



Compassion Day

Guided Loving-Kindness Meditation with Maitreya

Preparation

Sit in a comfortable position, with your back straight, and take a few minutes to relax your body and mind. Let your eyes close gently, and let your body become relaxed, light and free from tension. Let your breath flow in and out in a natural rhythm. Relax your mind by letting go of thoughts – thoughts of the past or the future, thoughts of your work, other places or people. Let these thoughts drift out of your mind, and decide to keep your mind in the present, focused on the meditation, without being distracted to anything else.

Motivation

Generate a positive motivation for doing this meditation. For example, you can think that you are doing the meditation in order to have more love, kindness and compassion in your heart to give to others and to the world. If you are comfortable with the idea, you can also think that you are doing it to become enlightened, to help all sentient beings.



Maitreya Buddha

Actual Meditation

Now -visualize- in the space in front of you a figure or image that represents absolute purity, goodness, peace, universal love and compassion. This figure could be Maitreya, the embodiment of loving-kindness, or another Buddhist figure that you are familiar with. If you prefer, you can visualize a figure from Christianity such as Jesus, Mary, or one of the saints. Or it could be a figure from another religious tradition that you are familiar with and that represents for you these positive qualities. You could also visualize simply light: a sphere or beam of radiant white or golden light. The point is to think of a representation of pure love and compassion that you are comfortable with, and imagine it in front of you. Visualize it as not solid, like our bodies, but made of light, transparent and radiant.

If you do wish to visualize Maitreya, imagine that his body is made of radiant golden light, and that his appearance is youthful, peaceful, and smiling. Don't be concerned about having a perfect, clear image. Just do the best you can, and be satisfied with that. The most important thing is to feel that it's really there; that you are sitting in the presence of this representation of goodness, perfection, purity, universal loving kindness and compassion. Spend some time getting a sense of the loving-kindness Maitreya feels for you and every other living being in the universe, without exception. He does not discriminate between people who are beautiful or ugly, wealthy or poor, intelligent or dull, well-mannered or unruly. He loves all beings equally, not because of their appearance or behavior, but just because they exist. He views all of us in the way that a loving mother sees her small child: beautiful, dear, precious, totally deserving of love. And his love is constant, not fleeting; it is always there, every moment, hour, day, month, and year, forever. He is completely non-judgmental, and always forgives us, no matter what we do. Try to really feel this loving-kindness and compassion emanating from Maitreya to yourself and all other beings. Moreover, understand that you also have the capacity to develop such love.

Now -visualize- light flowing from your visualized image into you, and filling your body as if it were like an empty vase being filled with liquid. The light flows down to the tips of your toes and fingers, then fills your legs, hands, arms, torso, neck and head, right up to the top of your head. It fills every cell, atom and tiny particle of your body. This pure radiant light purifies all of your troubles and pain – physical pain and sickness, as well as mental unhappiness, negative thoughts, and the imprints of harmful actions you did in the past. Everything negative in your body and mind is completely purified, and disappears like the darkness in a room when the light is switched on.

Imagine that your body is suffused with blissful, radiant light, and becomes clean and clear like a piece of crystal. Imagine that your mind becomes calm and clear, free of all disturbing thoughts, and filled with feelings of loving-kindness and compassion. Imagine that you become inseparable from the image in front of you, the embodiment of loving-kindness and compassion. You yourself become just like that – totally positive, loving, compassionate, peaceful, and blissful. Let your mind rest in this experience for a few minutes, without thinking of anything else....

Now generate the wish to share this peaceful, loving energy with others, so that they too become free from suffering, and filled with positive energy. Imagine the energy of loving-kindness radiating out from your heart to all directions like rays of light emanating from the sun. Imagine that it first touches other people who are in the room with you, or in the house or building that you are in. Imagine that they become filled with the energy of loving-kindness.

Then send it out further to all the people in your neighborhood. They all become filled with this light of loving-kindness.... Then send it out further to all the people in your town or city, and imagine that they all

become filled with the energy of loving kindness.

Continue, sending the light out to the people in other countries, so that gradually all people in all countries in the world become filled with loving-kindness. Imagine sending it out to other beings as well: non-human beings such as animals, birds, fish and marine life, and insects – all the living beings, everywhere in the world. They all become filled with the energy of loving-kindness.

Imagine sending it out to all the sentient beings in the universe; imagine that all of them become filled with the energy of loving-kindness. The minds of all beings everywhere become free of negative thoughts, and filled with loving thoughts, so that now there is peace everywhere. Then spend some time sitting quietly with whatever feelings are present in your mind....

Dedication

When you wish to conclude the meditation, dedicate the positive energy you created, sincerely wishing that it will bring peace to all beings, everywhere. For example, you can think or say: "May all beings everywhere become free from suffering; may their minds be free of all thoughts of intolerance, anger, hatred and the wish to give harm. May their minds be filled instead with patience, respect, loving-kindness, and the wish only to benefit others. May they all be happy." You can also dedicate the merit that all beings may ultimately attain enlightenment, the highest state of happiness.

Colophon: Meditation composed by Venerable Sangye Khadro 2012