

Verses of Kindness & Compassion

In gladness and in safety
May all beings be at ease.
Whatever living beings there may be,
Whether they are weak or strong,
omitting none,
The great or the mighty,
medium, short or small,
The seen and the unseen,
Those living near and far away,
Those born and to-be-born,
May all beings be at ease!
Let none deceive another,
or despise any being in any state,
Let none through anger or ill-will
wish harm upon another.
Even as a mother protects with her life
her child, her only child,
So with a boundless heart
should one cherish all living beings,
Radiating kindness over the entire world,
Spreading upwards to the skies,
and downwards to the depths,
Outwards and unbounded,
freed from hatred and ill-will.
Whether standing or walking,
seated or lying down,
One should sustain this recollection.

~ from the Buddha's *Metta Sutta*



Cultivating the Four Immeasurables

The four immeasurables are expressions of every sentient being's natural wish to be free of suffering, to be happy, healthy, full of joy and ease.

Begin with yourself: recognize, acknowledge, appreciate, and cultivate your wish to be safe, happy, healthy, at ease. Feel the genuine, good, and healthy caring that is the source of genuine happiness.

If resistance arises, feelings of anger, fear or unworthiness, include them in gentle, caring, compassionate awareness. As you explore your deepest aspirations, gradually and naturally extend heartfelt wishes of well-being to others:

~ your benefactors: those who support you in any way

~ friends: those you like

~ strangers: those you neither like nor dislike

~ enemies: those you dislike or have difficulty with

~ different kinds of people: women, men, children,
poor people, rich people, various ethnic groups

~ all beings, human and non-human

Take your time with each, letting your own aspirations expand to include others.

Recognize that we are all connected by our common, natural wish to be happy and free.

Let these aspirations, intentions, and feelings radiate from your heart in all directions, without limit, immeasurable.

Loving-kindness (metta or maitri)

the radiant warm wish for the deepest well-being

Far enemy: ill-will
Near enemy: attachment

May I (*you, they, we, all*) be safe, healthy and strong

May all enjoy a happy heart and peace of mind

May we enjoy the ease of well-being

May all be supported by loved ones and community

May all be endowed with the faith, wisdom, and kindness
that are seeds of genuine happiness

May we all be safe, healthy, happy, at ease in body, at home in the world

Compassion (karuna)

the courageous heart that wishes others not suffer

Far enemy: cruelty

Near enemies: pity, despair, rescuing, fixing

May I (*you, they, we, all*) be free from inner and outer harm

May we be free from misery and struggle

May we be free from disease and affliction

May we all be free from hunger and poverty

May we be free from pain, sorrow and grief

May we be free from fear, worry and anxiety

May all be free from anger, ill-will and conflict

May we all be free from greed and neediness

May all be free from fear and discomfort

May we be free from desire and busyness

May all be free from jealousy and competitiveness

May we be free from pride and arrogance

May all be free from suffering and the seeds of suffering

Sympathetic Joy (mudita)

joy in the happiness & success of others

Far enemy: jealousy

Near enemy: frivolity

May I (*you, they, we, all*) delight in the success and happiness of others

May all enjoy life just as they wish

May we be free of jealousy, envy and enmity for others

May we support the well-being of others

May all enjoy success in whatever they set out to do

May we all enjoy leisure, wealth and prosperity, and
may everyone share their good fortune with others

May we all enjoy harmony and friendship

May we roam with curiosity and play with delight

May we find boundless joy beyond our wildest dreams

May we all enjoy virtue, happiness, and good fortune

Equanimity (upekkha)

stability, clarity, & balance in the midst of experience

Far enemies: aversion, attachment

Near enemy: indifference

May I (*you, they, we, all*) accept things just as they are

May we all be clear and free from confusion

May we all abide calmly in the midst of change

May we be free from attachment, aversion, & indifference

May we know balanced clarity, free from preference and prejudice

May we see the essential equality of all beings

May we all embrace others with impartiality

May we care for others yet know that each is the owner of their deeds

May we all be peaceful and balanced

May all rest in great equanimity

Great are yourself and myself,
We are just as good and bad as the oldest and youngest or any,
What the best and worst did... we could do,
What they felt... do not we feel it in ourselves?
What they wished... do we not wish the same?

~ Walt Whitman

For as long as space endures
And for as long as living beings remain,
Until then may I too abide
To dispel the misery of the world.

~ Shantideva, *The Bodhisattva's Way of Life*

may all beings
be safe
healthy
happy
at ease in their body
at home in the world

