

Loving Kindness Meditation

The Loving Kindness Meditation is often used to end a meditation session. It can deepen feelings of peace and goodwill by offering and receiving the blessing of goodwill. Buddha called this loving kindness or metta. True metta is devoid of self interest. The mind becomes universal by identifying its own interest with the interest of all.

Considering the world today, metta is a practical necessity. Even the people who have harmed us are just fumbling through the world like we are. Holding anger against them doesn't help anything. So we hold them in our hearts and wish them well, thus deepening our own peace.

In the deluded mind that we want to escape from, the perfect escape is in this consciousness, which is dormant in us all. It is an amazing source of love, where we can have a feast of true freedom. We can recognize the oneness of all and embrace every being in our heart.

HOW TO USE THE LOVING KINDNESS MEDITATION

Close your eyes and let your awareness rest on your breath ... Pause for a moment and take the opportunity to set your intention to bring loving kindness to all beings ... Be sure to include yourself in all the groups to whom you send this loving kindness. Take your time.

Visualize someone or those you love sitting in front of you ... Open your heart and say to them (inwardly or aloud) these words of the Loving Kindness Meditation:

May you be safe from inner and outer harm ...
May you be free from guilt, shame, and hatred ...
May you enjoy mental and physical well being ...
May you live with the ease of an open heart ...
May you be awakened to your true nature,
Which is an inexhaustible source of love, compassion, and wisdom ...

... Now visualize someone or those who give you difficulty sitting before you ... Repeat the words of the loving kindness meditation to them ...

... Lastly, imagine the whole world sitting in front of you ... Repeat the words of the loving kindness meditation to them ...

... and then conclude with these words:

May we express loving kindness to all so that every form of conflict may
come to an end, allowing peace and harmony to pervade the entire world.

Buddhists follow the Loving Kindness Meditation with the Dedication Prayer:

By this merit may all attain perfect awakening,
Rising above all forces of negativity,
Going beyond the ocean of samsara*,
May they find liberation from the waves of birth, old age, sickness, and death.

* samsara means all the suffering in the world