

## Metta Meditation

### Complete Brief Basic Instructions

When you practice loving kindness meditation, you first start by sending loving and kind thoughts to yourself. You remember times when you were happy. When that happy feeling arises, it's a warm glowing feeling in the center of your chest. And a radiating feeling. As soon as that feeling arises, then, you make a wish for your own happiness: 'May I be happy. May my mind be peaceful and calm. May I be filled with joy. May I be cheerful.' Whatever wish you make for yourself, feel that wish. You know what it feels like to be peaceful and calm. Bring that feeling of peace and calm, put it into your heart, radiate that feeling to yourself. You know what it feels like to be happy. Bring that feeling into your heart, and radiate that feeling to yourself. Whatever wish you make for yourself, you want to feel that wish. You can make the same wish over and over again, as long as it has meaning for you, or you can change the wish occasionally. But you don't make a wish like this, you don't say: 'May I be happy. May I be happy. May I be happy. May I be happy. May I be happy.' When you do a wish like that, it turns into, like trying to memorize something, and you start thinking about other things. You want to feel the wish. Make the wish, feel the peace and calm, if that's what your wish is, keep that feeling in your heart, when that feeling starts to fade, then you make another wish.

While you're sitting like this, your mind is going to wander. You're going to think about other things. As soon as you notice that your mind is thinking about other things, you simply let go of those thoughts. Don't continue thinking, even if you're in mid sentence let it go. Relax the tension and tightness caused by those thoughts in your head, in your mind, in your body. And gently come back to the feeling of loving kindness and making a wish for your own happiness. It doesn't matter if your mind wanders fifty times during the sitting, and fifty times you see that, you let it go, you relax, you come back to your meditation object. That is a good sitting. A bad sitting would

be, noticing that you're thinking about something, and to continue thinking, not letting it go.

When you're sitting, you want to sit with your back reasonably straight. Please don't move your body at all. Don't wiggle your toes, don't wiggle your fingers, don't scratch, don't rub, don't change your posture. Don't rock back and forth. Sit very still.

While you're sitting like this, there can be some sensations that arise in your body. You want to cough, and itch, heat, vibration, a painful feeling. As soon as that arises your mind will be drawn to it, and then you start thinking about that sensation: 'I wish it would stop. I really don't like this feeling when it happens. I wish it would just go away.' Every thought like that makes the feeling become bigger and more intense. So, the first thing you do is to let go of the thought about the sensation. And then, relax the tension or tightness in your head, in your mind. Next you will notice that there is a tight mental fist wrapped around that sensation, you really don't like that sensation there, you really want it to go away. The truth is when a sensation arises, it's there. That's the truth. And it's ok for that sensation to be there. It has to be ok, because it's there. Anytime you try to fight with the truth, anytime you try to control the truth, anytime you try to make the truth be anything other than it is, that's the cause of suffering. Allow that sensation to be there. Make it ok for it to be there. Relax. Gently come back to the feeling of being happy and making a wish for your own happiness.

While you're doing this meditation, this is a smiling meditation. You want to put a smile in your mind. A little smile in your eyes, even though your eyes are closed. A smile on your lips, a little one, and a smile in your heart. Whenever you notice that you're not smiling, then start again.

After about ten minutes, then you start sending loving and kind thoughts to a spiritual friend. A spiritual friend is someone of the same sex, and they are alive. A spiritual friend is someone, that when you think of them, and their good qualities, you really like them. You will sincerely wish them happiness. You make a wish for their

happiness: 'May they be free from suffering, May their minds be uplifted, May their minds be peaceful and calm, may their minds be open and accepting, may they have happiness, may they have joy.' Whatever wish you want to make for your spiritual friend, feel that wish. Take your spiritual friend and put them right in the middle of your heart, and give them a great big heart hug. Wish your friend well. Feel that wish. Take a real interest in your friend. Really like them.

Tape ends.

**May all beings be happy.**

*Bhante Vimalaramsi*