

Yoga for Friendship

Loving Kindness Meditation

The question 'what is meditation?' is one which young people can ask. Sometimes a person may feel that they are unable to meditate as they believe that meditation is a state which has to be achieved. In fact, what happens when we meditate is that we take our attention to the inside. We turn inwards and recognise or watch how things are. This awareness of our inner selves is a way to nourish a calmer and more peaceful mind.

This takes energy, commitment and discipline but can be started slowly for just a few minutes at a time. It can be helpful to meditate with others or to be led by someone who will help to bring awareness back to the breath or give a focus for the meditation.

Thich Nhat Hanh, who is now 95 years old, has some interesting things to say about meditation and cultivating the energies of compassion through mindfulness and meditation.

You might like to try Metta Bhavana, a meditation to cultivate loving kindness by holding oneself; then someone you know well; then someone you know less well; then someone you find difficult or challenging; and then the planet or universe in your awareness.

The text for this meditation is:

May you be well and healthy.
May you be happy.
May you be free from suffering.
May you find peace.

This can be a really nice meditation to do with teens. Click **HERE** to see a video of a version of this meditation given by Lone Harris, a Teen Yoga Foundation teacher.