

THE FOUR IMMEASURABLE ATTITUDES: JOY (3)

What is immeasurable joy?

The attitude of immeasurable joy, at times called appreciative joy, is the unconditional wish "May all beings never be parted from the happiness that is free of suffering." This attitude:

- wishes everyone to experience ongoing and reliable happiness without suffering; and
- wishes everyone to rejoice in this happiness for both themselves and others.



From a Buddhist perspective, it refers to achieving the happiness of liberation and enlightenment, having purified all the causes of suffering. However, we develop the attitude of joy in this very life as a cause for happiness, and an antidote to suffering.

Developing this attitude

The attitude of Immeasurable Joy is developed as we:

- Recognise the happiness, kindness, compassion, goodness and beneficial qualities and actions people contribute to the world as we **pay attention**. Alan Wallace says: "*If you're not taking delight in the good of the world, you're not paying attention*".
- Use this form of attention to see and appreciate how people have happiness in contributing to benefit and support others and the community, and how people have happiness and good fortune in their own lives, and we rejoice and wish this happiness continues for them.
- Pay attention and focus beyond just 'my' happiness and so we open up our hearts with rejoicing for others, and this attitude of joy is a cause for our own happiness.
- Apply the attitude of joy as a balance when we need it with our attitude of compassion and its focus on suffering and its causes.
- Realise that when we see the happiness and good fortune of others it may not be joy that arises at all. Instead, jealousy and discontent arise as we compare our situation to others, and experience jealousy as combining anger & attachment and always causing suffering. This disconnects us from joy. With skillful means we use rejoicing as an antidote to transform afflictive states and be free of suffering.
- Remember happiness and suffering must arise dependent on causes and conditions.

Why practice Rejoicing

"We should practice rejoicing as much as possible...whenever we see good things happening to other people [such as] develop[ing] their Dharma practice...education, wealth, happy families or many friends [and] success in business...we should always rejoice, thinking, "How good it is! How wonderful it is... Why? Because by rejoicing we are creating the cause for success, success in our Dharma practice...and [in] ordinary activities of this life...But if we feel jealous of other people's success... we create obstacles for our own success. It is important to understand this and to practice rejoicing." Lama Zopa Rinpoche <http://www.lamayeshe.com/article/e-letter-no-155-may-2016>

The attitude of immeasurable joy:

- acts as an antidote to feelings of jealousy and envy as causes of suffering
- overcomes our lack of attention and joy in our own good qualities and actions
- creates causes for our own happiness
- opens the heart to connect to others recognizing our inter-dependence.

Glance Meditation on Joy

Joy for all my positive actions:

Generosity

Ethical behaviour

Patience

May I experience joy in all I do

May this rejoicing be a cause for happiness.

Joy for what others have brought to your life

Joy for people who have good fortune in life, including people you have some feeling of jealousy towards

Feeling happy when good things happen for others

Acknowledging other's happiness does not take anything from your own

Joy for specific people or groups

May I rejoice in what others bring to my life

May I rejoice in the good fortune of others

May I rejoice in the good others bring to the world

May this rejoicing be a cause for happiness.

Joy for all beings to continue

May all beings act to be of benefit to the world

May all beings rejoice in their own actions

May this rejoicing be a cause for ongoing happiness.

Send joy, appreciation and gratitude.



Practice

- ✓ At the beginning of each day make a firm resolution to attend to all the acts of goodness, generosity, kindness, you do, and others do...and rejoice!
- ✓ At the end of each day list five actions to rejoice in that made you happy - from the very simple (smiling) to the profound (meditation).