FINDING LOVING KINDNESS PHRASES



This is a pen and paper exercise. You will close your eyes and do some reflection, then open your eyes and write. Then open then close your eyes again.

The exercise is designed to help you discover loving kindness and compassion phrases that are deeply meaningful to you. If you already have phrases and wish to continue using them, you can try this exercise as an experiment but please do not feel the need to find new phrases.

***What do I need?***

Taking a moment, opening your heart and asking yourself this question:-

*What do I need? What do I truly*  need? (pause)

If this need has not been fulfilled in a given day, your day is not complete.

Let the answer be a *universal* human need. Examples are the need to be *connected, kind, peaceful, free* (pause)

When you are ready, please *open your eyes* and write down what you, as a person, really need.

If you wish, you can translate your needs into *wishes for yourself,* such as :-

*‘May I feel connected to others’*

*‘May I be kind to myself’*

*‘May I live in peace’*

*‘May I be free’*

**What do I long to hear?**

Closing your eyes again and asking yourself the following:-

*What do I long to hear from others?*

*What words do I long to hear? (because, as a person, I really need to hear words like this)*

Open the door of your heart and wait for the words to come.

*If I could, what words would I want to hear every day for the rest of my life? (Words that would fill me with gratitude every time I hear them?*

Open to this possibility, with courage. Listen.

Now gently *open your eyes again* and take a moment to write down what you heard.

If you heard a lot of words, see if you can make the words into a short phrase - a message to yourself.

Words that we long to hear from others are often qualities that we wish to actualise in our own lives. They are subtle wishes for ourselves.

You can use your phrases just as you wrote them down, with an implicit wish behind them, or you can shape them into an explicit wish for yourself. For example:-

‘*I love you’* can become the wish ‘*May I love myself just as I am’*

*‘I am here for you’* can become the wish ‘*May I be there for myself’*

*‘You’re a good person’* can become the wish ‘*May I know my own goodness’*

Take a little time to review what you have written and settle on 2-4 words or phrases that you would enjoy hearing again and again.

Finally, *close* your eyes for a last time. Begin saying your phrases over and over, slowly and gently, savoring the meaning. Just enjoy them, this gift to yourself.

Please consider this exercise to be only the beginning of a search for phrases that are just right for you. Finding phrases isa soulful journey. Hopefully you will find yourself returning to this process. (What do I long to hear?’ ‘What do I need?? as you practice loving kindness meditation.

Gently open your eyes.