

Filling Your Cup

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Our lives are inundated every day with alerts about political events, where to get the most for our money, and people who have passed away. Our friends and neighbors have been impacted and possibly displaced after catastrophic wildfires in our city. We meet with children and their parents whose daily battles range from a runny nose to a new diagnosis of a chronic health condition. We embarked on careers in healthcare to help others and make the world better to live. We chose pediatrics to help keep children safe and well. However, we confront situations which may be obstacles.

It is easy to succumb to sadness and frustration. Yet, we can choose a different path. Those feelings of despair are a heavy burden to carry. With some quiet contemplation, we can release the weight of the world and allow it to exist. In Buddhism, there is a concept known as “Metta”. Metta is considered to be “loving kindness”. It is a word that is in the language Pali, similar to the Indian language Sanskrit. Metta translates as “positive energy and kindness towards others”. It is a derivative of the Sanskrit word, *maitri*, which is defined as benevolence, good will, active interest in others. One study (Alba B, 2013) examined attendees to a retreat focused on metta meditation, with an increased number of participants indicating a larger percentage of time feeling happier. Other studies have demonstrated improvements on frustration tolerance and physical symptoms, specifically, back pain.

Our life journeys take us on a winding and bumpy path, which may be darker and more frightening. Each day, we come across individuals and situations which test our commitment to our purpose. A practice of metta can help us find our answers and pass that test. A simple way to practice metta and loving-kindness meditation is to say, “May all beings be happy, safe, and live with ease”.