

*This meditation was adapted by Terri Pahucki from Sharon Salzberg's loving-kindness meditations for use at the 2018 UU-UNO Intergenerational Spring Seminar. It includes three iterations of the meditation, originally used for morning worship over the course of three days, but can be used in part for a single worship.*

## **LOVINGKINDNESS MEDITATION FOR REFUGEES**

### **Thursday Morning Worship**

*\*We have placed a small picture of a refugee on each person's chair, which will be used in this meditation.*

In the Buddhist tradition, the practice of metta, or lovingkindness, invites us to open our hearts to compassion, to the natural capacity of love and kindness that we all have within us. It is a wish that everyone be happy, safe, and free from suffering. Together in community, we will cultivate and offer this gentle support-- to ourselves, to others, and to the world. We do this to expand and grow our hearts- to gently hold both joy and suffering, and to transform it- as we walk this journey together.

This morning we begin by generating and receiving compassion for ourselves. I will then invite you to direct this same compassion to others. We will end by offering lovingkindness to all beings throughout the world.

Today, we will be sharing our loving-kindness with the refugees whose pictures we have received. I invite you to place your picture on your lap as we begin this meditation.

Make yourself comfortable in your chair,  
Relax your shoulders, your neck.  
Allow your hands to rest easily in your lap.

You may wish to close your eyes... or keep them open if this is your practice.  
Soften into an awareness of your body and your breath.

We begin by sending loving-kindness toward ourselves.

Each one of us holds inherent worth and goodness.

I invite you to remember this goodness.

As you recall a moment when this goodness shone through you, a time you were kind or caring, or a time you desired to be happy and not to suffer.

Know that you are worthy of Love....

This Love is within and surrounds you.

I now invite you to offer these words of love to yourself by silently repeating these phrases in your mind...

May I be happy...

May I be well..

May I be safe...

May I be free from pain...

May I be peaceful and at ease...

(Repeat)

Now bring your awareness back to the person whose picture you are holding. This person is a refugee, a person who by circumstances beyond their control has found themselves displaced, without country, without home. Imagine, if you can, the life of the person who you hold before you. You do not know them... but they are just like you. You and this person are similar. Just like you, they wish to be happy. Just like you, she wishes to be whole. Just like you, he wants to be free of pain. Focus on sending all your love and warm wishes to that person.

Let us send love and warmth to the person before us...as we repeat the following phrases, silently:

May you be happy...

May you be well...

May you be safe...

May you be free from pain...

May you be peaceful and at ease...

(Repeat)

Now, allow your awareness to open out in all directions...to all beings...humans and animals living everywhere...living in richness, poverty, war, peace, hunger, abundance...Aware of all the joys and sorrows that we all experience together...

May we be happy...

May we be well...

May we be safe...

May we be peaceful and at ease...

(repeat)

As we move forward, may our hearts remain open, and may we be filled with the love and care that we have experienced together in this room.

## **FRIDAY MORNING WORSHIP**

Make yourself comfortable in your chair,  
Relax your shoulders, your neck.  
Allow your hands to rest easily in your lap.

You may wish to close your eyes... or keep them open if this is your practice.  
Soften into an awareness of your body and your breath.

We begin by sending loving-kindness toward ourselves.  
Each one of us holds inherent worth and goodness.  
I invite you to remember this goodness.  
As you recall a moment when this goodness shone through you, a time you  
were kind or caring, a time you desired to be happy and not to suffer.  
Know that you are worthy of Love....  
This Love is within and surrounds you.

I now invite you to offer these words of love to yourself by silently repeating  
these phrases in your mind...

May I be happy...  
May I be well..  
May I be safe...  
May I be free from pain...  
May I be peaceful and at ease...

(Repeat)

As we recognize the worth and dignity of all people, we are invited to extend  
our love beyond ourselves to include all those who suffer. This includes those  
people who contribute to the oppression and the suffering of others. These are  
the ones who we may find difficult to love. This morning I invite you to expand  
your heart by holding in your awareness those who have contributed to the  
suffering of refugees and displaced people. It may be someone who has turned  
their backs on refugees, or someone who has persecuted or rejected those

who have been displaced. It may be someone who has caused suffering in their home country. It may be a politician or someone in a position of power here in the United States. It may be a neighbor or a relative. We include these people too in our circle of care, our circle of concern. Begin to send the love that you have received and generated back to that person. You and this person are similar. Just like you, this person wishes to be happy. Just like you this person wishes to be whole. Just like you this person wishes to be well and free of pain. Focus on sending your love and warm wishes to that person.

Let us send love and warmth to the person before us...as we repeat the following phrases, silently:

May you be happy...

May you be well...

May you be safe...

May you be free from pain...

May you be peaceful and at ease...

(Repeat)

Now, allow your awareness to open out in all directions...to all beings...humans and animals living everywhere...living in richness, poverty, war, peace, hunger, abundance...Aware of all the joys and sorrows that we all experience together...

May we be happy...

May we be well...

May we be safe...

May we be peaceful and at ease...

(repeat)

As we move forward, may our hearts remain open, and may we be filled with the love and care that we have experienced together in this room.

## **SATURDAY MORNING WORSHIP**

Make yourself comfortable in your chair,  
Relax your shoulders, your neck.  
Allow your hands to rest easily in your lap.

You may wish to close your eyes... or keep them open if this is your practice.  
Soften into an awareness of your body and your breath.

We begin by sending loving-kindness toward ourselves.  
Each one of us holds inherent worth and goodness.  
I invite you to remember this goodness.  
As you recall a moment when this goodness shone through you, a time you  
were kind or caring, a time you desired to be happy and not to suffer.  
Know that you are worthy of Love....  
This Love is within and surrounds you.

I now invite you to offer these words of love to yourself by silently repeating  
these phrases in your mind...

May I be happy...  
May I be well..  
May I be safe...  
May I be free from pain...  
May I be peaceful and at ease...

(Repeat)

Now bring your awareness to all who are working to relieve suffering in the  
world, especially those who are working to improve the lives of refugees. Aid  
workers, advocates, resettlement sponsors, congregations gathering together  
to work on behalf of refugees. Each one of us seeking to do our part, to break  
down those walls that keep us divided, to embrace wholeheartedly the people  
in search of safety and freedom from persecution. Just like you, they wish to

be happy. Just like you they wish to be whole. Just like you they wish to be well and free of pain.

Let us send loving-kindness to all those who work to better the lives of refugees and displaced persons...as we repeat the following phrases, silently:

May you be happy...

May you be well...

May you be safe...

May you be free from pain...

May you be peaceful and at ease...

(Repeat)

Now, allow your awareness to open out in all directions...to all beings...humans and animals living everywhere...living in richness, poverty, war, peace, hunger, abundance...Aware of all the joys and sorrows that we all experience together...We are a part of all life, interconnected, and whole.

May we be happy...

May we be well...

May we be safe...

May we be peaceful and at ease...

(repeat)

As we move forward, may our hearts remain open, and may we be filled with the love and care that we have experienced together in this room.