

Meditation 39

Rejoicing Meditation

We start, as always, by establishing pure motivation for doing this meditation—not just to purify our own jealousy and envy but with the aspiration that, through the merit of our practice, all beings may awaken to the true nature of mind devoid of self-centeredness and negativity.

Then we train the mind by rejoicing step by step. We start with someone who it's easy to rejoice for, someone we really love that, when they find happiness, we're delighted. Or maybe it's someone who we've tried so hard to bring happiness to and, when they finally find it, it's effortless for us to rejoice.

Next, we do it with someone that we feel neutral toward, and then with someone who it's hard to feel like rejoicing for. Maybe it's someone who seems to have everything we ever wanted and never got, even after working so hard for it. Maybe we have strong judgment and aversion about the way they appear to be gathering the conditions that produce that happiness. No matter our reasoning, we remind ourselves that here's someone who's happy and, for their happiness to stabilize and increase, they must create rather than destroy merit. We rejoice in their happiness without judgment and without reservation, and pray and dedicate merit that it may increase.

We practice this meditation first with those we love and then with those we feel neutral about and finally with those we judge negatively—and everybody in between. We delight in their happiness, wish it would never diminish and only increase, and wish that they never be separate from the causes and conditions of future happiness. We keep expanding our practice of rejoicing until it includes all living beings. We first rejoice when the seeds that were previously planted ripen. Then we do the same sequence when someone is planting virtuous seeds and behaving in a virtuous way. In between each sequence, we let go of effort and let the mind rest. At the end of our meditation session, we dedicate the merit to the complete awakening of all those we've considered in our practice and, ultimately, all beings.