



First,
find a comfortable place to sit
where you won't be disturbed.

If you're in a chair,
make your way to the back of the chair,
to support your lower back.

Ground both your feet flat on the floor.

Sit upright
with your spine, neck, and the crown of your head
pulled skyward.

Gently pull your shoulder blades back
and down,
raising your rib cage slightly.

These small shifts will create a true physical openness for your heart,
an openness consistent
with the positive emotions
you aim to cultivate.

Gently lower your gaze
to reduce distractions;
if you're comfortable,
close your eyes.

In this meditation,
you'll hear my voice
followed by periods of silence.

In the silence,
continue to say the phrases of loving-kindness
silently,
to yourself.

We'll begin and end
by bringing awareness to the sound of a chime.



Take a few
deep breaths,
and bring your awareness
to your heart.

Visualize how each in-breath
affects your heart
physically.

Breathe normally now,
making no special effort to breathe,
in any particular way.

Continue to rest your awareness on your heart.

Consider how each in-breath nourishes you
as your heart drinks in precious oxygen.

This passage of oxygen from the nearby air,
through your lungs,
and then into your beating heart
and bloodstream
is the most basic and constant connection
between you and the world around you.

This simple act of breathing
knits together
all that is within you
with all that lies beyond your skin.

Each new breath
creates a unity of life
as all people
share the nourishment
that the earth's atmosphere
freely offers.

Check in now
with how your body is feeling.



Do you have any aches
or pains?

Any worries,
or areas of tension,
or are you excited,
caught up in eager anticipation?

Whatever the feeling,
there's no need to push it aside.

Pleasant or not,
let that feeling in;
accept it
as part of what it means to be you at this moment.

Meet the feeling with curiosity and openness.

Note how it registers in your body, and how those sensations change
subtly,
from one moment to the next.

Whether your current experience is pleasant, or unpleasant,
just witness and accept it.

Whether events in your life are presenting you with good or bad fortune these days,
just witness and accept those events;
see them as part of the inevitable ups and downs that all people experience.

Just as surely as all people face good and bad fortune,
all people, all the world over
yearn to feel good, safe, peaceful, and healthy.

Alongside your awareness of suffering,
and the fundamental sameness of all people,
you can choose to wish yourself well;
you deserve this kindness as much as anyone.

Begin by lightly calling to mind
your own good qualities.



Let these qualities remind you
of what's good in you.

What touches your heart about yourself?

Then gently offer the classic wishes of loving-kindness
to yourself,
choosing phrasings that best speak to your heart.

May I feel safe
and protected.

May I feel happy
and peaceful.

May I feel healthy
and strong.

May I live
with ease.

See yourself as being a dear friend to yourself.

It might help to first imagine the warmth
and tenderness you might feel toward an infant,
or a kitten,
as innocent as these small creatures can be.

Experience how your face softens,
and your heart expands,
in their presence.

Now,
imagine directing these same feelings of warmth and tenderness
to yourself.

May I feel
safe.

May I feel
happy.



May I feel
healthy.

May I live
with ease.

Between each phrase
pause for just a moment
to drop your awareness
down to your body,
to your heart in particular;
note and accept whatever sensations arise there.

Know that this practice is more than the mere repetition of phrases;
the phrases simply open a door to a chance for you to condition your heart,
to be more open, accepting,
and kinder.

Becoming aware of your heart region

May I feel
safe.

May I feel
happy.

May I feel
healthy.

May I live
with ease.

At times,
you'll find that your attention has strayed from the phrases;
this may happen a lot,
don't worry,
it's normal.

Simply begin again by gently bringing
your awareness back to the phrases.



There's no need to berate yourself
for losing your focus.

Each new moment of beginning again
presents another chance to experiment with the spirit
of loving-kindness.

Can you acknowledge your lapse,
while at the same time gently returning to the phrases?

What would it take to set aside all harshness,
and begin again,
with a kind and loving attitude towards yourself?

May I feel
safe.

May I feel
happy.

May I feel
healthy.

May I live
with ease.

As you end this practice,
know that it's completely natural for you to treat yourself kindly,
even if you may forget to do so
quite often.

Know that you can generate this tender,
and loving attitude towards yourself anytime,
just by reminding yourself that this dance exists,
and how at ease it makes you feel.
Difficulties and obstacles will still arise;
suffering happens,
but you don't need to add to that suffering by treating yourself harshly.

You can instead offer the ancient wishes of loving-kindness to yourself.