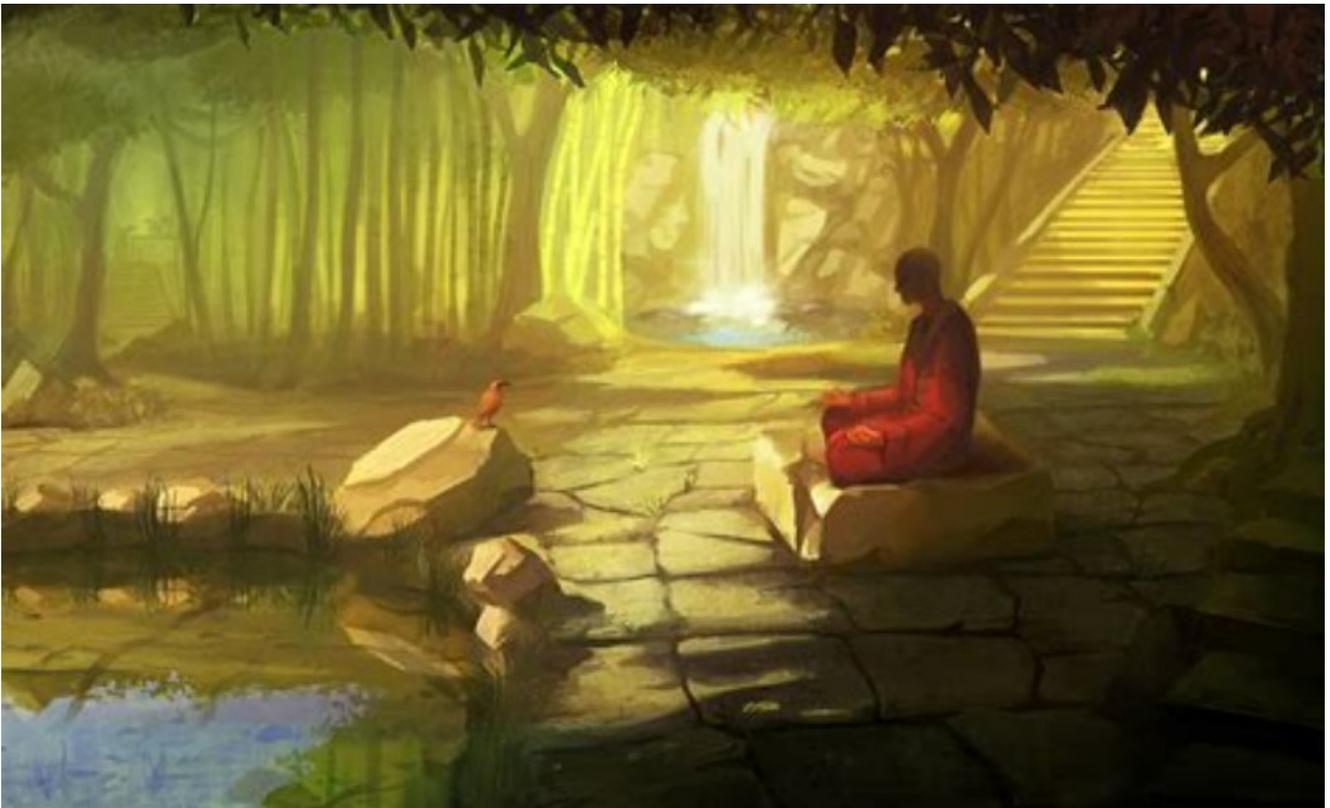


# A LOVING-KINDNESS MEDITATION



*The path of loving-kindness embraces all sentient beings without exception, and it begins with you.*

- Foundation: begin with a calm-abiding meditation, of your choice, which helps you to feel grounded, stable and relaxed. A traditional method is to focus attention on the physical sensations of the breath as it passes in and out of the nostrils. Breathe naturally and follow the breath for awhile, until you feel ready to move on to the next stage of the meditation.
- Visualization: as you continue to focus attention on the breath, gradually widen your awareness to feeling the natural flow of air as it passes through other areas of the body. Try to imagine it as a healing light, the colour of your choice. The healing light merges, at your heart, with any pain, fear or other negative states of mind, and is transformed into pure love. Exhale and inhale love as light for awhile. When ready, visualize yourself sitting in a beautiful familiar place, that has provided you with moments of joy in your life. If this is difficult to bring to mind, then silently call your name with a sense of joy attached to it. Remember to breathe.
- Recitation: if you can hold the visualization, or just the feelings of love, then calmly say a few times, “*May I be kind to myself.*” Observe how this feels and, remember to breathe. Now calmly say a few times, “*May I be patient with myself.*” Any discomfort, or resistance? When you are ready, calmly say a few times, “*May I be at peace.*” Try, within reason, to sit with whatever arises.

After awhile, calmly say a few times, “*May I cultivate a heart that is more kind.*” Observe how this feels. Then calmly say a few times, “*May I cultivate a heart that is more patient.*” Any discomfort, or resistance? When you are ready, calmly say a few times, “*May I cultivate a heart that is more peaceful.*” Continue to recite each of the six phrases and, be aware of how your mind and body feels.

- If your attention wanders off from the focus of the meditation, or you feel very anxious or fearful, then go back to the *Foundation* before eventually returning to the *Visualization* and *Recitation* sections of the practice.
- Do this meditation for a minimum of ten minutes each day.