

## HANDOUT 6

### OFFERING LOVING-KINDNESS TO ONESELF

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- Start by sitting comfortably with eyes either open or closed. Spend a few minutes with your anchor—either sounds, touch points, or the breath.
  - Let yourself settle, noting any tension or discomfort in the body. Invite it to soften.
  - Begin by directing kindness toward yourself with some of the traditional phrases: *May I be safe. May I be healthy. May I live with ease.* Or perhaps, *May I be happy. May I be peaceful. May I be free from suffering.* Choose whichever of these phrases, or others of your own, evoke a feeling of soothing loving-kindness.
  - Say the phrases silently to yourself, finding a rhythm that feels comfortable. See if you can open to each phrase. If one phrase speaks to you, it is fine to stay with that for a while.
  - Feel that each phrase contains an essential vitamin that you need or imagine them as a gentle, irrigating rain falling on parched soil.
  - Try the experiment of conjuring an image that evokes safety, health, peace, and ease. If it seems to enrich your sense of loving-kindness, continue visualizing the image.
  - If the mind wanders, no problem. Return to the phrases or image, letting them become your anchor.
  - When you are ready, take a deep breath, stretch, and open your eyes if they have been closed. See if you can carry an attitude of loving-kindness into your next activity.
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