

Dharmette: Love (50) Compassion Samadhi 2

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Hello and welcome to this week's series on the *Samādhi of Compassion, Karuṇā Samādhi*. And it's quite a profound and wonderful tool and skill and ability to have a meditation practice with compassion, and to allow the compassion that we have, a natural capacity, to grow and expand so that it becomes the predominant orientation and mood of the mind and heart. *Samādhi* means a unification, a gathering together, usually around some things. So everything is kind of gathered, looking at the same thing. And here, all of who we are is concerned with compassion, the feeling of compassion, the sense of compassion, the aliveness of what we call compassion within us. And for this to become a meditation practice that really helps us to get concentrated and still and unified so that we feel deeply at ease and relaxed and we can feel a lot of joy.

The mind is quite settled. Right. It's best to consider that compassion has, in its essence, in its simplest way, is simple, is uncomplicated. And sometimes people don't know about uncomplicated compassion. People maybe have a capacity for something like compassion. Exactly, I think no one, no two people probably have the same reference point for what compassion is. Some people it's very physical, maybe in the heart.

It's something we sense. Some people it feels more like an emotion. Some people it's more cognitive, and it's a rising of a beautiful sense and even the thought and the mind of wishing an end of suffering, recognizing suffering, acknowledging it. And so there's many ways. But the principle is to have it be uncomplicated by distress, by requirements, by needing to do something, by being involved in imagination and preoccupations about the future and what all this means. To be stuck in maybe the scenarios and reviewing what happened or what's going on, so that we feel overwhelmed or feel contracted or feel alarmed or feel angry.

There's certainly a time for our compassion instinct to be involved in reflection and thinking and acting as well. But it's very helpful to find out how simple it can be. Because as simple

and uncomplicated as it can be, as that can grow and develop, it helps us understand how much we can fall back in the simplicity of it, and how little we need to be anxious, how little we need to be dismayed or distressed, how little we need to be caught up in needing to fix things. How we don't have to yet tie, connect the compassion we have with our own unresolved suffering, our own pain that we carry with us. We can kind of just allow it to be there very simply, something that actually is very nourishing for us, something that feels wonderfully buoyant and alive and sweet.

Exactly what adjective to use for it, again, depends a lot on the individual, how they experience compassion. So I don't want to assume that everyone will have it sweet. So I offer all these different ways, adjectives. Gentle, tender, sweet, beautiful, warm, soft, kind, caring. And as it grows, as it's there, as we learn about it, stay with it.

The breathing can be a great help for this compassion meditation. At least I find that breathing keeps me fluid. It keeps me from getting caught in thoughts, caught in attachments, caught in trying to do something. And it helps me to just stay fluid. Let's stay with the flow, the current of the breathing, the flow of compassion. So that when I feel the compassion, together with the breathing, that I'm not going to be caught in anything.

I'll just stay kind of letting go, in a sense, letting go of the ways that compassion gets more complicated. So to breathe in and feel that compassion. And breathe out. Rather than, I don't like to let go of it, certainly you can just breathe out and relax. But I find it helpful to exhale, to almost settle into it, like into a soft bed or something, or into a wonderful pool of water that's so good to settle into, and then to breathe in and to feel it and settle. And that combination with the breathing can help keep it simple, but also it becomes a gathering point.

It becomes a gathering point for the unification, the gathering together. And probably the first time I had any notion of uncomplicated compassion was through my own meditation practice, where my mind got very, very quiet and still. And the sense of hard boundaries between me and the world, hard preoccupation with thoughts and ideas, which I had lots of, they all got quiet. And things felt kind of empty, like a wonderful sense of emptiness of things, or quiet or spaciousness of things. And in that space, in this vast emptiness or quiet, it was quite beautiful. And I was surprised that in that space, it seemed like compassion was just a natural presence.

It didn't need to have any object. It didn't need to have any thoughts connected to it. It was just that I was left with this reservoir of kind of a warm-hearted vibration that the only thing I could refer to was a kind of compassion that was sweet. And there was not a rush to action.

Action wasn't really part of it, but it was the preparation for action. It was what was alive that could act if there was something in front of me that needed action and care and support for.

So to learn this uncomplicated form of compassion and to meditate with it and let it grow and settle and be with it fully, and know that we're looking for a way of being at ease, from a deep sense of ease. And now all this is not easy, what I'm saying. And so of course it could be that our compassion is not uncomplicated yet, but this is where just breathing with the way it is complicated. And maybe this relaxing and settling into is a relaxing of the complications, of the reactivity, of how we're closed or resistant, or where we are alarmed or afraid, or where we feel guilt or anger, or where we get caught by the sense of responsibility and obligation, that we have to do something now. We can't just sit here and meditate.

So there's all kinds of ways that we feel overwhelmed. This is too much, the suffering of the world. So to be very compassionate, caring for these reactions, caring for these uncomplicated complications we add, but do that simply. Breathe with it, relax on the exhale, and come back, find the place inside, or the way it is for you, where it can be as simple as possible.

Sometimes it's helpful to bring to mind a scenario, a person, where it evokes compassion for you. And maybe a friend who is having a hard time, difficult time, but you know it's difficult. You know that they're a little bit suffering. But you're also confident they'll find their way. They are finding their way. You see that they're working well with it.

So nothing's required from you. In fact, a friend might not even appreciate you coming to help them or fix them. But maybe the friend just wants to know that your friendship involves an uncomplicated compassion, that you care kindly for their well-being, but they don't want you to do anything. So something is uncomplicated. Think of a scenario or something in your life that helps you find in that situation this uncomplicated compassion.

And it could also be something that you imagine. It could be, you know, like yesterday imagining a little animal that's afraid or injured and taking it to the vet. And, you know, it's kind of uncomplicated maybe. And so, just to choose simple things. Now, of course, there's great suffering in the world. And the idea is to put off compassion meditation for the great sufferings of the world and opening your heart to all of it until you're prepared, until you're ready, until you really develop a strong connection inside to this easeful compassion, simple compassion, this current of goodness that you feel buoyed by, you feel happy with to have it, you feel it brings you happiness to have it.

And compassion doesn't have to be an unhappy thing. In its essence, compassion brings happiness. So what I'd recommend, if you want to follow up on this, is through the day today, I don't know, you can three or four times, once an hour or something, maybe set a timer so you're reminded, or find some way to be reminded in a busy life. Take two minutes, two minutes if you go off to the toilet and you're by yourself, or you have to go stand in line, or you're in the car and you've parked, and you don't have to rush it right away. Find little blocks of two minutes to sit if you can sit down or be quiet and see if you can do this simple compassion meditation that we did today.

Breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, touching into where the compassion is. As you breathe in, let it grow and expand. As you exhale, let it relax and settle into it. Expand it, relax and settle. A wonderful massage, a wonderful rhythm. And see what it does for your day to touch into it. An uncomplicated compassion.

So thank you very much. And may your compassion meditation benefit you greatly so that you can benefit the world.