

Meditation

Week Four - Kindness Meditation and Reflection



Are you still repeating your mantra from last week? Is it something you'll continue to do?

Can you imagine thinking "loving-kind" thoughts about your colleagues?
What impact might that have on your connection to them?

Today, we are going to teach you the last of our four meditation practices. This one is called Loving-Kindness Meditation and it is derived directly from the research of Dr. Emma Seppala and her work at the Stanford Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education. Don't let this "touchy-feely" term scare you off. This practice is especially impactful. Once again, it builds upon our first meditative practice, Concentration Meditation and breathing. We'll start by trying this for five minutes or so and build on it each day until we can do it for fifteen minutes.

1. Start with our basic meditation practice. Sit comfortably, be quiet, listen to your breathing, etc.
2. Take a deep breath inward, filling your lungs completely and then exhaling slowly.
3. Continue your breathing cycle and now think of someone close to you, who supports you, and shows love to you. This might be a family member, a close friend, mentor, or even someone you work with. Now, imagine them standing just to your right, and their sending you their love. Their sending you "all the good feels"; kindness, love, and compassion. (Feels pretty cool doesn't it?)
4. Now think of another loving person standing just to the left of you. They too are sending you love and kindness, well-wishes for your health and for your happiness. Take in all that kindness.
5. Now, take it up another notch by imagining other people surrounding you, with this same quality of love and kindness. Maybe there are neighbors, extended family, colleagues, and clients with you. You're glowing with their affection and you're starting to overflow with this love.
6. As you continue to breath in and out, bring your attention back to that first person you thought of, on your right. Begin to share that overflowing love and kindness with them.
7. Now, we'll layer in our mantra technique from our last meditation practice. As you continue to breathe in and out, focus on that person and repeat a phrase like this silently:
 - May you live with ease, may you be happy, may you be free from pain.
 - May you live with ease, may you be happy, may you be free from pain.
 - May you live with ease, may you be happy, may you be free from pain.

Meditation



8. You're going to turn your attention to the person on your left. Repeat a phrase like this:
 - Just as I wish to, may you be safe, may you be healthy, may you live with ease and happiness.
 - Just as I wish to, may you be safe, may you be healthy, may you live with ease and happiness.
 - Just as I wish to, may you be safe, may you be healthy, may you live with ease and happiness.

9. Continue to make your way around the circle of people you've imagined, breathing in and out while repeating a phrase of loving kindness. Do this until you've completed the circle and shared your love with everyone.

10. Finish your loving kindness meditation by repeating the mantra to the whole group and even to the world at large. When you're ready, you may open your eyes.

Weekly To-Do's:

1. Complete your 21-day Meditation challenge!

Alternative Discussion

- How did applying loving kindness to your meditation change the practice for you?

- Did it feel awkward at first to imagine thinking of others while considering kindness and love?