



Kindness to Thoughts



You may notice that your response to the mind and its thoughts is not always rooted in kindness and gentleness. Traditionally, loving kindness is practiced toward a person (even if that person is yourself), but you can direct this same sentiment toward the mind itself. In the following exercise, we will explore how to approach our thoughts with kindness and curiosity, rather than judgment and criticism.

Instructions

1. Find a quiet and comfortable place where you won't be disturbed. Sit in a chair or on the floor, and make sure you're in a relaxed and comfortable position.
2. Take a few deep breaths and focus on the sensation of the air entering and leaving your body. Feel the rise and fall of your chest and belly with each breath.
3. Bring to mind a thought or a series of thoughts that are currently on your mind. It could be anything - a worry, a fear, a desire, or a memory. Don't judge the thought or try to push it away. Instead, let it sit with you for a moment.
4. Now, take a step back from the thought and observe it with curiosity and kindness. Imagine that the thought is a cloud passing by in the sky. Notice its shape, its colour, and its movement. Don't try to change it or analyse it. Just observe it with gentle curiosity.
5. As you observe the thought, try to identify any emotions or physical sensations that arise. You might feel tension in your body, or a sense of heaviness in your chest. Notice these sensations without judgment.
6. Now, imagine that you are extending kindness towards the thought. You might visualize yourself giving the thought a hug, or placing a warm hand on your chest. Or, you might simply offer a kind word or phrase, such as "It's okay to feel this way," or "I'm here for you."
7. Sit with the thought and the feeling of kindness for a few more moments, before slowly bringing your attention back to your breath and the present moment.

Tips:

- Like any technique, the more you practice, the more effective it can become.
- If you feel it is too hard to sit with the thoughts, only extend the kind thoughts towards yourself as a starting point to practice.

For full guided video practice, please click or scan the QR code

