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## Importance of Buddhist Ideas of Loving, Kindness and Compassion during COVID-19 Pandemic

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### **Abstract:**

Corona virus continues to affect the lives of all sentient beings. Even the most advanced health systems have been failed in front of this invisible threat. So many people are in anxiety and eagerly waiting for the end of this pandemic. Through this article, I would like to discuss how to deal with this present situation from the Buddhist point of view. Buddhist mediation therapies are India's most ancient techniques from past 2500 years ago. Buddhist philosophy advocates a pragmatic approach to stress reduction and mindfulness. Buddhist practices are based on loving, kindness, and compassion which are the Buddhist path to keep our mind fearless, to help heal mental agonies, and awaking to reality. The purpose of this article broadly draws the Buddhist ideas and practices which help to reduce the suffering of others and to ourselves, by transforming our mind and behavior so we can grow, learn and focus on the solution of suffering during this pandemic and try to compassionate with great kindness without any discrimination. This article briefly reviews loving-kindness and compassion benefits during this pandemic situation.

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**Introduction:**

Multiple pandemics have a stroke the world, now this coronavirus encroaches the entire humankind and becomes a critical problem for our system. It's forcing us to question ourselves how we can continue to survive or who created this problem and why? These questions show existential crises which continue to increase sickness and stress. We are living in the 21st century, the era of development and technology but at the same time we face serious problems which threaten all mankind. Precisely medical science, working hard to find a solution while I found Buddhist perspective, which can provide us some significant practices to manage our stress and maintain a peaceful mind. "The teaching of the Four Noble truths can help to deal with our internal and outer suffering. "Lord Buddha realized the four noble truths and spread it for the welfare of the whole mankind"

According to Buddha; we all have the great potentiality of love, compassion, and kindness. These mediation practices are designed to make us mindful of nature and help us to face this present situation. The

objective of my article is to emphasize the love, kindness, and compassion meditation therapy which aims to develop an effective unconditional kindness to all people and cultivate compassion for those who caught in the grip of this COVID 19. My analysis emphasis that only exercises cannot help us to come out from this critical situation. Communication, love, and compassion are also important and effective for each other. We all live in this era where we are connected through social- networking. So, we should take good advantage and connect socially not physically with each other. Due to a lack of genuine love and compassion, we connect with suffering automatically, and the cause of suffering primarily results from an unhealthy, negative, and fearful life. So, my study result shows that these Practices provide us spirituality and keep us calm, energetic, and loving during a pandemic situation. It's positively affected sustains and provide a liveliness to deal with this situation.

**Buddhist ideas of loving-Kindness and compassion:**

Buddhist addressing the pragmatic approach for the Transformation of this fear and anxiety. This approach provides a basic ability for everyone to live a healthy life. Many Buddhist scholars used to say "Buddhist teaching in fact, has evolved as if to keep mind healthy"

In every aspect of our life, we have to maintain both physical and emotional hygiene. Loving compassionate practices can enhance the activation of brain areas that are involved in the emotional process and empathy to boost a sense of positivity and reduce all negative thoughts from our minds. Buddha taught that to get liberation every person must develop two qualities: wisdom and compassion. The word "compassion" is translated as "Karuna", which is understood as the active sympathy or a willingness to bear the pain of others. On the other side wisdom is something primarily intellectual. Dalai Lama the world's spiritual leader mention in his book (An open heart) "what is compassion? Compassion is the wish that other to be free from suffering .it is by means of compassion that we aspire to attain

enlightenment. It is compassion that inspires us to engage in the virtuous practice that leads to Buddhahood. We must therefore devote ourselves to developing compassion"

Kindness means the quality of being generous and caring and loving means to shows love to other people. These practices healing effects are essential during these days. These practices help us to dismiss our fear and maintain our overall well-being. Many psychologists have seen a good result of their clients who follow these practices. Psychology has also seen compassion as a way to relate self and path for happiness.

Dalai Lama also said "if you want to be happy follow the compassion mediation. To alleviate the suffering compassion mediation is a technique we can use to dissolve self-isolation and cultivate compassion by realizing that we are not alone in experiencing any kind of suffering. This method is also known as Loving-kindness mediation, which helps to develop the mental habit of selflessness and encouraging the person to understand and accept themselves and others in the exact situation. Loving-kindness (Metta), compassion

(Karuna), joy (Mudita) and equanimity (Upeksha) are four sublime states of Buddhist philosophy. The Buddha advocated people to adopt these sublime states as their habitual state of mind to create the best possible relationship with the world. Through this practice, we develop our mind compassionate because if we are following these practices we will extend love and compassion to loved ones, strangers and with whom we did not like so much. During this pandemic we can practice generating kind intentions in our mind and try these techniques like, carve some time for ourselves and sit comfortably, close the eyes, relax the muscles and take deep breaths. Imagine ourselves emotionally and physically complete wellness and feel perfect love for, thinking about our existence. Focus on every breathing and the channel of awareness in our body. We have to breathe out tension and breathing in with love. That's the way to feel lighter and stress-free. To do what we can promote for ourselves and others.

**How to practice the Loving- Kindness and compassion mediation (LKM):**

Every Meditation required a complete sitting position where we do not disturb. Before we start our selected phrases, first we have to imagine ourselves with complete physical and emotional wellness. And try to feel love and kindness in our entire body and repeat some positive phrases like "May I be healthy, May I be happy, May I be safe, or may I live with ease." etc. so we can relax feeling so warm and compassionate for that moments. We can choose to either stay with a focus for the timing of our meditation or begin to shift our focus to loved ones. Feel our gratitude and love for them. These feelings bring provide awareness and inner peace. A simple way to do this with long deep breathes. Focus on every breathe is often most helpful to reduce tension and negative thoughts. We can repeat this process and extend the feelings of loving-kindness to people around the world and focus on the feeling of compassion. Even we want to include those with whom we conflict but we will try to help them and reach greater peace. When we complete our mediation, we can repeat these processes and generate the loving-kindness feeling internally. We can try this method in very different

ways; here we just take one example to understand LKM.

In this present situation as long, we can focus on attention in a way that promotes feelings and take benefits of that. Our mind is the central processing unit of our entire body. All body parts continue balanced with mind-body functions. Buddha adopted the meditation techniques as an important way of positively reconstruct our mind and brain. A person who practices these practices may attain a superconscious state of mind inclusive of love, affection, compassion, peace, and wisdom. In these mental states, a person will be more creative and wiser. The science of meditation develops over the past two decades has garnered much attention for its beneficial effects on the mind-body and rewire our brain circle. Much research suggests that compassion-based mediation practices can show the way to mood improvements, stress reduction, better relationships, and most important, increased empathy and compassion.

### **Benefit of Loving Kindness and compassion during Covid-19:**

“Covid-19 has been considered a relative of severe acute respiratory

syndrome (SARS), which has the possibility of transmission from animals to humans”. In these days where we facing economically crises in the COVID have shown that change is constant. “Covid-19 with its first outbreak in Wuhan, Hubei, China in December 2019 was recognized as pandemic by the world health organization (WHO) on 11 March 2020”. During the pandemic of Covid-19 it is observing that “A major adverse consequences of the covid-19 pandemic is likely to be increased social isolation and loneliness, which are strongly associated with anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicide attempt across the lifespan”. This method of mediation provides a good way to help people manage stress and improve their mental states. Several types of research have drawn a comparison between anxiety and immunity and how too much mental suffering can decrease the healing powers of the mind and body. Loving-kindness and compassion mediation (LKCM) practices can be beneficial for both our mind and body during this situation. Some following key points mentioned here:



- **Promote the idea of self-compassion:** daily practice may eradicate all negative thoughts through self-compassion. If we follow this, surely, we will remove self-doubt, judgment, unworthiness, and anger so we can easily handle the situations.
- **Decrease stress and anxiety:** For those who are suffering from this crisis or those who are quarantine and hospitalized the stress and fear of death might be increasing their anguish. Their pains are incomparable because they might lose their close ones. So, we practice regularly, we can reduce inflammation response that's caused by stress.
- **Reduce physical pain:** The highest burden of distress has been found in old age people. People who have been infected from COVID, who facing a fear of infections, death of loved ones, or loss of income or housing, worry about how to manage family and, despair due to isolation or quarantine. Negative emotions can also reduce our tolerance for pain so try to compassionate with others

we can cultivate positive emotions.

- **Enhances social connection:** In the whole world following COVID-19 guidelines and maintaining social distancing also. We cannot meet other people but we can connect with them through social networking. So, after reciting kind phrases for our self, we should extend kindness to other people and cultivate more positive connections.
- **Improve Longevity:** stress relieving activities always keeps our mind-body healthy. So it will help to improve our immune system. Loving-kindness and compassion techniques provide more muscle relaxations so they reduce anxiety and panic attacks.

#### **Discussion:**

We should always grateful for what we have like our staff, family, and relationships. Infrastructure, social network, etc. with social networking sites and internet facilities, we should keep more up-to-date and follow the authority instructions and also

encourage others. Our supportive words and actions can heal others. In this crisis, we cannot physically connect with people but we can increase quality time at home, the opportunity to reset priorities. We all have great potentiality and skills to deal with unkind situations so we should acknowledge them. In our life, many up and down come but the main thing is that we should grow and do not give up. Thus, as stated by Buddha in the teaching of four Noble paths, suffering exists (first Noble truth) which mean an individual can bring about the termination of suffering (third Noble truth), by following the path (fourth Noble Truth) that acts upon in cause (the second Noble Truth). True compassion and loving-kindness towards other areas due to the realization that unless individuals choose to enter the spiritual stream. Compassion has to effect of putting the mind at alleviated, helping to ease fear and insecurities during COVID, provide strength to cope with a problem these days. LKC Meditation helps us to live with constant change. Every age group struggling with mental and behavioral health issues, associated with COVID 19, including

anxiety, depression, and negative thoughts.

### **Conclusion:**

The ultimate goal of my Buddhist point of view of loving, kindness, and compassion, tries to eradicate all human suffering including COVID-19 pandemic. I prefer this practice personally because during this worse situation we can only help each other. Our supportive kind words can heal other souls and reduce stress and tensions. We can think during the isolation or quarantine only sit and follow LKCM how will help other people who are far from us. But when we are training our mind to be kinder, less judgmental, and more understanding, automatically make sense positively effect and giving relief from illness and fear of death. Buddhist practice's ultimate goal is total liberation (*Nirvana*). It's important to follow the teaching of the Buddha for well-being of all human beings. A person's higher mental functions like human behavior, speech, mood, emotions, concentration, memory, judgment are under the direction of the brain and mind. These are the functions that make a man a human being. So,

through these practices of compassion we all sentient beings can be from day to day life sufferings.

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