

Lovingkindness Meditation

[Free [audio recording of this meditation](#) and others are available on the [Palouse Mindfulness website](#)]

This meditation can be done in any position, and begins by taking a moment to be aware of any thoughts or feelings you may be experiencing right now, acknowledging how things are for you right now... and when you are ready, beginning to bring awareness to body: feeling your feet... legs... hips... lower and upper body... arms... shoulders... neck... head..., beginning to feel the movement of your breath, the actual sensations of breathing, reminding yourself that you are here, alive, whole...

When you're ready, you might bring to mind the image of a person who you know or you've known in your life to be loving and kind to you, someone who easily evokes feelings of warmth and love, it could be a spouse or partner, parent or family member, a mentor or close friend... someone who has been good to you, helps you feel safe and whole, whose caring easily emanates from them to you.

And if a person, past or present, doesn't come to mind, maybe someone who know to be inspirational may come, someone it is easy to imagine sending wishes of well-being to, wishing them well, and if it feels right, imagining saying to them:

May you be happy, healthy and whole, (*picturing them receiving your wishes for them*)
May you have love, warmth and affection,
May you be protected from harm and free from fear,
May you be alive, engaged and joyful
...may you experience inner peace and ease

You may have your own words and wishes for them, so feel free to use words that resonate with you...

Taking a few minutes now to feel how it is to wish these things for them, letting yourself have the sense of the wishes for well-being emanating from you to them, connecting you to them...

...noticing how it feels inside you, as you send these wishes of well-being to this person you love or care about.

When you are ready, seeing if you can imagine this person or figure wishing these very same things for you, knowing that they have your well-being in their heart, imagining them saying to you:

May you be happy, healthy and whole,
May you have love, warmth and affection in your life, (*imagining them close to you, feeling their presence and unconditional love for you, as they say*):
May you be protected from harm and free from fear,
May you be alive, engaged and joyful,
May you experience inner peace and ease...

Letting those feelings wash over you, feeling their unconditional love and caring for you, letting the feelings of love and safety grow in you, knowing there is nothing you have to do to deserve these feelings and wishes, that they are given freely, without condition. Seeing if you can connect to the meaning of these phrases even if you might not feel all the safety and warmth right now, knowing that is their wish for you, and now seeing if you can have these wishes for yourself, hearing yourself say to yourself:

May I be happy and healthy and loved,
May I be safe and protected,
May I be alive and free,
May I experience inner peace and ease.

You may have loved ones for whom it's also easy to have these wishes for, a child or family member or dear friend, or even a loved pet, and if it feels right, saying to them, in your own way and with your own words:

May you be happy and healthy and loved in your life,
May you be safe and protected, and not suffer,

May you be alive and joyful,
May you have inner peace and ease.

If it feels right, seeing if there are others in your life you can extend these good wishes to, a friend, a co-worker, a neighbor, saying to yourself, to them:

May you be happy and healthy and loved in your life,
May you be safe and protected, free from harm,
May you be alive and joyful,
And may you have inner peace and ease.

It might even be possible to expand even further out, to acquaintances, people you know of but don't have a personal relationship with: the people you see around town, your neighbors, even people you don't have strong feelings about, like the salesperson who checks your groceries, saying to these people:

May you be happy and healthy and loved,
May you be safe and protected, free from suffering
May you be alive, engaged and joyful,
And may you have inner peace and ease.

And even if the wishes aren't infused with the same warmth and love as they were with a loved one, seeing if you can extend the wish, without the expectation that it should make you or them feel in any particular way, connecting with what these wishes represent, keeping these people in your awareness as you send these good wishes:

Wishing for them to be healthy and whole,
Wishing for them to have aliveness and love in their lives,

And if you feel strong and secure, and you're comfortable with this, you might try extending these wishes to someone who's difficult for you right now, not necessarily the most difficult person in your life, just someone for whom there's been some sort of frustration or misunderstanding. In doing this, it might help to remember that, just like you, they want to be loved... And just like you, they want peace in their life, you could say to yourself:

Just like me, they want to feel happiness and joy,
Just like me, they want peace and ease,
And they want to be loved and to know their loved ones are safe and healthy,
And just like me, they are doing the best they can with what inner and outer resources they have,

And if this feels possible to you, silently saying to them...

May you feel peace and ease (*remembering that if this were really true for them, that they would certainly be easier to get along with*)

May you have love and warmth in your life,
May you be happy, healthy and whole

Even if this is difficult, there's value in noticing what it's like to extend the wish, recognizing that you are not condoning their actions, but seeing in them a human being with some of the same needs as you: to be loved, to be safe, to be at peace.

And, if this is possible, remember the circle that began with yourself and the persons you loved the most, family and friends, extending the circle to include all the many people you don't know who may live far away, in other countries or cultures, saying:

May you be happy and healthy,
May you have peace and ease.

May you have love and warmth in your life.

You could even imagine extending these wishes to include the animals and plants, all life on our planet and beyond, including ourselves, saying

May we all be happy and healthy,
May we all be safe and protected,
May we all live together in peace, ease and happiness

And now, as this lovingkindness meditation comes to an end, taking time to appreciate and feel what's been generated through this practice. And even if there have been difficult parts of this practice, knowing that this practice has the potential to increase your sense of aliveness, of connection and of belonging...

And when you are ready, letting yourself feel again your physical presence, sensations of your body, feet, seat, upper torso, neck and head, beginning to notice the movement of your own breath, bringing aliveness and nourishment to your body as a whole, just as your wishes of good will bring aliveness and nourishment to those around you...