

Audio Track 17: Loving-Kindness for Couples

[00:00:00]

Try this: Loving kindness for couples.

Begin by finding a comfortable place to sit or lie down. Taking a few moments to settle in to feeling supported by your external supports, like the chair, the cushion or the floor beneath you. Feeling their solidness, their strength. You can rest and relax into them. And then take a few moments to invite a sense of internal support. You might greet yourself with an inner smile of welcome. Or place a hand over your heart or elsewhere as a physical gesture of support and kindness. Or tune into your body, breathing with an awareness of how the breath is nourishing you, with every inhalation.

If it feels right, calling to mind an image or a felt sense of yourself as you are right now. It may help to remember the circle of friends who invited you into their circle in the last exercise on belonging. Can you see yourself through their eyes and how you're worthy of belonging? This group of friends and loved ones sees you as you are and cares about you. They want the best for you. And they begin to offer you kind wishes. Perhaps the kind wishes are: may you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be healthy. And may you live with ease. Or perhaps their wishes that speak to you more specifically. Let yourself hear and receive their kind wishes now.

As you feel ready, beginning to offer yourself your own kind wishes. May I be happy. Even me. This one here. May I be happy. May I be peaceful. May I be healthy, or as healthy as I can be

right now. And may I live with ease. You can use these words or other words that speak more directly to your situation. And as you say these words silently to yourself, repeating them over and over, offer them with the intention of kindness as best you can. No need to rush through them, saying them slowly. And with a warm tone. You can stay here as long as you like.

And when it feels right to move on, calling to mind your partner. You might picture them in your mind, or just have a felt sense of them. Let yourself feel how much you want them to be happy and free from suffering. And when you feel ready, offer these phrases or other ones, if you prefer, to the image of your partner slowly and gently. May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be healthy. May you live with ease. And as you say these phrases or other ones, if you prefer, let yourself feel how much you care about them and wish them well. You can also stay here as long as you like.

And when you're ready, forming a picture or a felt sense of you and your partner together, allowing yourself to know how important your relationship with this person is. And as you feel ready, begin offering the phrases, or your own phrases to both of you. May we be happy. May we be peaceful. May we be healthy, in body, and mind, and spirit. And may we live with ease. Over and over at your own pace. Perhaps in your own words, wishing your kind wishes, for both of you.

And when you feel ready, letting go of the images and phrases and taking a moment to notice how you feel right now. As best you can, accepting yourself and your practice, just like this, at least for right now.

And remembering to thank yourself for showing up, for practicing, for strengthening this habit, this reflex, this way of being kind to yourself, to your partner, to your relationship. Remembering that what we practice grows stronger.

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