

GIVING AND RECEIVING COMPASSION

Please sit comfortably, closing your eyes, and if you like, putting a hand over your heart or another soothing place as a reminder to bring not just awareness, but *loving* awareness, to your experience and to yourself.

Savoring the Breath

- Taking a few deep, relaxing breaths, noticing how your breath nourishes your body as you inhale and soothes your body as you exhale.
- Now letting your breathing find its own natural rhythm. Continue feeling the sensation of breathing in and breathing out. If you like, allowing yourself to be gently rocked and caressed by the rhythm of your breathing.

Warming Up Awareness

- Now, focusing your attention on your *in-breath*, letting yourself savor the sensation of breathing in, noticing how your in-breath nourishes your body, breath after breath....and then releasing your breath.
- As you breathe, breathing in something good for yourself...whatever you need. Perhaps a quality of warmth, kindness, compassion, or love? Just feel it, or you can use a word or image if you like.
- Now, shifting your focus now to your *out-breath*, feeling your body breathe out, feeling the ease of exhalation.
- Please call to mind *someone whom you love* or *someone who is struggling and needs compassion*. Visualize that person clearly in your mind.
- Begin directing your out-breath to this person, offering the ease of breathing out.
- If you wish, intentionally sending warmth and kindness—something good—to this person with each outbreath.

In for Me, Out for You

- Now letting go of what you or the other person may need, and just focusing on the sensation of breathing compassion in and out and sending something good. “In for me and out for you.” “One for me and one for you.”
- If you wish, you can focus a little more on yourself, or the other person, or just let it be an equal flow—whatever feels right in the moment.
- Or you can send something good to *more* than one person.
- Allowing your breath to flow in and out, like the gentle movement of the ocean - a limitless, boundless flow - flowing in and flowing out. Letting yourself be a *part* of this limitless, boundless flow. An ocean of compassion.
- Gently opening your eyes.