GIVING AND RECEIVING COMPASSION

- Please sit comfortably, closing your eyes, and taking a few deep, relaxing breaths. Allowing yourself to feel the sensation of breathing in and out. Noticing how your breath nourishes your body as you inhale and soothes your body as you exhale.

- Now, letting your breathing find its own natural rhythm. Continue feeling the sensation of breathing in and breathing out. If you like, putting your hands over your heart as a reminder to bring not just awareness, but loving awareness, to your experience.

- Now, focusing your attention on your in-breath, letting yourself enjoy the sensation of breathing in, one breath after another.

- If you like, you can also carry a word on each in-breath, such as “love,” compassion,” “ease,” or “peace.” Or you can imagine inhaling warmth or light—giving yourself whatever you need in this moment. Continue inhaling something good for yourself and then simply exhaling.

- Now, calling to mind someone to whom you would like to send goodwill, either someone you love or someone who is struggling and needs compassion. Visualize that person clearly in your mind.

- Shifting your focus to your out-breath, feeling your body breathe out, sending something good with each exhalation to this person.

- Now feeling your body breathe both in and out—breathe in something good for yourself and breathing out something good for another. “One for me, one for you.” “One for me, one for you.”

- Allowing your breathing to flow in and out, like the gentle movement of the sea, flowing in and flowing out. Letting yourself be a part of this limitless, boundless flow, breathing in and breathing out.

- If you wish, you can focus a little more on yourself or on the other person—whatever you need.

- And as you breathe out, feel free to send love and compassion to other persons, to groups of people, or to the world in general.

    (long pause)

- And now, gently opening your eyes.