

Compassion Meditation

To begin, take a comfortable position.

Compassion meditation involves silently repeating certain phrases that express the intention to move from judgment to caring, from isolation to connection, from indifference or dislike to understanding.

You don't have to force a particular feeling or get rid of unpleasant or undesirable reactions; the power of the practice is in the wholehearted gathering of attention and energy, and concentrating on each phrase. Let it come not from the head, from the mind, but from the heart, from the part of you from where your love emanates.

If your mind wanders, don't be concerned. Notice whatever has captured your attention, let go of the thought or feeling, and simply return to the phrases. If you have to do that over and over again, it is fine. Let the music accompany you through the exercise and accentuate the intention.

Shift your attention inward and offer, from the bottom of your being, from your well of love & compassion, these phrases of compassion to yourself: **"May I be peaceful. May I be healthy. May I be well and happy."** Or whatever sentences that have personal significance for you.

Closing your eyes or leaving them slightly open, start by thinking of someone you care about already—perhaps she's been good or inspiring to you. Visualize this person, say the name to yourself, remember their voice, their smile, get a feeling for their presence.

Silently offer phrases of compassion to this person: **"May you be peaceful. May you be healthy. May you be well and happy."**

Turn your attention to someone you've barely met —the supermarket checkout woman or UPS man. Even without knowing his or her name, you can get a sense of the person, perhaps an image and try as best you can to get a sense of the richness of their world, the stories about them you don't know. And offer the phrases of compassion.

Now move on to someone you find difficult, such as a difficult relative or client. Get a feeling for the person's presence and offer the phrases of compassion to this person. Without forcing yourself, let them come from the heart, from where your love emanates.

We close with the offering of compassion to all people, to everyone, everywhere; to all forms of life, without limit, without exception: **"May you be peaceful. May you be healthy. May you be well and happy."**