

Spirituality & Practice

Just-Like-Me Compassion Meditation

Spiritual Practice by Ram Dass, Mirabai Bush

"Realizing that the other person is also just like me is the basis on which we can develop compassion, not only toward those around us but also toward our enemy. Normally, when we think about our enemy, we think about harming him. Instead, try to remember that the enemy is also a human being, just like you."

— His Holiness The Fourteenth Dalai Lama

This practice can be done alone, by bringing to mind a friend, a colleague, a neutral person, or a difficult person. It can also be done silently, when meeting someone new. This practice is also effective when done with a group of people. Ask participants to sit in pairs or have them stand in two lines facing one another. Have the people look into their partners' eyes, letting them know that they can close their eyes or look down at any time if they need to. If practicing in a group, after participants complete the exercise with one partner, have them begin again with a new partner, so that the repetition with someone new increases everyone's understanding that all others are "just like me."

Use any or all of the suggested phrases below or any others that may be more appropriate. Begin by becoming aware that there is a person in front of you, another human being, just like you. Then, silently repeat the phrases below, while looking at your partner.

This person has a body and a mind, just like me.

This person has feelings, emotions, and thoughts, just like me.

This person has experienced physical and emotional pain and suffering, just like me.

This person has at some time been sad, disappointed, angry, or hurt, just like me.

This person has felt unworthy or inadequate, just like me.

This person worries and is frightened sometimes, just like me.

This person will die, just like me.

This person has longed for friendship, just like me.

This person is learning about life, just like me.

This person wants to be caring and kind to others, just like me.

This person wants to be content with what life has given them, just like me.

This person wishes to be free from pain and suffering, just like me.

This person wishes to be safe and healthy, just like me.

This person wishes to be happy, just like me.

This person wishes to be loved, just like me.

Now, allow wishes for well-being to arise:

I wish this person to have the strength, resources, and social support they need to navigate the difficulties in life with ease.

I wish this person to be free from pain and suffering.

I wish this person to be peaceful and happy.

I wish this person to be loved . . . because this person is a fellow human being, just like me.

After a few moments, thank your partner with a bow or in whatever way feels appropriate.

— *Ram Dass, Mirabai Bush in Walking Each Other Home*



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