

FOUR IMMEASURABLE ATTITUDES FOR A HAPPY LIFE: REVIEW (R)

WHERE: Finding Happiness with the Four Attitudes

Each attitude is expressed as a deep, sincere wish to direct the mind with a clear motivation to achieve the result of happiness in our lives. Each attitude has its own specific 'view' to apply to the different situations we meet on our path.



Immeasurable loving-kindness: May all beings have happiness & the causes of happiness.

Immeasurable compassion: May all beings be free of suffering & the causes of suffering.

Immeasurable joy: May all beings never be parted from the happiness that knows no suffering.

Immeasurable equanimity: May all beings abide in equanimity free from attachment and aversion that hold some close and others distance.

WHY: Protecting and Transforming our Minds with these Attitudes

Buddhist science of the mind presents the mind as being "a dynamic stream of experiences, a succession of moments of consciousness" (Ricard 2008), and so is not permanent but constantly changing. The mental factors carried in our mind from moment to moment are the causes of our happiness and suffering. The four immeasurable attitudes are each like an umbrella supported by the spokes of many mental factors working to protect our minds and produce the result of lasting and reliable happiness for us. Their capacity to generate positive energy and purify hindrances and transform our experiences is immeasurable and can extend immeasurably to all sentient beings.



WHAT: From Cultivation to Habituation

Meditation is.....the cultivation of basic human qualities, such as a more stable and clear mind, emotional balance... - qualities that remain latent as long as one does not make an effort to develop them. It is also a process of familiarisation.

Scientific American Oct 2014, Matthieu Ricard, Antoine Lutz and Richard Davidson

Meditation...is a practice that makes it possible to cultivate and develop certain basic human qualities in the same way as other forms of training...acquire any other skill.

The Art of Meditation 2008, Matthieu Ricard

WHO and WHEN: The Bedrock of Our Daily Life

We face many different situations and circumstances, and we all have different dispositions, so one attitude will not fit all situations and inclinations. These four attitudes provide the responses to fit all situations we may encounter in our lives. We cultivate them all and habituate our minds with them as inseparable companions motivating and directing actions:

"For better or worse...our life entails a lot more than formal...practice. It entails having children, spouses, parents, jobs...The bedrock of our practice does not lie in any meditation technique: the bedrock is our lives. The quality of how we spend our waking and even our sleeping hours, needs to be fertile ground, so that once we start to grow and mature in our practice [of the four immeasurable attitudes] the roots can go deeper and the sprout can come to fruition [happiness]." *Boundless Heart The Cultivation of the Four Immeasurables* 1999, B. Alan Wallace

Glance Meditation on Four Attitudes as a Team

Equanimity

- Supports loving-kindness in not turning into self-centred attachment
- Recognises our labels friend, difficult person, and stranger come from our side
- Considers the impermanence of these relationships -

May I be free from attachment, aversion and indifference

May you be free from attachment, aversion and indifference.

Compassion

- Brings equanimity back to the path when this attitude wants to slip into indifference
- Knows that suffering has its causes in afflictive states of mind
- Understands people can become free of these mental states

May I be free of suffering and its causes

May all be free of suffering and its causes.

Joy

- Provides balance for compassion by paying attention to the good in the world
- Appreciates our own generosity, ethical actions and patience
- Rejoices in the happiness of others and has gratitude for actions to benefit others

May I experience joy in the actions of myself and others

May this rejoicing bring me happiness

Loving Kindness

- Reminds joy not to get caught up in hedonic pleasures from external sources
- Identifies the causes for genuine and lasting happiness from internal mental factors
- Develops these positive mental factors for happiness of self and others

May I have happiness and its causes

May all have happiness and its causes

From the warm energy and light of the four immeasurable attitudes recognise all beings are the same in wanting happiness and to be free of suffering and surrounded by all beings from your heart of loving-kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity wish:

May we all have happiness and the causes of happiness

May we all be free of suffering and the causes of suffering

May we all have joy and the happiness of rejoicing

May we all abide in equanimity, free from attachment, aversion and indifference.



✓ **Connect** with your four close friends - loving-kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity - as soon you wake up in the morning. Become familiar with them.

✓ **Practice** them by reciting the wishes to direct your mind, so they drive your day, in all your actions and communications.

✓ **Meditate** to develop your attention and to train in the attitudes, so as to develop all the causes for happiness.