

Thursday, February 8

There are three more sayings to the Loving-kindness Meditation that we began yesterday. The remaining three are very similar. The third saying focuses on a neutral person; this is someone you see around but really don't know. Say three times, "May that person be filled with loving-kindness. May he/she be well, peaceful and at ease, happy and free of suffering."

The four saying is for difficult person; this person could be a loved one or some other person with whom you interact on a regular basis. Say three times, "May (name of person) be filled with loving-kindness. May he/she be well, peaceful and at ease, happy and free of suffering."

Fifth and finally, project your sentiment toward the whole world, repeating three times. "May all be filled with loving-kindness. May they be well, peaceful and at ease, happy and free of suffering." You can also begin these five sayings with "Dear Lord, fill (name, him/her/they, etc.) with loving-kindness..." Over time you'll find yourself being naturally kind and compassionate toward others and others will see that kindness and compassion in you! Make some notes of your experience here.

Friday, February 9

Here's an abbreviated Self-Love Gym Exercise for Self-Forgiveness. First, reflect on the ways in which forgiveness is good for your health; you can do some research on this issue. Meditate on your past mistakes and how they are affecting your health both mental and physical health. Then as yourself "How could my life be better if I let go of thinking about myself in this way? Borrowing from the list you created on Tuesday writes some positive statements or an affirmation that will help you when you let old ways of thinking pop into your mind. Follow this practice with working on some self-compassion. Reflect on how everyone makes mistakes, makes errors of judgment, and hurts people. Admit that we are only human. If possible think of ways you can atone for your mistake; perhaps apologizing, making amends, etc. Know that this process can be done as often as needed and take practice and time.

Message Notes – February 4, 2024

*I Heart Me – I Am Enough!**

- I. Jesus was confronted by the Pharisee asking him about which commandment in the law is the _____.
 - A. Jesus could have said that all 10 of the Ten Commandments were _____ important.
 - B. Or that the book of _____ was the greatest expression of God's law.
 - C. Instead, Jesus names the greatest commandment: "You shall love the _____ your God. You shall love your _____ as yourself."
 - D. David Lose says that "our Lord names his _____" with these greatest of commandments.
 - E. The center is _____.
- II. I began this series of messages because I believe that love is at the center of the church's _____ and _____.
 - A. I've also have long believed that the _____ of loving others was not our capacity to express compassion for others, but rather in our ability to love ourselves.
 - B. The issue could very well be our inability to _____ love. Not only from others but certainly from ourselves.
- III. Dr. David Hamilton in his book, *I Heart Me*, desires for us to have a healthy sense of _____ - _____.
 - A. Throughout the book he equates self-_____ with self-_____.
 - B. He continues, "Self-_____ highlights an important difference between self-love and self-esteem.
 - C. "Self-love is _____ than self-esteem. It contains self-compassion, whereas self-esteem does not."

*Matthew 22:34-39 and Ephesians 4:1-16

- D. Hamilton concludes, “Self-compassion also helps us to extract our _____ from our successes and achievements, reinforcing that we are enough.”
- IV. Hamilton also shared a number of studies on how self-compassion reduces _____.
- A. Biologically.
- B. Self-inflammation which is what self-_____ is and be countered with self-_____.
- C. Inflammation of our _____.
- V. An important part of developing self-compassion is _____.

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, February 5

Pastor Jack shared his belief that that the challenge of loving others was not our capacity to express compassion for others, but rather in our ability to love ourselves. We can love others, even with a diminish capacity to love ourselves; however, loving ourselves better can certainly enhance our ability to love others. What do you believe? How is your ability to love other affected by your self-love? Meditate on these ideas and write your thoughts here.

Tuesday, February 6

Today we will try an Exercise from Dr. David Hamilton’s book, I ♥ Me. He calls these exercises the Self-Love Gym. Today’s exercise is one of the simplest strategies for developing self-compassion by swapping self-defeating thoughts for gentle self-compassionate thoughts. First make a list of some of the ways you’ve shown kindness or compassion to someone, or when you’ve shown patience or gentleness. Next, make a list of your positive attributes, your skills and your achievements. Then make a third list of instances when you’ve coped with a difficult challenge or when you’ve shown courage. Your fourth list should be of some of your happiest memories.

When you catch yourself in a self-criticism, take a deep breath, release it gently and then recite or visualize one or more items from your lists. It’s that simple but in time you will rewire your brain networks. If normal for you has been self-criticism, normal will become patience, understanding and self-compassion instead!

Wednesday, February 7

Today and tomorrow we will work on the Loving Kindness Meditation. There are five sayings in this meditation. The first begins with you. Say three times, “May I be filled with loving-kindness. May I be well, peaceful and at ease, happy and free of suffering.” Sometimes it is useful to place your hand gently on your heart area as you say these words. If you prefer, you can begin by saying, “May I be blessed with loving-kindness...” or God, bless me with loving-kindness...”

The second saying builds sentiment toward a loved one, repeating, again three times: “May (name of person) be filled with loving-kindness. May he/she be well, peaceful and at ease, happy and free of suffering.” If you are a visually oriented person you may want to look upon a picture of the person to whom you are showing loving-kindness. Try this and record your experience here.