

Loving Kindness

Welcome – today we will be doing a loving kindness meditation. This is adapted from the work of many leaders of this field including Sharon Salzberg, Jon Kabat Zinn, Stephen Levine & John Wise. In this meditation, we will be connecting with feelings of love, kindness, and compassion for ourselves and others. You can do this meditation sitting or lying down. Invite yourself to find a comfortable, yet alert posture. At the end of the practice, you will hear a bell to conclude the meditation.

Notice your breathing in this moment. (Small pause) Allowing your attention to come gradually to breath, this breath coming and going all by itself, deep within the body. Inviting your attention to rest with the ebbs and flows of the body, the rise and fall. In and out.

(Pause)

Just breathing

(Pause)

In and out

(Pause)

Noticing the movement of the chest. The rise the fall. Bringing awareness to the warmth of your heart. This open heart from which we give and receive kindness and love. And from where we can offer mercy and compassion. Letting your awareness rest on your heart.

Now bringing to mind someone who is easy to love, it could be a dear friend, a child in your life, a beloved pet or a partner. Just be aware of what happens when you hold this person in your mind's eye. Does it invite a smile, a sense of warmth, or softness behind the eyes? Or anything else?

(Pause)

Allowing the focus of your dear one to soften and bringing the attention to the sensations in your body. Breathing into these sensations. Getting to know them. And as you do this, allowing yourself to slowly repeat these phases in your mind.

May I be happy

May I be safe (well)

May I flow with the stream of change

May I live with ease (in peace) no matter what I am given (surrounds me)

May I be happy

May I be safe (well)

May I flow with the stream of change

May I live with ease (in peace) no matter what I am given (surrounds me)

Continuing to repeat these words in your mind, in your heart... being open to any subtle changes you may feel...

May I be happy

May I be safe (well)

May I flow with the stream of change

May I live with ease (in peace) no matter what I am given (surrounds me)

Now bring to mind someone who has been a support to you, someone who has “had your back,” or just knows how to be there for you when you need it. This person can be someone close in your life or maybe someone who inspires you. Possibly imagine sitting across from this person offering them these words...

May you be happy

May you be safe (well)

May you flow with the stream of change

May you live with ease (in peace) no matter what you are given (surrounds you).

May you be happy

May you be safe (well)

May you flow with the stream of change

May you live with ease (in peace) no matter what you are given (surrounds you).

Just noticing any sensations, experiences... being curious.

And now bringing to mind an acquaintance.... Someone you don't know particularly well, but you recognize, possibly a store clerk you see often, a group or classmate you don't know well, bring them to mind and again repeat these words...

May you be happy

May you be safe (well)

May you flow with the stream of change

May you live with ease (in peace) no matter what you are given (surrounds you).

Inviting yourself to be curious about how it feels to extend long kindness to acquaintances. Continuing to breathe into the expanse of your heart, allowing it to grow...repeating again

May you be happy

May you be safe (well)

May you flow with the stream of change

May you live with ease (in peace) no matter what you are given (surrounds you).

Just notice...

And now, bringing to mind a group of which you are a part- a neighborhood, a team, a work group, a friend group, a group of other cancer survivors, a group of other people wishing of what you wish for... a group – small or large- that you feel a part of.

May we be happy

May we be safe (well)

May we flow with the stream of change

May we live with ease (in peace) no matter what we are given (surrounds us).

May we be happy

May we be safe (well)

May we flow with the stream of change

May we live with ease (in peace) no matter what we are given (surrounds us).

Let us expand this feeling another step further. Picture of the entire human race. Male and female, all nations, all cultures, all races, all colors of skin, all sexual orientations, all ages, all heights and weights... All people. All human beings.

May we be happy

May we be safe (well)

May we flow with the stream of change

May we live with ease (in peace) no matter what we are given (surrounds us).

Continuing to hold all people in mind...and envisioning the whole planet floating like a bubble of the ocean of your heart. Each breath in drawing in the love that heals the world, that deepens the peace and ease we all seek. Each breath out- feeding the world with mercy and compassion. The warmth and patience that quiets the mind and opens the heart.

May we be happy

May we be safe (well)

May we flow with the stream of change

May we live with ease (in peace) no matter what we are given (surrounds us).

(Pause...longer)

Notice how this feels in your body, in your heart right now....

Spend a few moments feeling this, living this, living this moment right now. Continue to invite your breath into your heart; continue to invite your attention to the center of your chest, to the warmth of your open heart. Allowing yourself to bathe in what you have created.

(Pause)

As you draw your breath a little deeper, gradually bring your attention back to your breath. Then, inviting your eyes to gently blink open while carrying this feeling of loving kindness with you. Even as you begin to wiggle your fingers and your toes, feeling all the sensations. Noticing your body right now. Noticing what is present.

Carrying this feeling of loving kindness with you as you leave this practice. Carrying this feeling of loving kindness as you interact with others today.

May you be happy

May you be safe (well)

May you flow with the stream of change

May you live with ease (in peace) no matter what you are given (surrounds you).

Ring Bell