

## Guided Meditation: Continuity of Metta

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Hello, everyone, and welcome. Welcome to this morning meditation on goodwill, *mettā*, and with the general idea that we are looking, studying, engaging in the ability to give ourselves over completely to meditation on goodwill. And so that we feel immersed in it or fully absorbed in it, or as if this is the primary interest and enthusiasm for what the mind and heart is engaged in. And as a *samādhi*, it's a wonderfully healthy state of mind where there's not distracted and not scattered mind has no conflict. It just, the mind settles down for a few minutes as willing to put aside concerns of the day, of our life, not to be dismissive of them, but to be able to come back to them in a better way.

And so to do the *samādhi* of *mettā*, in one way or the other, there has to be a gentle, thorough continuity of sorts with the attention on this topic, on this attitude, on this purpose, on this feeling of goodwill. And it's not that we hold ourselves tight and fixed on it, but rather there's a kind of like gentle waves that arise and fall and rise and fall. There's a rhythm of just staying present with it, and then applying ourselves again, staying present with it. And so for some people, it's the rhythm of the phrases, may I be happy, may you be peaceful. May you be peaceful. And so there's a rhythm there.

And then as we say these phrases, kind of coast along on the influence that is left over with the kind of the way that saying those phrases, Hangenmetta, carries you a little bit for a few moments into a greater maybe sense of openness and possibility. It's kind of like, may you be happy, and we open to that possibility, or we open to feel the goodness of that intention. And then we do it again. And again, and so, but stay with it, stay with it. And if you're tracking your mind well enough, you'll know when you're saying the phrases and when you're not. When you're off on doing it mechanically, for example, and off really thinking about something else.

Or if it's not the words, that there's a feeling, an attitude, a glow of goodwill that goes on. Sometimes the wave-like rhythm is with the breathing, with it, breathing with it, breathing through that goodwill. And to give ourselves over to it. And one way to do that is both to feel the central focus of attention, the phrases, the feelings, the attitude, the image of the person we have, and then also the periphery, around the edges, the influence, the glow, the movement, the feelings that come along with it, so that we're fully engaged, fully there with all of who we are. Here, just in a gentle, calm, quiet way, giving yourselves over to this.

So to say this in brief, continuity, a rhythmic, cyclic continuity, just staying there like you're maybe gently pedaling a bicycle and there's continuous pedaling of the pedals moving around and around. So there's this kind of cyclic kind of giving ourselves to this practice today, over and over again. Maybe a massage of the heart. Maybe a gentle wind blowing through us. Maybe a warm kind of a warm wind that moves through our whole body and mind.

And to do it with a person, it's easiest. If it's easiest with yourself, great. If you have some other person, so just keep it really simple and just kind of enter into that world of the goodwill for yourself or for someone else. Filling yourself, filling the world, filling this other person with your kindness. So assuming a meditation posture, giving ourselves over to the body from the inside out, feeling the posture, inhabiting the body. There's a way of coming alive in the body as we begin meditating, waking up the sensations of the body, gently closing the eyes.

In bringing to mind some way that you're reminded of goodwill, a person who has goodwill, a person that inspires you, a time when you had wonderful goodwill, *mettā*, love, bring to mind your own capacity. I associate *mettā* with the heart smiling, a time when your inner life was smiling at the very knowledge of another person who brings you joy and delight through whom you want that person to be happy. And then be aware of your breathing, the rhythm of breathing in and breathing out, breathing in and out through *mettā*, through the goodwill, as if breathing is kind of gently inviting the goodwill to spread and grow and have its time here. And then if you use the phrases of *mettā*, see if you can say these phrases with an inner voice that has no weight or pressure in it. The lightest, simplest way of speaking words of kindness in a kind way. May I be happy.

Or if you're thinking of someone else, may you be happy. Safe, peaceful, free, giving yourself over to coordinating, organizing, mind, body, heart. It's all organizing, coordinated to express goodwill, love, kindness. A small smile can sometimes strengthen, expand the goodwill, the *mettā* within us. And as we approach the end of the sitting, maybe at the end of the exhale, letting go into the goodwill, relaxing into your capacity for *mettā* in your heart, your

body, your mind.

Maybe right there in the relaxing, the letting go, you find more kindness, goodwill, softening and relaxing the body so that the boundaries between you and the world right around you become softer. Your love spills out beyond you like the warmth of a heater radiating out and turning your attention outward into the world, letting your goodwill flow outwards in all directions in front of you, behind you, to the right and left, gazing upon the world kindly, willing for a few moments, for your goodwill, your well-wishing, your positive regard of all beings. May all beings be happy. May all beings be safe. May all beings be peaceful. May all beings be free. Thank you.