

## Guided Meditation: Mudita Samadhi 2

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Good morning. Hello, everyone, and welcome. And we'll continue this morning with a meditation on appreciative joy, with the idea that it's possible to have a continuity on this subject, on this feeling, the intention of appreciative joy, so that it becomes the gathering place for our life at the moment, for these minutes, so that our intention, our thoughts, our emotions, our body, all kind of center around and get absorbed or immersed in this world of appreciative joy.

And sometimes the word joy seems a little bit too excited. Sometimes it can be the word that's used as gladness. Some people prefer to be pleased or inspired, delighted. It can be very quiet. It can be very deep and intimate, and maybe with a deep sense of contentment, satisfaction, well-being. And so each person has to find what inspires them, what feeling, what emotion is really what we can gather around, what we're happy to be connected to.

And then at times, this appreciative joy is taught that the real center of what the practice is doing is the wishes we have for someone, the intention, the aspiration we have for them. I love the word aspiration because it has the word breathing in it, like we're breathing into a possibility, breathing out, breathing out, kind of like the spring breeze bringing forth the cherry blossoms. So we are kind of bringing forth our love, our care, our inspiration, our intention, our wish for someone to feel well, to be successful, to have a sense of well-being.

And yesterday the person was whoever is easiest for. And today, the category is our benefactors. The traditional category is the second, is the people who have benefited us in some way. Our teachers, our relatives, maybe parents or grandparents. Maybe it's a friend. Maybe it's someone who has stepped forward to help us, to support us, to guide us, to mentor us in a way that maybe is really good for our lives, and changed our lives for the better.

And for that person, regardless of how happy they are, regardless of all kinds of issues that might make it a little more complicated, because they've been so generous to us, it's kind of, some part of us just wants them to be well, wants to return, in a sense, the gift by wishing them well, wishing that their life goes easy for them or inspiringly for them, that what they love, what they enjoy, what they're dedicated to can flourish for them. So wishing, and so this appreciative joy that spills out with, yes, may your well-being thrive. May you do well.

And then as a *samādhi*, we're kind of riding the wave, surfing the wave of this intention. It's kind of like the scooter analogy that I like to use, that we're pushing one foot against the ground and carrying the momentum of the scooter forward. We're surfing, we're paddling, and then we get caught by the wave, and we're surfing the wave for a while until we have to paddle again. And so we're wishing this person well. May you be, may your happiness continue. May your well-being thrive. May, in my appreciation of you and your goodness, may it continue.

And each time we say it, it's kind of like we're on the wave and we're riding that intention, riding the momentum of it, feeling it in our body, connecting maybe to the image we have of this person with a smile, or how they can be so that our hearts smile. And so there's this all-encompassing engagement, involvement. We're kind of giving ourselves over to the momentum, the slide, the wave. May your happiness continue. May your good fortune continue. And then feeling it.

I find it useful to kind of say the phrase on the inhale, with the last word being said at the beginning of the exhale, beginning of that wave, and then beginning again. So, choosing a benefactor who is relatively uncomplicated for you, assuming meditation posture and quietly, softly, closing your eyes, and tenderly letting your attention settle into your body, like you're settling into a refreshing bath or pool of water, and feel in your body what feels comfortable, what feels nice, even if part of your body is uncomfortable, is in pain. It's okay. For now, let that be held or supported by that in your body which feels comfortable. Maybe a very broad, panoramic, global feeling. Maybe in a very specific place.

And as you breathe, breathe into whatever feeling of well-being there might be for you. As you exhale, relaxing into it. As you breathe in, feeling the thinking mind. And that too, as you exhale, relax and soften it. So it settles. Almost like it can settle deeper into the torso, out of the head.

And bringing to mind a benefactor, someone who not only benefited you, but brought you joy, a smile in your heart of how you've been supported, your good fortune, how nice. And bring this person to mind, maybe remembering a time when their eyes sparkled, that they

were happy. Maybe a time when it was palpable, their generosity, their gift that they provided you, and which at some point, when it happened or later, makes your heart smile.

And breathe with that, breathe through that well-being, the goodness of that memory. And then with this person in mind, is there some way that you can wish them well, wish them that their goodness continue, that they benefit and are nourished, inspired by their own generosity, the good they did, the way they supported you? When they remember that, may they also smile. May whatever happiness they have in their life, may it continue.

And maybe the phrase you can use to make it simple is, may your happiness continue. Where may your happiness is said on the inhale and continue on the exhale, with continue being the wave, the exhale being the wave in which we dip into the intention we have, the sense of this person, the way that we smile or are happy thinking of them, the joy we felt from being benefited, and the joy of wishing them well. May your happiness continue.

The word continue and the exhale is an occasion for the discursive mind to become quieter, so you can immerse yourself in the practice of appreciative joy, so that you become unified or whole for these few minutes, oriented, directed to appreciative joy. If it helps you connect and enter more deeply, you might also say the person's name, your benefactor's name. May you, name. Maybe saying their name first: name, may your happiness continue.

Imagining yourself bathed in the well-being of this practice, the generosity of this practice of appreciative joy. And because this person's a benefactor, appreciative joy contains within it some gratitude, a feeling, a sense in the body of thankfulness.

And as we come to the end of the sitting, perhaps appreciating that this benefactor of yours is a more complicated person than just being your benefactor. They have their joys and sorrows, their positive and maybe negative qualities, challenges. But in spite of that, we still feel inspired to stay appreciative of their goodness, their capacity for generosity and support, and their own capacity for happiness, wishing them well, wishing whatever goodness they have can continue and grow.

And in the same way, we can see all people like that. All people maybe have combinations of good and not so good qualities. They have times and capacities for happiness and unhappiness. But it's good to shine a light sometimes on where people can be happy, where their goodness is, so it can grow, so it can thrive and thrive through the recognition.

And as we end this sitting, may our capacity for appreciative joy, recognizing the goodness in others, the happiness of others, may we see all beings with goodwill. May we see all beings so we wish them all happiness. May all beings be happy. May all beings be safe. May all

beings be peaceful, may all beings be free, and may we remember to see all beings for their goodness, for their good qualities, maybe seeing that one way or the other, all beings are our benefactors. Thank you.