

Week 5: Loving Kindness

Lesson Time: 1 hour

Instructors Required: In-person: 2, Virtual: 1- 2

Supplies:

- Paper, markers, crayons and colored pencils
- How to Handle an Emotion cards
- Bodhisattva Vow chant

Learning Objectives

- *Create safe, fun and participatory environment.*
- *Explore lovingkindness as a daily practice.*
- *Introduce concept of metta and making an offering.*
- *Demonstrate ways participants can practice loving kindness in their day-to-day life*
- *Connect loving kindness and basic Buddhist teachings including the Bodhisattva Vow & interconnection*

Outline

I. Gather & Morning Message	20 mins
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morning Message• Alter Practice/Gassho and Bow• Fun & Games	
II. Dharma Lesson -Loving Kindness	15 mins
III. Movement & Meditation	5 mins
IV. Main Activity - How to Handle Emotions ?	15 mins
V. Closing Chant	5 mins

Gather & Morning Message

Begin day with informal questions to get participants talking.

- Ask participants what they remember about mindfulness.
- Ask if any participants had a chance to practice mindfulness.
- Ask those who attempted mindfulness practice, how being mindful made their experience different from times when they were not mindful.

Alter Practice/Gassho and Bow

Refer participants to the alter. Provide an example of Gassho and bow

Instruct participants individually to Gassho and bow at alter.

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Fun and Games: Draw Cosmic Mudra

Demonstrate to participants how to make a mudra. State “Now I am going to show you another way that you can hold your hands, this type of gesture is called a mudra. This particular hand gesture is called a ‘cosmic mudra’ and it is made by opening your left palm and then placing your right palm underneath to make a bowl-like shape. Then you connect your two thumbs together which then makes a complete circle.” “Let’s all try it!”

Explain what the gesture means: “When we make this gesture, our left hand symbolizes compassion. What do you think compassion is? (allow time for responses). Our left hand symbolizes wisdom. What do you think wisdom is? (allow time for responses). So in this mudra our wisdom supports our compassion. Then we touch our thumbs together so we can remember that we are a part of everything, we are all one together.”

Pass out paper, markers, crayons, and colored pencils. Event participants to draw a cosmic mudra. Let them know they can decorate their mudra’s in colorful and imaginative ways.

Virtual Participant Consideration

Work with virtual participants in advance to acquire necessary paper and drawing supplies to decorate their own mudras. with questions or requests for examples throughout activity to ensure they are fully included in activity.

Dharma Lesson: Lovingkindness

Facilitators are encouraged to develop Dharma lesson content in a manner that most resonates with them.

Suggested talking points

- Loving kindness is rooted in basic Buddhist teaching.
- We can view the Buddha as a role model of loving kindness
- Loving kindness relates to other topics we’ve explored: Bodhisattva Vow & interconnectedness
- Demonstrate that participants have opportunities to practice lovingkindness at school, at home, or at play.

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Movement & Meditation

Take participants through a series of mindful movement postures as a way to give participants an opportunity to move around, stretch, and explore mindfulness.

Suggested movements with instruction:

One: Begin with your feet slightly apart, arms at your sides. Breathing in, keep your elbows straight as you lift your arms in front of you until they're shoulder level, horizontal to the ground. Breathing out, bring your arms down again to your sides. Repeat the movement three more times.

Two: Begin with your arms at your sides. Breathing in, lift your arms in front of you. In one continuous movement, bring them all the way up, stretching them above your head. Touch the sky! This movement can be done with your palms either facing inward toward each other, or facing forward as you reach up. Breathing out, bring your arms slowly down again to your sides. Repeat three more times.

Three: Breathing in, lift your arms out to the side, palms up, until your arms are shoulder level, parallel to the ground. Breathing out, touch your shoulders with your fingertips, keeping your upper arms horizontal. Breathing in, open your arms, extending them until they're stretched out to a horizontal position again. Breathing out, bend your elbows, bringing your fingertips back to your shoulders.

Four: When you breathe in, you are like a flower opening to the warm sun. Breathing out, the flower closes. From this position with your fingertips on your shoulders, do the movement three more times. Then lower your arms back down to your sides.

Five: In this exercise, you make a large circle with your arms. Breathing in, bring your arms straight down in front of you, centered between your hips, palms together. Raise your arms up and separate your hands so your arms can stretch up over your head. Breathing out, continue the circle, arms circling back, until your fingers point toward the ground. Breathing in, lift your arms back and reverse the circle. Breathe out as you bring your palms together and your arms come down in front of you. Repeat three more times.

Six: Start by putting your hands on the sides of your waist. As you do this exercise, keep your legs straight but not locked, and your head centered over your body. Breathing in, bend forward at the waist and begin to make a circle with your upper body. When you're halfway through the circle, your upper body leaning back, breathe out and complete the circle, ending with your head in front of you while you're still bent at the waist. On your next in-breath, begin a circle in the opposite direction. On your out-breath, complete the circle. Repeat the series of movements three more times.

Seven: Begin with your hands on our waist, heels together, feet turned out to form a V, so that they make a 90 degree angle. Breathing in, rise up on your toes. Breathing out, stay on your toes, keep your back straight, and bend your knees. Keeping your upper body centered, go down as low as you comfortably can maintain your balance. Breathing in, straighten your knees and come all the way up, still standing on your toes. From this position, repeat the movement three more times, remembering to breathe slowly and deeply.

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Main Activity: How to Handle Emotions

Instructions

- One person draws a card containing an emotion.
- The participant acts out a scenario for that emotion with a unhelpful response and then with a loving-kindness, compassionate, response.
- Observers have to guess the emotion (fear, worry, anger, disappointment, selfishness, sadness, jealousy, etc) is on display.

Facilitators can model first: Emotion = disappointment. Scenario = it's your birthday and you are really excited to get a present but when you open it and see that it is socks you feel disappointed. One response could be, "Think of all the kids who don't get any birthday presents." A loving kind response might be, "Gee, you look like you need a hug."

Closing Chant

Pass out closing chant to participants. Show participants how you plan to put your hands together and chant the four line Bodhisattva Vow. Go through once on your own. For the second time, invite participants to follow along.

May we develop a deeper understanding in order to live peacefully with people, animals, plants and minerals.
May we develop compassion in order to protect the lives of people, animals, plants and minerals.