

## Instructions for Loving Kindness Meditation

- 1 Cultivate kindness for yourself:** To begin, find a posture that creates ease. Notice your breath coming in and out—its texture, its frequency, its depth—without judgment. See if you can remain quiet, attentive, and open to what is happening within and around you. Once ready, send loving kindness to yourself, as you pray, *May I be well, May I be calm, May I be open, May I be whole*. Repeat for 2-5 minutes, or as desired.
- 2 Cultivate kindness for a loved one:** After a few repetitions of self-blessings, shift your focus to a loved one. Allow yourself a moment to see them in your mind's eye. Notice their expressions or attributes with compassion. See if you can remain quiet, attentive, and open to wishing them well wherever they are as you pray, *May you be well, May you be calm, May you be open, May you be whole*. You may repeat this blessing for one or a handful of loved ones before moving on.
- 3 Cultivate kindness for a stranger:** After blessing your loved one(s), shift your focus to a relative stranger. It may be someone you see regularly in your routine but do not know well. It may be someone who you know only visually but not by name. Your kindness is offered freely and anonymously. See if you can remain quiet, attentive, and open to wishing them well wherever they are as you pray, *May you be well, May you be calm, May you be open, May you be whole*. Repeat for 2-5 minutes, or as desired.
- 4 Cultivate kindness for a "difficult" one:** After blessing your stranger(s), shift your focus to a "difficult" person. Start with someone who is, perhaps, hard for you to love but not distressing to think about it. Notice their expressions or attributes with compassion. See if you can remain quiet, attentive, and open to wishing them well wherever they are as you pray, *May you be well, May you be calm, May you be open, May you be whole*. If cultivating kindness for them proves too stressful, return to sending and receiving kindness for yourself, as in Step 1.
- 5 Cultivate kindness for all beings:** After blessing your difficult one(s), shift your focus to all beings. Extend feelings of kinship, friendship, and compassion to all individuals and all forms of life. Notice what sense of communion arises in you or extends out from you. See if you can remain quiet, attentive, and open to wishing us all well wherever we are as you pray, *May we be well, May we be calm, May we be open, May we be whole*. Repeat for 2-5 minutes, or as desired. When you're ready to end your meditation practice, bring your attention back to your body, your breath, and the holy present.

