



10. COMPASSION MINDFULNESS

In Sanskrit there is a word: *metta*. It doesn't have an exact translation in English. The closest we have is the idea of compassion or lovingkindness - it is that sense of deep and abiding care that you can feel towards another human being; a sense that you wish no harm to come to that person and a feeling of holding them in kindness and care. Sometimes it is possible to get a sense of that feeling by imaging how a parent may feel towards their child.

Now, allow yourself to notice your breath. Don't feel that you have to do anything to your breathing - just be aware, curious and attentive to the physical sensations of breathing in and breathing out.

Allow yourself now to bring your awareness and attention to that feeling of compassion, lovingkindness or deep and abiding care and concern. Bring to mind someone in your life who is dear and precious to you. Imagine yourself enfolding this person in that feeling. Allow yourself to have the following thoughts towards this person:

- May this person know a decrease in distress
- May this person know peace and tranquillity - at least for a while
- May this person know happiness and joy - at least for a while
- May this person be able to deal with their suffering

Continue to imagine this person, holding them in your mind and sending to the image you hold these loving, kind and compassionate thoughts. Notice how this feels in your body. What are the physical sensations that come to you when you connect with feelings of lovingkindness and compassion? What are the images and thoughts that come? Just notice these thoughts, physical sensations and emotions - note them with gentle curiosity, without judgment.

Now, if you can, see whether you can direct some of that lovingkindness, compassion and deep abiding care towards yourself. See whether you can have the following thoughts for yourself:

- May I know a decrease in distress
- May I know some peace and tranquillity in my life - at least for a while
- May I know some happiness and joy -at least for a while
- May I be confident that I can deal with my own suffering

Now bring your attention, mindfulness and awareness back to your breath. Notice your inward and outward breath for a few moments.