

Insight Meditation

Insight meditation is typically practiced with the support of an instructor or guide. While there are many different kinds of insight-oriented practices, here you'll find an example of a *metta* meditation, which is designed to cultivate a sense of "loving-kindness" or benevolence. It is derived from Theravada Buddhism.

The meditation consists of repeating a series of blessings for four specific individuals, followed by extending these same considerations to the whole world. The four specific individuals consist of yourself, a loved one or friend, someone to whom you feel neutral towards (e.g., colleague at work), and someone you dislike. You conclude the meditation by repeating the series for the benefit of everyone in the world.

1. Identify the individuals who you will reference during the meditation.
2. Sit in a relaxed, alert posture either in a chair or sitting on a meditation cushion. Invite yourself to "Sit with dignity" and note how you change the way you're sitting.
3. Prior to starting the meditation, imagine yourself at a time when you felt very happy and content. Imagine this sentiment radiating through your body as you begin the meditation.
4. Smile.
5. For each person (and then the world), mentally repeat the following:
 - May [X] be happy
 - May [X] be well
 - May [X] be free from suffering
 - May [X] live a life of ease



[X] represents the person to whom you are offering these well wishes.

6. Spend about 3 - 5 minutes repeating the blessings for the benefit of each person. Notice what arises within yourself as you proceed through the meditation.