

Duke | Clergy Health Initiative

Loving Kindness Meditation

Offered by the Duke Clergy Health Initiative

Put on some soothing background music, if you can. If not, silence is fine, or maybe you're out in nature.

Relax, notice how your breath feels right now. Simply watch your breath. Notice the texture of your breathing. The rate of your breathing. The depth of your breathing. There's no need to change it.

Bring your awareness to your chest, to your heart. Keep your awareness there as you notice your breath. Notice what it is like to breathe into your chest, into your heart. Simply place all of your awareness right there, to the center of your chest. Now slowly and silently repeat this phrase:

May I be happy, may I be well, may I be safe...and at peace

Direct loving kindness toward your body and all its mental habits. Try to embrace all parts of yourself. This includes anxiety, fears, emotional habits and desires, physical aches and pains, as well as illness and old age. Embrace all parts of yourself. Leave nothing out.

Repeat the following phrase with gentleness and kindness:

May I be happy, may I be well, may I be safe...and at peace

Now, imagine someone you love very much
Notice how you feel, any changes in your body

Slowly and silently repeat this phrase: May they be happy, may they be well, may they be safe...and at peace

Imagine the faces of your extended family
Repeat: May they be happy, may they be well, may they be safe...and at peace

Next imagine your church congregants
Repeat: May they be happy, may they be well, may they be safe...and at peace

Next imagine your neighbor and people across your city
Repeat: May they be happy, may they be well, may they be safe...and at peace

Next imagine people all across this country
Repeat: May they be happy, may they be well, may they be safe...and at peace

Finally, imagine people all across the world; people of all kinds, all skin colors, all ages
And say to yourself: May we be happy, may we be well, may we be safe...and at peace

I invite you to open your eyes, wiggle your fingers
Carry this feeling of loving kindness with you today
And it is my blessing to you - May you feel happy, may you feel well, may you feel safe and at peace

The above is a version Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell adapted from the two sources below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-d_AA9H4z9U

https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/loving_kindness_meditation