

This is a 30 minute guided meditation practice from Buddhism Guide called – Cultivating Compassion in your mind

00:00

sit comfortably on the floor or on an unarmed chair with your back straight but not too rigid. Gently close your eyes and do the follow breathing awareness exercise.

I want you to breathe in deeply to the count of 5, hold the breath for the count of 4, and then breathe all the air out to the count of 5.

Let's begin:

Breathe in...2...3...4...5. hold...2...3...4 breathe out...2...3...4...5... hold...2...3...4

Breathe in...2...3...4...5. hold...2...3...4 breathe out...2...3...4...5... hold...2...3...4

Breathe in...2...3...4...5. hold...2...3...4 breathe out...2...3...4...5...

Now breath normally. Making sure your breathe is slow and natural.

This exercise brings you comfortably into the present moment, the here and now....rest there while I briefly explain what compassion is.

Definition:

Compassion is a mind free from hatred and discrimination. When we free our minds of negative emotions, we are automatically calm and at peace. Compassion is the wish that others do not suffer, as well as having the aspiration to *help end* the suffering of others. Cultivating compassion is a wonderful source of peace and harmony in your mind.

keep yourself in your relaxed state and start to picture someone who is close to you, someone you care about and are very fond of. Notice how this fondness feels in your heart...*(Pauses between each question)* Notice the sensations around your heart... Perhaps you feel a sensation of warmth, openness or tenderness... *(10 seconds)*

Focus on these feelings as you visualize the person you care about. As you breathe out, imagine that you are sending light rays out from your heart and these light rays hold your warm feelings. Imagine the light reaches out to the person you care about, bringing him or her peace and happiness. At the same time, silently recite these phrases.

“May you have happiness.

May you be free from suffering.”

“May you have happiness.
May you be free from suffering.”

(30 seconds)

Continue to silently recite, “May you have happiness.
May you be free from suffering.”

(30 seconds)

As you silently repeat these phrases, remember to extend the light rays to your loved one from your heart. Feel with all your heart that you wish them happiness and freedom from suffering..... *Pause 10 seconds*

Now think of a time when this person was suffering. Maybe they experienced an illness, an injury or have been going through a difficult time in their lives...*(15 seconds)* Notice how you feel when you think of their suffering...*(Pauses between each question)* How does your heart feel? ... Do you feel calm?... Do you continue to feel warmth, openness and tenderness?... Are there other sensations? *(10 seconds)*

Continue to visualize the person you care about as you breathe. Imagine that you are extending the light rays from your heart to this person, and the light is easing their suffering. Extend this light out to them while breathing out, with the strong heartfelt wish that they be free from their suffering. Recite silently to them:

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

(30 seconds)

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

(30 seconds)

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

(1 minute)

Notice how this feels in your heart...*(Pauses between each question)* What is happening to your heart? ... Did the sensations change?... Did you continue to feel warmth, openness and tenderness?... Were there other sensations?... Did you have a wish to take away the others suffering? *(Allow silence until next time point, at least 10 seconds)*

Contemplate a time when you have suffered yourself. Perhaps you experienced a conflict with someone you care about, or did not succeed in something you wanted, or were physically ill...*(15 seconds)* Notice how you feel when you think

of your suffering... How does your heart feel? ...*(Pauses between each question)*
Do you continue to feel warmth, openness and tenderness?... Are there other sensations? *(10 seconds)*

Just as we wish for our loved one's suffering to end, we wish that our own suffering would end. Visualize your own pain and suffering leaving your body, so that you may experience happiness.

Continue to visualize yourself as you breathe. Imagine that the light rays emanating from your heart is easing your suffering. With each out breath, feel the light emanating within you, with the strong heartfelt wish that you be free from your suffering. Silently recite to yourself:

“May I be free from this suffering... May I have joy and happiness”

“May I be free from this suffering... May I have joy and happiness”

(1 minute)

Continue to silently say to yourself, “May I be free from this suffering... May I have joy and happiness”

(1 minute)

“May I be free from this suffering... May I have joy and happiness”

(1.5 minutes)

Again, notice how this feels in your heart... What kind of sensations did you feel? ...*(Pauses between each question)* How is this feeling different from when you wished your *loved one's* suffering to be relieved?... Did you feel warmth, openness and tenderness?... Were there other sensations such as pressure? Did you have a wish to take away your *own* suffering?

(Allow silence until next time point, at least 10 seconds)

Now visualize someone you neither like nor dislike, but someone you may see in your everyday life, such as someone from work you are not familiar with, a bus driver or a stranger you pass on the street.

(5 seconds) Although you are not familiar with this person, think of how this person may suffer in his or her own life. This person also may have conflicts with loved ones, or struggled with an addiction or may have suffered an illness. Imagine a situation in which this person may have suffered. *(30 seconds)*

Notice your heart centre... does it feel different?... *(Pauses between each question)* Do you feel more warmth, openness and tenderness?... Are there other sensations?... How does your heart feel different from when you were envisioning your own or a loved one's suffering?...*(10 seconds)*

Continue to visualize this person as you breathe. Imagine that you are extending the light rays from your heart to them, and that the light is easing his or her suffering. Extend this light out to them while exhaling, with the strong heartfelt wish that they be free from suffering. See if this wish can be as strong as the wish for your own or a loved one's suffering to be relieved. Silently recite to him or her:

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

(1 minute)

Continue to silently recite,

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

(1 minute)

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

(1.5 minutes)

Again, notice how this feels in your heart...*(Pauses between each question)* Did the sensations change from when you were *envisioning* this person's suffering?... Did you continue to feel warmth, openness and tenderness?... Were there other sensations?... Did you have a wish to take away this person's suffering?... How were these feelings different from when you were wishing to take away your own or a loved one's suffering?

(Allow silence until next time point, at least 10 seconds)

Now visualize someone you have difficulty with in your life. This may be a parent, ex-girlfriend or boyfriend, a room-mate or a Co-worker. *(5 seconds)*

Although you may have negative feelings towards this person, think of how this person has suffered in his or her own life. This person has also had conflicts with loved ones, or has dealt with failures or may have suffered illness. Think of a situation in which this person may have suffered. *(30 seconds)*

Notice your heart centre... does it feel different? *(Pauses between each question)* Do you feel more warmth, openness and tenderness?... Are there other sensations?... How does your heart feel different from when you were envisioning your own or a loved one's suffering?...*(10 seconds)*

Continue to visualize this person as you breathe. Imagine that you are extending the light rays from your heart to him or her, and that the light is easing his or her suffering. Extend this light out to them while exhaling, with the strong heartfelt wish that they be free from suffering. See if this wish can be as strong as the wish for your own or a loved one's suffering to be relieved. Silently recite to him or her:

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

(1 minute)

If you have difficulty in wishing for this person’s suffering to be relieved, you may think of a positive interaction you have had with this person that can help you in wishing them joy and happiness. Perhaps there were times when you got along, laughed together. It is important to remember that they are just the same as you – they want happiness and do not want to suffer.

Continue to silently recite,

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

(1 minute)

“May you be free from this suffering... May you have joy and happiness”

(1 minutes)

Again, notice how this feels in your heart... Did the sensations change?...

(Pauses between each question) Did you feel warmth, openness and tenderness?

... How were these feelings different from when you were wishing for your own or a loved one’s suffering to end?... Were there other sensations, perhaps a tightness in the chest? Did you have a wish to take away this person’s suffering?

(Allow silence until next time point, at least 10 seconds)

Now that we are almost at the end of this meditation, let’s finish with a wish for every-bodies suffering to be relieved. Remember - Just as you wish to have peace, happiness, and to be free from suffering, so do all beings...*(30 seconds)*

Now rest a moment with the warmth of compassion in your heart...*(30 seconds)*

In a moment, when you hear the soothing sound of the singing bowl, start to slowly open your eyes and gently introduce yourself back into the world.