

A Sea of Benefactors

Sitting comfortably, bring attention to the points of contact where your legs and back are resting on the chair or cushion. Feel the weight of the body resting, supported. Notice the sensations and movements of the body as it sits and breathes. See if you can rest in the experience of the breathing body. Inhaling, the body expands. Exhaling, the body contracts. Sitting and breathing, the body balances itself, supported by the chair or cushion and the ground underneath. Sitting, breathing, resting, supported.

Now recall someone whose actions have benefited you. It might be someone in your family, or a friend, the clerk at the store, or someone in the street who spontaneously smiled at you, bringing you a moment of friendliness or a sense of ease. It doesn't particularly matter how well they know you, or how much or how purely they intended to benefit you; some action they did, large or small, actually did bring you some benefit.

Recall your parents, siblings, and other family members. You may have some difficult relationships with some of them, perhaps some painful memories, but also recall that since before you were born, they have been there, feeding you, taking care of you, sharing their time and energy and experience with you. Before they knew what you would go on to do, before they knew who you would become, they sheltered and educated and supported you. Recognize the enormity of what you have received from your family.

Bring to mind a few of the many people who are involved in the production and delivery of food, clothing, shelter, heat, material goods of all kinds. You may not know many of these people personally, but they are all around you, doing what they do best in order to make available all the things you need to survive and thrive. Their energy, knowledge, and actions are supporting you. The interdependence of beings and events is deep, broad, subtle, and profound.

Recall the environment from which you draw life and enjoyment: the earth, the cooling breeze, the warm sun, the clean flowing waters, the plants and animals that provide you with food and companionship and a kinship that goes beyond species.

Recall a teacher who taught you something. It might be a teacher from grade school or high school, or a college professor. Recall a mentor, someone who supported you or encouraged you to grow. Recall a spiritual teacher or guide who has written or spoken or shown you something that made a difference in your life, someone whose work or life has been an inspiration to you.

Continue to recall mentors, teachers, friends, and benefactors of all kinds, large and small, spiritual or practical or mundane, those from the past, those who support you now, and those who will support and benefit you in the future. Imagine this large and growing group of benefactors out in front of you -- a sea of benefactors in front of you.

There is nothing you have to do to earn their support and receive all these benefits. Your benefactors, known and unknown, have been supporting you since before you were born. They have been there your entire life, and will always be there, giving you what you need, teaching you what you need to know, supporting and inspiring you spiritually. Imagine the sea of benefactors in front of you, smiling, accepting you just the way you are, wishing you well, acting on that wish in order to benefit your health and well-being.

Recognize, acknowledge, and appreciate the benefit you receive from this sea of benefactors. Feel the support and rely on it. Rest in the experience of being supported and receiving infinite benefits. Feel your body, sitting and breathing, supported physically, emotionally, spiritually.

From the center of your body, feel a warmth, a warm radiating light. Gradually, naturally extend that warm radiating light throughout your body and beyond, radiating warm friendly light into your surroundings, received by everyone, so that they receive the warmth and benefit. Continue to sit, breathing, supported, radiating good wishes to yourself and to everyone, all human and non-human beings.

With deepest gratitude for all his teachers and benefactors, this contemplation was offered by George Draffan in June 2011. NaturalAwareness.net