



The DAILY PRACTICE *of* MAITRĪ



SARVAMANGALA FOUNDATION

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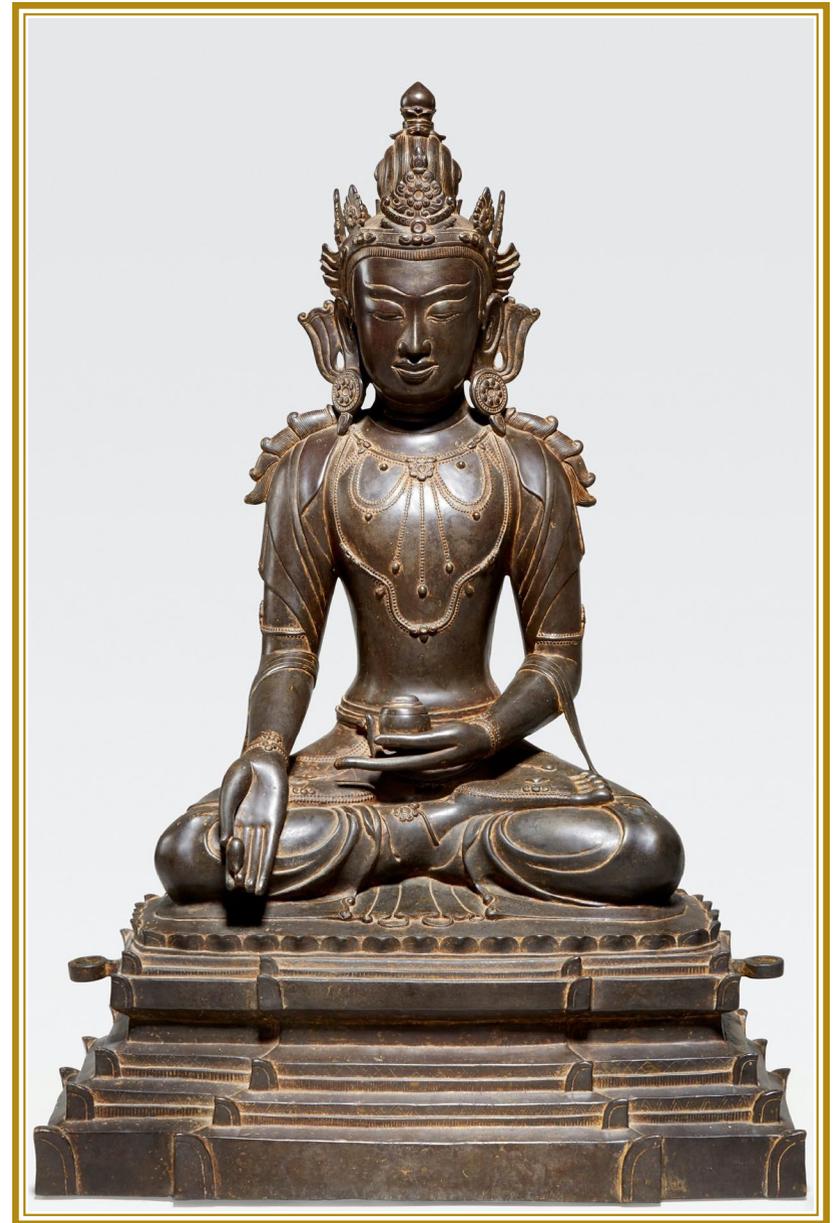
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SARVAMANGALA

The DAILY PRACTICE of MAITRĪ



LORD BUDDHA

One of the first teachers to share the teaching of Maitrī and Karuṇā.

Sculpture @ Himalayan Art Resources

The DAILY PRACTICE of MAITRĪ

Commence the practice by paying obeisance with your heart to all the Siddhas, Buddhas, Yogīs and Yoginīs of the three times (the past, the present and the future):

- 1 Sit in one of the following three postures: Padmāsana (lotus posture), Siddhāsana (the posture of the accomplished ones), Sukhāsana (the comfortable posture).
- 2 Inhale deeply and breathe out strongly 3x, then take a few deep breaths, then breathe in a very relaxed and natural way.
- 3 Bring to mind such people/beings for whom you have great affection, such as family members, friends, lovers, kind and loving people, animals --- generate and sustain the clear inner feeling and auspicious wish: “May you be truly happy, may you be at ease”. Sustain this sense for a minimum of 1-2 minutes, wishing them joy and well-being.
- 4 Then bring to mind people/beings regarding whom you have no particular emotion, i.e. a neutral attitude, such as people you happen to know but neither like nor dislike, or people you do not know and have heard about. Generate and sustain the clear inner feeling and auspicious wish: “May you be truly happy, may you be at ease”. Sustain this sense for a minimum of 1-2 minutes, wishing them joy and well-being.

- 5 Now bring to mind people/beings regarding whom you have aversion and bitterness, i.e. negative feelings, people whom you dislike. Even if it is hard at first, generate and sustain the clear inner feeling and auspicious wish: “May you be truly happy, may you be at ease”. Sustain this sense for a minimum of 1-2 minutes, wishing them joy and well-being.
- 6 Now direct Maitrī at yourself: Wish yourself “May I be truly happy, may I be at ease and free of my obstacles.” Sustain this for a minimum of 1-2 minutes, wishing everything about yourself, your good and negative sides, everything about yourself, no matter which part, to be filled with joy and well-being.
- 7 Finally relax for 1-2 minutes, simply relaxing into the awareness of the present moment, completely free of judgment, bias, opinions and ideas about yourself or anyone.

Conclude the practice by paying obeisance with your heart to all the Siddhas, Buddhas, Yogīs and Yoginīs of the three times (the past, the present and the future).

A Few Scriptural References on Maitrī and its Strength

maitrī sarva-bhūta-suhṛttvam

Maitrī means the state of having a good heart (i.e. friendship) towards all beings. (Yogavāsīṣṭha, Tātparyaprakāśa 2884)

Maitrī... bhāvanātaś citta-prasādanam

By meditatively cultivating Maitrī..., the mind becomes serene. (Yoga-Sūtra 1.33)

Tatra maitrībhāvanāto balaṁ yena jīva-lokaṁ sukhīkaroti tataḥ
sarva-hito bhavati

By the strength arising from the Bhāvanā (meditative cultivation) of Maitrī one makes the world of beings happy, hence there is benefit for all. (Vyāsa-bhāṣya on Yoga-Sūtra 3.23)

maitrī śubhādṛṣṭajanyakāriṇī

Maitrī brings about an auspicious unseen merit, adṛṣṭa. (Parānanda-Sūtra 84)

maitrīkārūṇiko'jasraṁ prāpnoti satataṁ śivam |
kṣaṇārdhenāpi yat puṇyaṁ kuryān maitrīsubhāvitaḥ |
na tadvarṣātenāpi tapo-yajñāsatairbhavet ||

A compassionate person who has Maitrī always obtains the auspicious. The merit (puṇya) one engages in by just half a moment of cultivating Maitrī properly, that is not attained even by a hundred years of hundreds of austerities and Yajñas. (Śiva-dharmottaraāgama 7.74-75)

sarvasyāhlādanī śāntā maitrī paramapāvanī |
abhyudeti hṛdo hṛdyā sutaror iva mañjarī ||
antaś-chidravatī jāḍya-yuktāyukta-guṇā svayam |
cintā śoṣam upāyāti sūrya-dagdho himo yathā ||

Maitrī makes each and every one happy – peaceful, it is the greatest purifier, amicable to the heart, rising from the heart like a blossom from a beautiful tree. All worry, yoked to inner faults and endowed with unsuitable qualities such as dullness, dries up like ice scorched by the sun. (Yogavāsīṣṭha 24079)

baddha-padmāsanaḥ sthitvā tatravocyātmanātmani |
rāga nīrāgatāṁ gaccha dveṣa nirdveṣatāṁ vraja ||

Sitting in Padmāsana, one should speak by oneself within oneself:
O Rāga (coveting), attain the state of Rāga-lessness. O Dveṣa (aversion), attain the state of Dveshalessness.

sahajaśatruṣu rāgadveṣādiṣv api nirdveṣatāṁ maitrīṁ ca bhāvayan
gantukāma iva hitamupadiśan praṇamya tān āmantrayate

Cultivating freedom of aversion, Maitrī, even towards natural enemies, towards whom (one would usually have) likes, aversions etc., as one desiring to go on a journey (together), one invites them by saluting them and suggesting to them what is beneficial. (Yogavāsiṣṭha 24886 with Tātparya-prakāśa)

The Daily Practice of Karunā

Pay obeisance to all the Siddhas, the accomplished masters, Buddhas, enlightened beings, Yogis/Yoginis of the three times – the past, present and future

- 1 Practise the three energising exercises known as the three Bandhas.
- 2 Just be aware of your breathing, your inhalations and exhalations – for a while. Breath is life.
- 3 Begin with a short session of Maitrī – wishing those you like, those you are neutral towards, and those you dislike or where some tension exists, and finally yourself *“May you be truly happy, may you be at ease.”* Then direct the same light of Maitrī towards your own inner states: the things you like, those you are neutral towards, and those things you dislike about yourself. Exclude nothing.
- 4 Now switch from Maitrī to Karunā (compassion) meditation: *“May you be free from suffering and from the causes of suffering.”* Address this first to those you like, then to those you are neutral towards, then to those you dislike or where some tension exists, and finally to yourself:

“May I be free from suffering and from what causes me to suffer.” Let your entire being be flooded with this, all parts of you, even the most hidden parts.

- 5 After Karunā meditation is complete, gently apply Vimarśa noting to all your states of experience: Bodily sensations, emotional states, mental states and mental insights arising and ceasing like waves rising and ceasing – whatever arises and ceases, be vividly aware of the state by gently identifying it with a word.
- 6 Then rest for a little while just in the present moment: Let go of thoughts about the past or the future. Only the present is really experienced, so rest completely into the present.

Conclude the practice by paying obeisance with your heart to all the Siddhas, Buddhas, Yogīs and Yoginīs of the three times (the past, the present and the future).

PRAYER *to* GODDESS SARASVATĪ *to*
INCREASE *our* INTELLIGENCE



GODDESS SARASVATĪ, THE SANSKRIT LANGUAGE PERSONIFIED

Ancient Nepali Painting of Goddess Sarasvati © Himalayan Art Resources

PRAYER to GODDESS SARASVATĪ to
INCREASE *our* INTELLIGENCE

ॐ नमस्ते शारदे देवि काश्मीरपुरवासिनि ।
त्वामहं प्रार्थये नित्यं विद्यादानं च देहि मे ॥

oṃ namaste śārade devi kāśmīra-pura-vāsini |
tvām ahaṃ prārthaye nityaṃ vidyā-dānaṃ ca dehi me ||

Om Obeisance to you, O Goddess Śāradā,
You who are like the Full-Moon in Autumn,
You who dwell in the Region of Kaśmīr!
I ever beseech you: Grant me the gift of knowledge!

