

# Directional Compassion

## GUIDED MEDITATION SCRIPT

Date / Time:

So far today, have you brought kind awareness to your:

Thoughts?  Heart?  Body?  None

### To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to:

- ▶ why you chose this topic
- ▶ how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- ▶ the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- ▶ the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- ▶ the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- ▶ how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- ▶ when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



One of the biggest challenges when it comes to having compassion for ourselves is the belief that we are alone in our struggles. It is so easy to think, “I am the only one who feels this way. No one in my life is having as hard a time as I am.”

Even if we know, in our logical mind, that this is not true, it can be easy to fall into a sense of isolation when we are struggling, especially if we are keeping our struggles to ourselves.

Unfortunately, when we feel alone in life’s difficulties, it feels tempting to withdraw even further, which then creates an even stronger sense of aloneness.

This meditation is a gentle reminder that even if we are physically alone or feel like we are the only one to face this challenge, we are never truly alone. Our experience is common to all of humanity.

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To begin, gently allow your eyes to close and relax into whatever position you’re in – allowing the ground to support you, and envisioning how held you are by the earth.

Take a deep breath, and imagine breathing into your heart space, nourishing that energy with oxygen and attention.

Take another deep breath, and imagine bringing that air right down into your digestive organs, nourishing them with air.

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One more big, healthy breath, right down into your legs and feet.

And exhaling, allowing your body to settle... your shoulders to melt down a bit... your jaw and face to relax and to let go of any tension you might be holding.

[pause]

Now, bring to mind something you are having a hard time with.

Try to choose something that's not insignificant but not traumatic, either.

It could be difficulty in a relationship, or an issue you're trying to overcome with someone at work. It can be something you're trying to deal with within yourself.

Once you've settled on whatever it is that you'd like to work with today, allow yourself to set aside the story of the situation: who did what and when, and any solutions you might be working on to alleviate the problem. Set these aside and then check in with your body.

Where do you feel this struggle in your body?

Is there any tension or tightness in your chest?

Do you feel any fluttering sensations in your stomach area?

Do you feel a shift in your breathing?

We all process things differently. There is no right or wrong sensation to experience.

Whatever it is that you're feeling, for now, just notice it. Without judgment... without trying to change anything.

[longer pause]

Now, see if you can bring to mind someone who is unconditionally loving and kind. It doesn't have to be a human, and it doesn't have to be someone you know. It can even be a fictional character. Just imagine the presence of someone, or maybe even an animal, who loves and accepts you no matter what.

Imagine that this person or being can see your suffering... that they can understand exactly how you feel right in this moment.

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How might they react?

Would they put an arm around you?

Their hand on your hand?

Would they tell you, "I understand how you feel."?

Or, "This must be so hard for you."?

Imagine this being engaging with you with love, warmth and acceptance – holding you in their presence exactly as you are right now.

What does that feel like?

[pause]

Once you have found the sensation or experience of this love and acceptance, picture it spreading throughout your entire body.

Your heart... your torso... all filled with loving acceptance and kindness.

No matter what you're holding onto, the sense of love and acceptance from this being permeates your entire body. From your heart space, traveling into your shoulders, down through your arms, past your elbows, into your hands and fingers.

And then down through your belly... through your pelvis... down into your seat... your legs... your knees... calves... feet... toes.

And then it rises up from your heart as well, up through your neck, your throat, into your face and head.

All you are doing is sitting with what it's like to gently accept yourself, exactly as you are in this moment.

Acceptance of all of you, including unwanted emotions you might be experiencing, or any unwanted physical sensations.

[pause]

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Even the experience of not wanting a particular feeling is, in fact, a feeling. Allow this resistance, if it is here for you, to be included in the experience of acceptance as well.

[pause]

Now, imagining this acceptance, this unconditional kindness, to remain within you but to also extend out in front of you.

It can now embrace anyone who is in that direction, whether it's someone 10 feet away, 10 miles away or 1000 miles away... as long as you are facing them.

Imagine this unconditional kindness and acceptance reaching out to any beings who might be suffering or struggling, whether they are human or not.

Perhaps people in the building you're in...

Your neighbors...

People in your town or city...

People across the world from you.

Include them in this space of acceptance and compassion that you've cultivated.

[pause]

You can imagine them as having similar experiences of struggle and difficulty as you have, even if their specific stories are very different.

People experiencing loss... grief... heartache...

Anxiety... fear... anger... helplessness.

[pause]

Allow this space and sensation of compassion to reach as far as feels right for you in this moment. If it doesn't go very far, that's perfectly fine. Each time we practice this it might feel different.

Now, allowing the compassion to flow outwards from the right side of you. Again, it can go as far as feels right for you, whether that's a few feet or a light year away.

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Whomever is in the path of this compassion is being permeated by it, too.

Their sadness, their challenges, their seemingly insurmountable struggles... all their universal human emotions.

All being permeated, steeped in this unconditional compassion, this acceptance.

Every single one of us, including you, is trying our best. Every single one of us, including you, is worthy of this acceptance and compassion.

[pause]

Next, letting it move outwards behind you, as far as feels right for you.

It can almost feel like light, or a sense of warmth.

Imagining one person or many people who are suffering with situations they simply can't do anything about.

And imaging them being graced with self-compassion and acceptance...

With warmth and love.

[pause]

And then to your left, feel this loving energy extending outwards, as far as feels possible for you today.

Gracing whoever is in the path of this compassion with the feeling of acceptance... no matter how hard they're being on themselves... no matter how difficult it seems.

Like a kind hand on their hand...

An affectionate arm around their shoulder.

[pause]

You can imagine the experience extending upwards as well.

Above your head.

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Towards any being above you, human or otherwise, who is dealing with difficulty, unexpected grief, or struggle...

[pause]

And then below you.

To whomever is having a tough time right now.

A feeling of warmth, of acceptance.

A supportive sense that they, too, are doing the best they can.

A reminder that life is not easy sometimes, for all of us.

[longer pause]

And when you're ready...

When you feel called to it...

You can allow this accepting, compassionate energy to dissolve as you sink back into the felt sense of your body on the seat that holds you.

Know that you can come back to this energy at any time you need it.

[pause]

Let this practice be a reminder that we all struggle. We all experience pain. We all feel alone from time to time.

And yet none of us are.

We are so much more alike than we think.

Everyone is carrying some kind of burden or struggle, even if they hide it well.

These struggles are a part of being on this earth. It's what makes us real and human and alive... and what connects us to our great capacity for compassion.

Taking all the time you need now, perhaps taking a gentle, clearing breath... and then slowly opening your eyes when you feel ready.

Thank you for practicing today.