

The Four Immeasurables

The following text may be used by the umdze or by individual practitioners to guide this contemplative practice

The four immeasurables is a heart practice that helps to develop the qualities of equanimity, love, compassion, and joy. We contemplate them in turn, allowing a period of silent reflection for each one. The aim is to generate a sincere feeling of these qualities in our hearts and to allow that to extend outwards:

EQUANIMITY

Equanimity is the even-minded attitude towards all beings and events. It is an attitude of complete openness. It is unconditional, free from any distinction whatsoever. We are living through times of great turbulence and suffering. We open our hearts fully to the world, and to whatever thoughts and emotions arise within us as we do so.

LOVE

With the profound attitude of equanimity, we extend love to all beings. We open ourselves to all those who are caught in the cycle of violence and horror, to those who have inflicted violence, and to those who are the victims.

COMPASSION

We meditate on compassion with great energy, filled by our love for all who are swept away on the ocean of samsara. We open our hearts to all beings, nearby or far away, who are living in fear, who are undergoing unthinkable hardship, who are wracked with pain, who are consumed by hatred. May they be free from suffering and the root of suffering.

JOY

No matter how inconceivable the suffering, whatever arises is cradled in the space of compassion and wisdom. For the benefit of all beings —as limitless in number as space is vast— we arouse the wish that ever yone may attain true, complete enlightenment.

TRADITIONAL LITURGY

May all sentient beings enjoy happiness and the root of happiness.

May they be free from suffering and the root of suffering.

May they not be separated from the great happiness devoid of suffering.

May they dwell in the great equanimity free from passion, aggression, and prejudice.