

Guided Meditation: Radiating Metta

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So today, to do *mettā* meditation, having goodwill, goodwill that radiates and is a powerful inner motivation and attitude, warmth, is directly related to how much we feel at ease in this life of ours, how much we feel joy, peace, and how little we're caught in craving, how little we're caught in ill will and hatred, how little we're caught up in grievances.

And grievances and craving and hatred and ill will all take a lot of energy in the mind; they all create a lot of stress for us.

And the remarkable thing is without that kind of stress, how simple goodwill, love, compassion, a peaceful attitude that's receptive and present for others in a good-hearted way becomes almost like a natural phenomenon, a natural way.

And this naturalness of it speaks to how it doesn't have to be so much a technique of thinking about particular people and having love for them or even particularly particular latitude towards oneself.

But categories of people, categories of self can begin to dissolve, become less and less important, less and less the focus, and rather and instead replaced by a general warmth, a soft, warm feeling, attitude of goodwill, of well-wishing, of kindness, of friendliness.

That doesn't need to, it doesn't need to be a technique, but rather something we allow to flow and move and radiate.

And there's a practice of loving kindness called radiating loving kindness that doesn't use the categories of people, but simply involves making room, allowing for a radiance of warmth, a glow of warmth from our heart center to begin radiating out into the world in all directions.

So to assume a meditation posture and to gently close your eyes and to take some long, slow deep breaths, to settle in into your meditation, into your posture, to take a few long, slow

deep breaths, softening the body as you exhale, softening in the mind, softening in the heart, and letting your breathing return to normal, and with the support of the rhythm of breathing in and breathing out.

To settle yourself into your body, into your breathing, to feeling settled, stable, here, putting aside thoughts and ideas that have nothing to do with here and now.

And then, is there some place within you that you associate as the heart center, the center of love or goodwill, a place that's soft and tender, maybe a place that's gentle, warm.

Oftentimes it's in the chest, but it can be other places that we have that feels like the center for *mettā*.

And as you exhale, let other concerns that you have gently fall to the side.

As you center yourself on your heart center, your place of kindness, care, gentleness, there's many ways of experiencing feeling.

Sensations of goodwill might be a warm softness, a gentle vibration, tingling flow, a small calm excitation, energy.

Breathe with whatever place you feel kindness, goodwill, love, as if when you breathe in you're filling this place.

When you breathe out, you're allowing it to relax and spread.

Breathing with through that place within that's the heart center, a warmth, a radiance, a glow like a light shining outwards.

Allowing that light, that flow and glow to flow out in front of you.

So you're using your spatial awareness to be intimate with *mettā*, flowing from your tender heart, your gentle place, imagining its light, its light or warmth with every breath.

And if it helps, you can say the phrase, may there be happiness, without specifying who it's for, just may there be happiness.

And radiating into that spatial awareness that can consider what's to your right, not concerning yourself how far the radiance is, but more like you're opening up to the right side of you, to have love, kindness, be available for the right with every breath.

The inhale opening to your goodwill, opening to your tenderness within, gentleness, warmth, and the exhale, imagining it being available to all areas to the right of you, and then to the left of you, and then behind you, and then letting yourself become aware of or become connected to your spatial awareness that's 360 degrees all around.

As if your heart center, kindness center, is a light that gets turned on and radiates equally in all directions all around.

On the exhale, imagine your *mettā* filling out into that wider space around you, spreading kindness in all directions.

And to end this meditation, allow your spatial awareness to become filled with the community around which you, around you, neighbors, people of your town and city, let your spatial awareness begin filled with the comings and goings of people going to work and coming back from work, caring for kids and for the elderly and for each other.

All the different things people are doing, wishing them well.

May all beings experience happiness and peace.

May all beings experience respect and goodwill from others.

May all being be free from oppression, suffering, and may each of us not forget our capacity for *mettā*, for goodwill.

May we bring it into the world for the happiness and welfare of all beings.

Thank you.