

METTA BHAVANA MEDITATION

<p>SETTING UP</p>	<p>Spend some time ensuring that your posture is comfortable, upright and relaxed. Direct your attention to your environment using your different senses to become aware of your surroundings, particularly feeling the contact of your body with the ground and seat.</p>
<p>FIRST STAGE- Self</p>	<p>Direct attention to your inner experience, starting with becoming aware of your body by scanning through it sequentially, and becoming aware of the tone of your thoughts and your emotions. Ask yourself 'how am I?' Dwell on a kind response to however you are by silently saying 'May I be well. May I be happy. May I be free from suffering. May I make progress.'- and really wish those things for yourself, then wait for a response.</p>
<p>SECOND STAGE- Friend</p>	<p>Bring a close friend to mind: either by imagining them in front of you, or imagining what they might be doing at this moment. Allow your responses to that person emerge, dwelling on any kind, empathetic responses and well wishing by using the phrases. Really wish those things for your friend, then wait for a response.</p>
<p>THIRD STAGE- Neutral Person</p>	<p>Bring to mind someone you see fairly often, but whom you don't have particular feelings for one way or the other. You could really fill out their life in your imagination, connecting with the fact that they experience joy and sorrow just as you do. Allow your responses to that person emerge, dwelling on any kind, empathetic responses and well wishing by using the phrases. Really wish those things for the neutral person, then wait for a response.</p>
<p>FOURTH STAGE- Difficult Person</p>	<p>Bring to mind someone you know who you are having difficulty with at the moment (not someone you really loathe!) Connect with the fact that they experience joy and sorrow just as you do and try and broaden your awareness of them to include the whole person and not just the difficulty you are having with them. Allow your responses to that person emerge, dwelling on any kind, empathetic responses and well wishing by using the phrases. Really wish those things for that person, then wait for a response.</p>
<p>FIFTH STAGE- All four people then all beings</p>	<p>Bring all four people together. Imagine that kindly response of metta to all four of you. Then extend that out as far as your imagination can take you. You may do this geographically, or in terms of the states of mind that surround us.</p>
<p>SETTING DOWN</p>	<p>Take your time coming out of the meditation by letting go of the method and spending a few minutes enjoying the effect of the practice. Then broaden out your attention to include your body, the room etc.</p>