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Metta Bhavana Meditation

The road to cultivating your peace begins with developing compassion for yourself and this path has been exquisitely formed into the practice of Metta Bhavana Meditation. Metta is a Pali word which means Loving Kindness, friendship or simply kindness and is an ancient Buddhist practice whose principles can be seen as the bedrock to many spiritual traditions and religious doctrines. If you have a religion or spiritual practice that you follow, this meditation will in no way deter you from it or clash with other doctrines. Metta is a pure practice that supports you, whatever your spiritual beliefs.

The joys of Metta reach us in ways you could not have imagined, as though you have drunk long and deep from the soul of life itself that softens and nurtures your innermost being.

Metta is a balm for healing the human heart.

The four main principles of Metta Bhavana Meditation

Acceptance

The benefits of cultivating qualities of acceptance dissolves criticism, judgement, jealousy, loss, anger, emotional and physical pain, feelings of separation or isolation and create empathy, sympathy, deep relaxation and joy.

This principle of Acceptance is an important theme within body work therapy as shown within this handbook. Acceptance becomes the therapists' invisible aid during therapy, who you bring to life through integrating the guidance given in the chapters Your Breath and Your Mind. Acceptance creates stillness and a space for change.

Gratitude

The benefits of cultivating feelings of gratitude dissolve craving, greed, grasping, frustration, selfishness and dissatisfaction and create qualities of appreciation, thankfulness, generosity and equanimity.

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Unless you can appreciate your own body, your health, your sanity, your family, your friends, your abilities, your home and all the many riches within and around you, you will never be satisfied. By being thankful for who you are and what you have, more will be given in body, mind and spirit. Gratitude brings joy to the heart. Count your blessings.

Forgiveness

The benefits of generating qualities of forgiveness dissolve feelings of blame, guilt, sadness, grief, remorse and regret and create a powerful sense of inner freedom, healing, reconciliation and compassion.

Forgiveness can be a slow yet deeply healing process which does not mean that you condone whatever has occurred in the past. Neither does it mean that you forget any injustice that may have wounded you in any way. Forgiveness frees you from reliving the suffering caused by the continued feelings of grief or blame or regret in the present. Forgiveness is a force for reconciliation beyond the reasoning of the mind, allowing you to heal at the very heart of the matter.

The four most common hazards to peace and happiness

Regret - which causes us to hold on and live in the past.

Blame - which blocks true forgiveness.

Guilt - which is how we punish ourselves.

Anger - which is hidden or suppressed hurt.

Clearing the mind and heart of these elements makes space to plant new positive seeds that can grow into the quality of life that is your birthright.

Loving Kindness

The benefits of creating qualities of loving kindness dissolve feelings of struggle, strife, inadequacy and vulnerability, generating feelings of strength, protection, contentment, kindness and nurture.

In this world of diversity, where we can experience and witness the blessings of wealth, peace and wisdom, and the hardships of poverty, injustice, sickness and war a charitable mind and heart is a simple act of human kindness. Reflect on those that have been charitable to you and how you can be kind and generous also. Kindness is its own reward.

The Meditation Practice

Metta meditation practice is a simple process of sitting quietly and repeating specific phrases that relate to the above principles, slowly and silently within the sanctity of your own mind and heart. You can create your own language of Metta in the way that you think if you chose. Here Metta is presented in its traditional form which carries with it the blessings and energy of all those

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who have practiced in exactly this way since Bhudda gave us this great teaching 2000 years ago.



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