

Opening the Heart

This meditation is a way to connect to the love and compassion that does exist in this world.

Imagine you are encircled by people who love you. Sit comfortably, eyes open or closed, and imagine yourself in the center of a circle made up of the most loving beings you've met. There may be some people in your circle who you've never met but have been inspired by. Maybe they exist now or they've existed historically, or even mythically.

Receive the love of those who love you. Experience yourself as the recipient of the energy, attention, care, and regard of all of these beings in your circle of love. Silently repeat whatever phrases are expressive of that which you most wish for yourself, not just for today but in an enduring way. Phrases that are big and open, something like: *May I be safe, be happy, be healthy. Live with ease of heart. May I be safe, be happy, be healthy. Live with ease of heart.*

Notice how you feel when you receive love. As you experience yourself in the center of the circle, all kinds of different emotions may arise. You may feel gratitude and awe, or you might feel kind of shy, like you would rather duck down and have all of these beings send loving kindness to one another and forget about you. Whatever emotion may arise, you just let it wash through you. Your touchstone is those phrases: *May I be happy. May I be peaceful...* or whatever phrases you've chosen.

Open yourself up to receiving love. Imagine that your skin is porous and this warm, loving energy is coming in. Imagine yourself receiving. There's nothing special that you need to do to deserve this kind of acknowledgement or care. It's simply because you exist.

Send loving care to the people in your circle. You can allow that quality of loving kindness and compassion and care you feel coming toward you to flow right back out to the circle and then toward all beings everywhere, so that what you receive, you transform into giving. You give the quality of care and kindness that does actually exist in this world. That can become part of you, and part of what you express or return. When you feel ready you can open your eyes or lift your gaze to end the session.