

GLADDENING THE MIND: MEDITATING IN THE DIVINE ABODES

Session One: Introduction

ARRIVING

Arriving where?

Here in this space

Arriving when?

Now in this moment

The main consideration: Am I available?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AVAILABLE?

Showing Up for our Experience: Four Somatic Markers

Grounding in the physical body

Aligning: the thin, strong thread attached to the head

Spaciousness

Open-Hearted: someone who was kind to you/a time you were kind

WHAT'S IN YOUR MIND?

See ... Hear ... Feel

Externally: Sights ... Sounds ... Physical Sensations

Internally: Mental Images ... Mental Talk ... Emotional
Feelings

MINDFULNESS

So, what is mindfulness?

Affectionate attention

Relaxed embodied awareness

Concentration Focus, Sensory Clarity, and Equanimity

THE FOUR DIVINE ABODES

Lovingkindness ... metta ... friendliness

Compassion ... karuna ... caring

Appreciative Joy ... mudita ... gladness

Equanimity ... upekkha ... spaciousness

“our best home” ... “the place where your heart is kept” ... God

A SHIFT IN CONSCIOUSNESS

Combining deliberate and effortless mindfulness

Being aware of awareness itself

Seeking assistance from those who have walked this path,
asking them to place into our mindstream qualities of
brightness of mind and lightness of heart

LOVINGKINDNESS, OR METTA

The Phrases: mantra style (guard of the heart)

The Feeling: the embodied, felt sense

The Field: a quality of awareness of awareness

THE PHRASES: FRIENDLY WISHES

May you be safe and protected ...

May you be calm and peaceful ...

May you be healthy and happy ...

May you awaken and be free ...

HOW THE PRACTICE BEGAN

The Lovingkindness origin story: “the heart’s sure release”

We begin with with ourselves.

You could look the whole world over and not find one more deserving of lovingkindness than ... yourself!

This view of ourselves for most of us requires a shift into a different level of consciousness.

SECURE ATTACHMENT: IDEAL PARENT FIGURE

Safety and Protection

Emotional Attunement

Soothing in the Face of Distress

Expressed Delight

Secure Attachment leading to Exploration

OFFERING LOVINGKINDNESS

The Categories:

For oneself ... for ones who have helped us ... for dear ones ...
for strangers ... for difficult persons ... finally, for all beings

DEDICATING THE MERIT

Whatever merit, whatever benefit, whatever blessing, whatever goodness has arisen from our practice, may it ripple out to all beings, without privilege, without exception.