

Meditation 9

Mirror of the Mind

Begin by establishing pure motivation. Watch your mind as you think of more and more beings and their long-term as well as short-term benefit. What's actually taking place in your mind? Are you remaining one-pointedly focused on their benefit, or do you get carried away by thoughts or stories about them? If and when you become aware of being lost in distraction, bring your awareness back to pure motivation.

Then, observe your mind while imagining or replaying an emotionally charged interaction. Notice the ways in which you judge the other person's speech or behavior. Do your thoughts and feelings stem from self-centeredness? Do you place your own opinions, needs, and desires first? If so, reestablish pure motivation. Reviewing recent events and anticipating future ones, continue to watch your mind as if looking into a mirror.

As you become more familiar with this meditation through your formal meditation practice, try it during actual conversations, beginning with situations that don't bring up strong emotions. As your ability to watch your own mind develops, you'll learn to create enough space in your mind to check your motivation before speaking. No matter what thoughts are arising, always bring the mind back to bodhicitta.