



## Metta Meditation: A Practice of Loving Kindness

Metta is a Buddhist practice of loving kindness for oneself and others. It always begins with loving thoughts for self (often the person we're hardest on!) and then extends out to others. This practice does not require that you believe in anything in particular as a matter of religious faith or cultural value. It is a practice anyone can do regardless of one's deepest convictions. It is simply a way of offering care and softening one's heart.

Take a comfortable position that allows you to remain alert with eyes closed or downcast. Take several slow, gentle breaths, and then begin to repeat silently the following good wishes:

***May I be safe***

***May I be strong***

***May my heart be open***

***May I know peace***

After some time, extend this wish to someone close to you ("close" can mean either emotionally important to you or simply nearby physically).

***May you be safe***

***May you be strong***

***May your heart be open***

***May you know peace***

Gradually expand your circle of loving-kindness to include more people, more living beings.

If there is someone in your life with whom you have been in conflict, try sending loving-kindness to them.

In time, perhaps our circle of loving-kindness will expand to include all beings!

When you are done, simply allow yourself to rest quietly for a moment in the space of loving-kindness, without focusing on any thought that may arise.

By Rev. Ellen Swinford; adapted by Chaplain Donnel  
From book: *Prayers & Blessings for Healthcare Workers*