

Compassion Meditation Script

Written for teachers and practitioners who need a script to read aloud. Twelve minutes of karuna practice — meeting suffering rather than wishing it away — moving through someone who is struggling, yourself, a stranger and someone difficult. Distinct from loving-kindness, which wishes people well; this one stays with the hard part.

12 min · 5 segments

Twelve minutes, five segments. The phrase stays identical throughout — only the person it's directed at changes.

BEFORE YOU RECORD

- Say the compassion phrase exactly the same way every time. The repetition is the technique; varying the delivery to keep it interesting is what breaks it.
- This practice can surface real grief, particularly in the segment on someone who is struggling. The permission line there is not a disclaimer — read it as though you mean it, because some listeners will need it.
- Go slower on the difficult-person segment than feels natural. That's where people either do the work or quietly opt out, and rushing decides it for them.
- Don't perform warmth. A voice straining to sound compassionate reads as insincere and gives the listener something to resist.

01. What compassion is, here

2 min

[clear and unsentimental — the distinction in this segment is the whole practice]

Hello. This is twelve minutes of compassion practice — karuna, in the tradition it comes from.

It's worth separating this from loving-kindness, which is its close cousin. Loving-kindness wishes people well. Compassion is what happens when you turn towards suffering that's already there and stay with it rather than looking away. The wish isn't for it to disappear. The wish is that it be met.

Sit upright, somewhere you can stay comfortably. Let your eyes close, or let your gaze rest low and unfocused. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

The phrase we'll use is the same every time: 'may you be held in this'. Four words. Nothing to memorise. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

02. Someone who is struggling

2 min 30

[the permission line matters — slow down for it]

Bring to mind someone you know who is having a hard time right now. Not the hardest case you can think of — someone real and close enough that you actually feel it.

[pause for 25 seconds]

Let yourself see them clearly, and don't tidy up what they're going through. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

May you be held in this. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

May you be held in this. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

If something rises in you here — grief, or the urge to fix it, or an old ache of your own — you can let that be here too. Feeling it is not a failure of the practice. It is the practice.

[pause for 30 seconds]

03. Yourself

2 min 30

[matter-of-fact, not tender — tenderness here makes people flinch]

Now turn it towards yourself. This is the one people find hardest, and it usually comes with a small argument about whether you've earned it. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

You don't have to justify it. Bring to mind something you're carrying at the moment. Not the worst thing — just something that's genuinely heavy. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

May I be held in this. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

May I be held in this. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

04. A stranger, and someone difficult

3 min

[go slower here than feels natural — this is where people opt out]

Bring to mind someone you barely know. Someone you passed today, or saw behind a counter. Someone whose life you know nothing about. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

They are carrying something today. You have no idea what. May you be held in this. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

And now someone difficult. Not the hardest person in your life — start further down the list than that. Someone who irritates you, or who you're quietly avoiding. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

This isn't forgiveness, and it isn't agreeing with them. It's the recognition that they're struggling too, in ways that probably explain more than you'd like. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

May you be held in this. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

05. Widening, and closing

2 min

[voice returns to normal across the last three lines]

Now let it go wider than any one person. Your street. Your city. Everyone awake right now and struggling with something they haven't told anyone about. *[pause for 35 seconds]*

May you all be held in this. *[long pause — 40 seconds]*

Let the phrase go. Come back to the plain fact of sitting where you're sitting. *[pause for 15 seconds, then lift the voice]*

Move your hands. Take one deeper breath. And when you're ready, open your eyes.

If this was heavier than you expected, that's usual, and it settles within the hour. Thank you for practising with me.

USAGE

Free to use. Record this script, publish it under your own name, and keep whatever you earn from it. No credit required.

Record it with Hilite — hellohilite.com

Studio-quality audio from your laptop mic. Free to start.