

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Northern Chautauqua
Connecting with courage through love, faith, and service

The “metta” or lovingkindness meditation

This comes from the Buddhist tradition and is intended to help one develop compassion for, and connection to, all beings. It is an orientation for the heart and mind in the expansion of goodwill and good intention.

The phrases:

May I be filled with lovingkindness.

May I be well and safe, free from mental and physical suffering.

May I be peaceful and at ease.

May I be happy.

After one has repeated these four phrases for oneself, several times, bring to mind someone who is dear to you and say in your heart the same phrases, saying, *May you, [their name] be....* After a bit of time here, move to someone you feel neutral for, someone you don't really know, like a grocery clerk or someone who checks out your purchases at a store. Again, *May you be....* Then bring to mind someone for whom you feel some frustration or difficulty with, and with their image in your mind and heart, say, *May you, [their name] be...* [Note: it is suggested that initially you not bring to mind a person you have had a traumatic experience with or are deeply troubled with. One must build up to this, so go slowly in this area.] And lastly move on to all beings, human and animal, with the phrases, *May we all be....* and feel your heart moving outward to embrace larger and larger circles of creation.

This meditation can be practiced walking, riding in your car, as you do daily activities or are at work waiting for the copier! You can focus on one aspect of it, repeating the phrases over and over for yourself; or you could do it only for someone else; and you can always simply do the last part: *May we all be filled with lovingkindness..* But it is also important to do the entire meditation occasionally.