

LOVING-KINDNESS YOGA NIDRA SCRIPT

Objective

Loving-kindness Yoga Nidra is based on the teachings of Buddha. It specifically retrains our minds to overcome all forms of negativity. As we systematically develop the quality of 'loving-acceptance' we will note positive changes in our attitudes towards ourselves and others.

When we practice loving-kindness, we train ourselves to accomplish the Four Sublime Abodes: Friendliness (Metta), Compassion (Karuna), Appreciative Joy (Mudita), and Equanimity (Upekkha). The quality of friendliness is experienced as warmth that reaches out and embraces. When our ability to integrate loving-kindness increases, we experience compassion as we truly empathize with people's difficulties and suffering. A near enemy of this is pity, which is merely an illusion of concern but without empathy. Appreciative joy is a positive expression of empathy and is the ability to sincerely appreciate the good qualities and good fortunes of others, rather than feeling jealous toward them. This process comes to maturity in the state of equanimity, which is the ability to remain caring and involved with an equal amount of feeling and acceptance toward all people, relationships, and situations.

Ways of arousing feelings of loving-kindness are visualization, reflection, and auditory. In visualization, you bring up a mental picture of yourself or the person smiling and being joyous. In reflection, you reflect on the positive qualities and acts of kindness. Auditory seems the simplest way, but it is highly effective. You simply repeat a certain word or phrase (a mantra), like "loving-kindness" or "I wish you happiness," while visualizing yourself or the person.

In this practice, your aim is to send loving-kindness to yourself, to your spiritual friend, to a beloved person, to a neutral person, and to a person you perceive as negative or enemy even. A word of caution here is to choose people from the gender that you do not feel attracted to, in order to avoid creating a sensual distraction for yourself.

Instructions

Preparation

'Get ready for the Yoga Nidra. Lie down in Shavasana. Adjust your position, so that you can be comfortable and still for the whole duration of this practice. If required adjust yourself finally.'

(pause)

'Become aware of the weight of your physical body. Your body is heavy, let the floor hold your body. Let it go, let it sink into the floor.'

(pause)

'Bring your focus on the breath. Take easy, relaxed, and natural breaths. Observe the breaths as they enter and leave your nostrils.'

(pause)

'Now bring your focus on your whole physical body, from head to toe.'

'Focus on your whole body, your whole body, observe your whole body. You are aware of the whole body, the physical body from the head to toe, not just the awareness of your legs, arms, trunk, chest,



or head, but awareness of the whole body, awareness of the body as a whole, complete and constant awareness of the whole body.'

'Be aware that you are going to practice Yoga Nidra and say mentally,' "I am aware, I am going to practice Yoga Nidra; I am aware, I am going to practice Yoga Nidra."

Relaxation

'Relax your body, relax your mind, you are completely relaxed by breathing normally and concentrating on the natural flow of the breath in your nostrils. As you inhale your belly is rising and as you exhale the belly is relaxing. With each exhalation let your body relax a bit more into the ground.'

'Observe the breath as it passes through your nostrils. Check if you are breathing more from the left or the right nostril. Observe the flow of the breath. Enjoy your breath. Easy, relaxed, and calm breathing.'

'Keep focus on the practice, do not wander away.'

Sankalpa / Resolve

'Now think of a positive resolve / *Sankalpa*. The Sankalpa should be simple, short, in clear Language.'

'Now repeat your resolve, the Sankalpa, three times mentally. '

Rotation of consciousness

'We will now practice the rotation of consciousness in our physical body.'

'Become aware of the body parts as I name them. Mentally visualize their shape, weight, and sensations in that part. Let us begin.'

'Right foot, heel, sole of the foot.'

'Big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, fifth toe.'

'Right ankle, calf, shin, knee, thigh, hamstrings, right hip, right side of the waist.'

'Right ribcage, right chest, right collar bone.'

'Right-hand thumb, second finger, third finger, fourth finger, fifth finger.'

'Back of the hand, palm, wrist, lower arm, inside of the lower arm, elbow, upper arm, armpit, shoulder.'

(Left Side)

'Left foot, heel, sole of the foot.'

'Big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, fifth toe.'

'Left ankle, calf, shin, knee, thigh, hamstrings, left hip, left side of the waist.'

'Left ribcage, left chest, left collar bone.'

'Left-hand thumb, second finger, third finger, fourth finger, fifth finger.'

'Back of the hand, palm, wrist, lower arm, inside of the lower arm, elbow, upper arm, armpit, shoulder.'



'Observe the pelvis, lower abdomen, intestines, stomach, heart, whole chest. Observe the throat, neck, chin, lips, nose, right cheek, left cheek. Right eye, left eye, right ear, left ear, forehead, the crown of the head.'

'Observe your whole body, whole body, whole body.'

'Make sure you are not asleep, stay awake, and keep listening to me!'

'Your whole body is very calm and still.'

'Let us move a wave of relaxation throughout the body.'

'The wave of relaxation is moving through your feet, ankles, calves, knees, thighs, hamstrings, pelvis, back, abdomen, chest, arms, shoulders, throat, neck, face, forehead, the crown of the head.'

Step 1: Send loving-kindness to yourself:

'Remember a time that you were happy and when that happy feeling arises observe this warm glowing feeling at the center of your chest.'

'When you get that feeling, let go of the memory and just keep the feeling of happiness.'

[short silence]

'Make a wish for your own happiness. No matter what kind of wish, just feel the wish and put that in your heart and surround yourself with that feeling.'

'Thoughts will arise and when you realize that you have been distracted, simply let the thought go and release any tension or tightness that might have been caused by that distraction. Then make another wish for your own happiness and let it resonate within your heart and let it envelop you like a warm blanket.'

[short silence]

Step 2: Send loving-kindness to your spiritual friend:

'Now send loving-kindness to a spiritual teacher or friend. Someone that when you think of them and their good qualities you deeply respect them, and you sincerely wish them well.'

'Let your mind be filled with the image of your spiritual friend and send loving-kindness to your spiritual friend by evoking the following feeling within yourself. I feel this happiness and wish this too for you. May you feel this happiness too.'

[short silence]

[Another method to send loving-kindness is to visualize your spiritual friend smiling back at you and being joyous.

Yet another way is to reflect on the positive qualities of your spiritual friend and any acts of kindness they have done.]

'Remember that thoughts will arise and when you realize that you have been distracted, simply let the thought go and release any tension or tightness that might have been caused by that distraction. Then return to evoking feelings of loving-kindness and sending them toward your spiritual friend.'

[short silence]



Step 3: Send loving-kindness to a dearly beloved person:

'Now send loving-kindness to a beloved person, a family member or dear friend. Someone that when you think of them, you feel a deep connection.'

'Let your mind be filled with the image of this dearly beloved person and send loving-kindness to him or her by evoking the following feeling within yourself,' "I feel this happiness and wish this too for you. May you feel this happiness too."

[short silence]

[Another method to send loving-kindness is to visualize your beloved person smiling back at you and being joyous.

Yet another way is to reflect on the positive qualities of your beloved person and any acts of kindness they have done.]

'Remember that thoughts will arise and when you realize that you have been distracted, simply let the thought go and release any tension or tightness that might have been caused by that distraction. Then return to evoking feelings of loving-kindness and sending them toward your beloved person.'

[short silence]

Step 4: Send loving-kindness to a neutral person:

'Now send loving-kindness to a neutral person. Somebody you know but have no special feeling towards, for example, a person who serves you over a counter.'

'Let your mind be filled with the image of this neutral person and send loving-kindness to him or her by evoking the following feeling within yourself,' "I feel this happiness and wish this too for you. May you feel this happiness too."

[short silence]

[Another method to send loving-kindness is to visualize this neutral person smiling back at you and being joyous.

Yet another way is to reflect on the positive qualities of the neutral person and any acts of kindness they have done.]

'Remember that thoughts will arise and when you realize that you have been distracted, simply let the thought go and release any tension or tightness that might have been caused by that distraction. Then return to evoking feelings of loving-kindness and sending them toward this neutral person.'

[short silence]

Step 5: Send loving-kindness to a hostile person:

'Now send loving-kindness to a hostile person. Somebody you currently have difficulty with.'

'Let your mind be filled with the image of this hostile person and send loving-kindness to him or her by evoking the following feeling within yourself,' "I feel this happiness and wish this too for you. May you feel the happiness too."

[short silence]

[Another method to send loving-kindness is to visualize this hostile person smiling back at you and being joyous.



Yet another way is to reflect on the positive qualities of the hostile person and any acts of kindness they have done.]

‘Remember that thoughts will arise and when you realize that you have been distracted, simply let the thought go and release any tension or tightness that might have been caused by that distraction. Then return to evoking feelings of loving-kindness and sending them toward this hostile person.’

[short silence]

Step 6: Radiating loving-kindness:

‘Now become aware of your capacity to radiate loving-kindness all around you.’

‘Let go of the image of any specific person and project the aroused feeling of loving-kindness to all points of the compass: north, south, east and west, up and down, and all around you.’

[silence]

Witnessing the ‘Self’

‘Now try to become your own witness, try to become your own witness, try to become your own witness.’

‘Say to yourself’, “I am not this physical body, I am not these senses, I am not this mind, I am not this breath, I am not these thoughts, I am not these feelings, I am not emptiness, I am not pain, I am not cold, I am not this mind. All of these are changeable but I am unchangeable. I am the immortal Self.”

(pause)

‘Observe the ‘Self’ the silent observer for the next five minutes.’

(five minutes silence)

‘Bring your attention back to your breath. Observe the movement of the breath.’

(pause)

‘Now repeat your Sankalpa / resolve three times.’

(pause)

‘Yoga Nidra is now complete.’

‘Slowly become aware of your surroundings. Move your fingers, toes.’

‘If required stretch a bit.’

(pause)

‘And slowly coming into sitting position.’

‘Om Om Om

Shanti Shanti Shanti’