that they're in your life in some way. It's easy to have love.

It could be a dear friend, a benefactor. And if it's the easy person is yourself because there's an intimacy with yourself, an inner warmth, an inner, you kind of know yourself from the inside, and you care, and it's tender and invaluable to have this kind of caring intimacy. Okay? So think of who it's easy and establish some image or some sense of this person and see if you can connect to an intention, a wish for their well-being. It would be really wonderful for the person yourself or this other person to be happy, maybe imagining them happy, what they would look like with a smile. So some simple image or sense of the person.

And is there any feelings associated with goodwill for this person? Is there a warmth? Is there a glow? Is there a tenderness, gentleness? Is there any pleasure with it? And then consider if it's nice for you to very gently, in an inner voice which maybe you enjoy, an inner voice which expresses goodwill, care, to say the phrases, may you be happy, may you be safe, or if it's for yourself, may I be peaceful, may I be free.

So of these different elements, choose one to be the place that you are riding along with, that you're staying in touch with, kind of like if you're petting a cat, the place where you just, where your attention just settles and relaxes and enters into the world of loving-kindness. And these other elements are the supporting casts to support you to really be there with a focus, focal point, whether it's the words or the feelings, the pleasure. Another element that's supportive sometimes is to do all of this somehow in harmony with the breathing, in tune, in time with the breathing. Giving yourself over to this fully, willingly putting aside in any interest in your discursive thoughts, your conversational thoughts, so that if you are thinking, it's all in support of becoming quietly immersed, engaged, centered in goodwill. One breath at a time.

So we'll continue now in silence. Giving yourself over to the practice of goodwill, if necessary, surrender to doing it.

And as we approach the end of the sitting, to feel around your body and heart, has anything shifted for you in a good way? Are you calmer? Is there an increased sense of goodwill or kindness? Something that feels pleasant, joyful. Do your eyes now relax and capable of gazing upon others kindly? Are you softer, gentler?

In whatever ways that the practice of goodwill has grown a feeling of kindness or goodness throughout your body and mind, dip more deeply into it, like you're dipping into a refreshing pool of water, a warm bath, and in the middle of it, the gentle massage of breathing, that somehow the breathing moves through the field, the waters of kindness, goodwill. And turning your attention outward now into the cross the land, considering, in a happy way, considering how good it would be, for others to be happy, others to be well, as if your smile and your goodwill makes a difference and supports all beings, gaze upon the world kindly, wishing it well.

May all beings be happy. May all beings be safe. May all beings be peaceful. May all beings be free. And may all of us here today for this meditation. May we in small, big ways contribute to that possibility. May we support the goodness and the wellness of this world. Thank you.