

Loving-Kindness Meditation

The loving-kindness meditation, also known as “Metta” meditation is a technique for nurturing love and compassion for yourself and others. You can find many variations online. However, the core elements of most are:

1. Still your heart and mind while in a comfortable position.
2. Prayerfully bring to mind a warm feeling of compassion and care.
3. Extend this sense of loving-kindness to yourself, and to a series of others while repeating a positive phrase such as, “May you be healthy, may you be happy, may you be free from suffering.” Choose whatever words evoke for you a genuine desire for another person's well-being. I often like to add a Christ-centered blessings such as, “May Christ reign in all areas of your life.”
4. Repeat the phrases from a positive feeling of love, and kindness. Fill yourself with these emotions..
5. Repeat this process through a series of people. You can read my particular series in the notes below.
6. Take a few deep breaths when you are finished and notice how the meditation has shifted how you feel.

Why I use the order of people I do

I practiced the loving-kindness meditation for forty days during Lent of 2023. I started by following guided versions on Youtube that ranged from five to twenty minutes. I eventually settled on around ten minutes.

Models typically include a spectrum of four to five different types of people to consider while meditating.

The order that became normative for me was:

- Someone I love or feel very loved by
- Myself
- Acquaintances and casual friends
- Someone hard to love
- The world

Each layer offered a different benefit. As mentioned, starting with people I loved got me in a good place of mind quickly. Including myself, which is a typical element, was easier for me if I started with others. Starting with myself felt awkward.

Considering acquaintances made me appreciate people I took for granted, such as workers in the smoothie shop I frequent. I became much more mindful of and interactive with acquaintances. I openly became more engaged.

Extending loving kindness to difficult people was easier if I waited until later in the meditation. God softened my heart toward these people through this practice.

Ending with the world was just a great way to frame going into the day with a heart full of kindness.

I would encourage you to start as I did by following a few models on youtube. You can find a link to an expanded article and a five minute example of a loving kindness video that I particularly like by a good friend of mine, Mikah Horn, on the FPC discipleship resource page.

<http://fpcrogers.com/discipleshiptools>