

**Metta for the Whole World:
A Meditative Reflection**
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Introduction

“Metta” means lovingkindness. A beautiful way to compensate for the hard-wired tendency to fix our attention and affections on mainly one person, or small group of people, is to deliberately cultivate and practice an attitude of compassion and kindness toward people in general.

A Reflection

Finding a posture that helps you remain both alert and relaxed.

Settling into the breath.

Going with the feelings that seem right to you, staying with the suggestions here or following your own direction.

Sensing the sensations of the breath in the chest, in the region of the heart.

Bringing to mind the feeling of being with someone you care about deeply. Someone you love.

Feeling that love.

Perhaps sensing that love flowing through the heart, perhaps in a rhythm with the breath.

Perhaps a sense of that love as having a life of its own, flowing through your heart, not specific to any one person.

That love becoming more global, a broad sense of goodwill and kindness toward the people you know well, your immediate friends and family.

Perhaps a sense of that lovingkindness flowing through your heart in rhythm with the breath.

That lovingkindness extending further outward toward the many people you know who are pretty neutral to you . . . perhaps people you see sometimes at the store, or at work, or connected with people you know well . . . wishing them the best, too . . . that they suffer less . . . that they are truly happy . . .

Perhaps a sense of the lovingkindness like a warmth or light shining outward through you . . . or like a spreading pool like water, lapping outward ever farther, gentle waves extending outward to include ever more people.

Lovingkindness including even difficult people . . . lovingkindness with a life and strength of its own . . . that recognizes some of the many causes that affected those people and led them to be a problem for you . . . lovingkindness that wishes well to even people who have mistreated you . . . lovingkindness that wishes that even they may suffer less . . . lovingkindness that they, too, may be truly happy . . .

The peacefulness and strength of this lovingkindness flowing outward ever farther to include people you know exist, though you do not know them personally . . . lovingkindness for all the people living in America today, whether you agree with them or not, whether you like them or not

Taking a couple minutes here on your own, to explore extending your lovingkindness to each one of the billions of people living here on Earth . . .

Someone somewhere right now laughing . . . someone crying . . . someone getting married . . . someone caring for a sick child or parent . . . someone worried . . . someone being born . . . someone dying

Lovingkindness flowing, extending out, comfortable and flowing, perhaps in rhythm with the breath . . . Lovingkindness extending to all living beings on this Earth . . . Wishing them all well . . . All animals of all kinds, in the sea, on the earth, in the air May they suffer less and find more comfort . . . All plants of all kinds . . . All microorganisms of all kinds, the amoebas, the bacteria, even the viruses . . . May they all suffer less, and find more comfort . . .

So that all cubs are our own . . .

So that all beings are our clan . . .

All life, our relatives . . .

The whole earth, our home . . .