



## **Meditations of Natural Wisdom and Love**

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*This practice is adapted from Tibetan Buddhist meditation traditions for people of all  
backgrounds and faiths to explore.*

### **Introduction and Definition of Terms**

The meaning of *love* here is the power to commune with persons in their fundamental goodness and worth, while wishing them deep wellbeing and happiness. It is to take joy in the very *being* of persons. Your *benefactors* are those who have quietly extended such love to you, often in little moments long forgotten. They include people that you enjoyed being with at any time in your life, and spiritual figures that have inspired you from near or far. If it feels joyful to think of such a person, to hold their smiling face in mind, then they serve as a “benefactor” for this meditation.

To receive and extend love helps your mind relax into its natural state—the wisdom of tranquility, openness and simplicity beyond self-clinging. By resting in its natural state, the mind can further unleash its underlying capacity of love. As this unity of love and wisdom unfolds, we become more fully present to others, communing with them in the depth of their being instead of reacting from habitual judgments. You can do Meditation One each morning *for several months*. Then add Meditation Two in daily practice, letting both meditations inform and empower each other. For fuller explanation of these practices, see *Awakening through Love* (Wisdom, 2007) by John Makransky.

### **Meditation One--Receiving Love and Releasing into Natural Wisdom**

**1) Identifying Benefactors** -- *Recall someone that you really liked to be near*, someone with whom you have felt happy, safe, well, loved. “**Benefactors**” are people who bring joy to hold in mind, because at some moment in your life they connected to your essential goodness and worth, while holding you in an unspoken wish of love—the wish for your deep well-being and happiness. Benefactors can include people from any time in your life such as a beloved relative, teacher, camp counselor, pastor, professor, mentor, a friend of your parents you loved to be near or a stranger who momentarily smiled upon you. Your benefactors also include spiritual figures from near or far whose presence in the world or whose words you feel have blessed or inspired you--such as the Buddha or Christ, the Dalai Lama, Martin Luther King, Mother Theresa.. If you initially have difficulty recalling such persons, you may think of a beloved pet as benefactor, or a



figure from literature or a dream who made you feel safe and well. Or you could think of your benefactor as a special place where you have felt blessed, safe and well.

**2) Deep Breaths** -- Sit in a relaxed way with back comfortably straight on cushion or chair, eyes gazing gently downward. Take a deep breath, hold it in the lower abdomen for a little while, then release fully as if releasing the breath from all pores of your body at once. Repeat three or more times.

**3) Receiving loving energy into the body** – Now recall one or more of your benefactors and envision their smiling faces before you. Imagine they are sending you the wish of love, the wish for your deepest wellbeing, happiness and peace. Sense them *communing with the fundamental goodness of your being—your deep worth* beyond judgment. Feel the joy of holding them in mind, of opening and accepting their loving energy.

Imagine their energy as a shower of gentle, healing radiance that bathes your whole body and mind, every part of you. Just be at ease, open and accepting—like a puppy lying on a rug in the morning sun, passively soaking up its warming rays. Receive this soft, healing energy into every part of your body, gently, slowly, part by part, letting each area of grasping and tension soften under its touch. Receive this tender radiance into every cell, all the way down to your fingertips and toes—*sensing every part of you as loved*.

**4) Receiving loving energy into the mind**—Again recalling your benefactors smiling faces, receive their loving energy into every part of your mind---into every layer of tension or anxiety, into every mental feeling of difficulty, unease, frustration, longing, sadness, or anger. Let all such patterns of feeling and emotion, especially those most familiar to you, come up and be bathed in this loving energy. Let every thought and feeling in the mind, even as it arises, be permeated by this healing energy—*sensing every part of you as loved*.

**5) Releasing the visualization into natural wisdom beyond grasping--** Receive this loving energy into the subtlest feelings of holding onto your self; of holding on to anything at all. At this point let go of the visualization and just merge into oneness with that gentle, radiant energy. Let all thoughts, feelings and sensations settle into their own spacious ground, like snowflakes settling in a pond. Let the mind relax into it's own natural openness, in utter simplicity, letting all be as it is. All senses wide open, mind unconfined, unrestricted, totally open. Let the natural power of openness and awareness itself do the knowing, the meditating. Let thoughts and sensations just arise and dissolve of themselves within this sky-like expanse of openness and awareness.

**For further information about teachings, retreats or meditation groups, see: 2**  
**[foundationforactivecompassion.org](http://foundationforactivecompassion.org)**



## **Meditation Two—Loving Connection: Taking the Position of Benefactor for Others**

**Begin with the three naturals of body, breath, and mind--** 3 deep breaths, then:  
Notice feelings of grasping or holding on within the **body**, and gently let them relax themselves. Let all bodily sensations settle naturally in their own way. Surrender to the natural power of the body, feeling it embody you. Sense any feeling of grasping to the breathing process, and let that relax. Let the **breath** settle into its own natural flow. Surrender to the natural power of the breath, feeling the breath breathe you. Similarly in the **mind**, notice any grasping to the thinking mechanism and let that feeling of holding-on in the mind relax its grip. Give the mind permission to fall completely open into deep allowing. Disengage the thinking mechanism and let all thoughts, feelings, and sensations just settle into their own spacious ground, like snowflakes settling in a lake. Let the mind relax into its own natural openness—utter simplicity—letting all be as it is. [\*] All senses wide open; mind unconfined, unrestricted, all pervasive, expansive like the sky. Let this expanse of openness and awareness itself do the knowing, the meditating.

### **Receiving becomes Extending:**

After a little while, again recall your benefactors' smiling faces, this time imagining them *behind* you and just above. Feel the joy of holding their smiling faces in mind, sensing them commune with your essential goodness beyond anyone's limiting judgments. Feel the loving energy of this communing, imagining it as a gentle radiance that permeates your whole body and mind. Mentally repeat the wish of love *for yourself*, so as to receive the energy even more deeply into your whole body and mind: "May this one have deepest well-being, happiness, and peace."

After a little while, bring to mind a person who is dear to you, such as a dear relative, neighbor, student or colleague, and imagine her in front of you. While continuing to receive the loving energy from your benefactors behind, as if you were a windowpane, let that radiant energy come *through you* now to the person envisioned before you. Imagine this loving energy pervades her whole body and mind. As you do so, mentally repeat the same wish of love *for her*: "May this one have deepest well-being, happiness, and peace." While repeating that wish in your mind, commune with the goodness of her very being beyond limiting judgments, affirming her in her deep dignity and potential.

When you are familiar with the practice thus far, you can let the energy and wish of love gradually extend to further persons around you in widening circles, communing with each in their essential goodness and worth beyond limiting judgments, repeating the same wish for them all: "May they have deepest well-being, happiness, and peace." Do



this step-by-step in widening circles at your own pace, including more and more of the persons and beings all around you.

After some time, imagine that the benefactors behind you dissolve into your heart. Imagine now that your heart, one with the benefactors, radiates like the sun, extending the same loving energy and wish to all persons in all directions at once, communing with them in the goodness of their very being: “May all beings have deepest well-being, happiness, and peace.”

Finally, let yourself just merge into oneness with that radiant energy. Release the visualization and all frames of reference. Let all thoughts, feelings and sensations settle into their own spacious ground, like snowflakes settling in a pond. Let the mind relax into its own natural openness, in utter simplicity, letting all be as it is. All senses wide open, mind unconfined, unrestricted, totally open. Let the natural power of openness and awareness itself do the knowing, the meditating. Let thoughts and sensations self-arise and self-dissolve within this sky-like expanse of openness aware.

**Dedicate** the spiritual power of this practice to the fullest realization of everyone’s potential for deepest freedom, well-being and enlightenment.