



WISE PATHS TO THE HEART

3. The Four Immeasurables

BUDDHIST MIND SCIENCE
ACTIVATING YOUR POTENTIAL

An FPMT Introductory Course



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The Four Immeasurables

They are known in Sanskrit as:

- *Apramāṇa* (immeasurable) or
- *Brahmavihārā* (divine abodes or abodes of Brahma)





May all sentient beings have happiness and the causes of happiness.

Maitri: loving-kindness

May all sentient beings be free from suffering and the causes of suffering.

Karuna: compassion

May all sentient beings never be separated from the happiness that knows no suffering.

Mudita: sympathetic joy

May all sentient beings abide in equanimity, free of attachment and hatred for those held close and distant.

Upeksha: equanimity

Maitri *A fundamental attitude in which one sincerely wishes oneself and others to experience lasting happiness*

Karuna *A fundamental attitude in which one sincerely wishes oneself and others to be free from duhkha*

Mudita *The joy that one experiences when seeing the joys, success, and virtues of others*

Upeksha *A balanced attitude towards others, avoiding seeing them through the eyes of attachment, aversion, or indifference*

Their Characteristics and Cause

	Characteristic	Cause
Loving-Kindness	Friendliness	See oneself and others with affection
Compassion	Seeks to alleviate suffering	Noticing the helplessness of those overwhelmed by dukkha and its causes
Sympathetic Joy	Brings joy	Noticing others' success and joy
Equanimity	Promotes impartiality towards beings	Understanding that beings are subject to their karma



What They Are Not

	Far Enemy	Close Enemy
Loving-Kindness	Hostility, ill-will	Attachment that includes seeing the positives qualities of the person, exaggerating them, wanting something from the person, in a possessive or needy way
Compassion	Cruelty, contempt	Pity, grief, distress : feeling distressed when noticing suffering, a kind of oppressive feeling that pushes one to move away from that experience. Acknowledging suffering from a stance of superiority.
Sympathetic Joy	Envy, cynicism	Hedonic joy that comes from delighting in pleasures, in worldly achievements (related to the worldly concerns)
Equanimity	Biased attitude towards others	Indifference and apathy . Lack of awareness of the person or neglecting what one sees, due to disinterest



Counteracting Anger

The mind does not find peace, nor does it enjoy pleasure and joy, nor does it find sleep or fortitude when the thorn of hatred dwells in the heart.

— Shantideva (7th-8th century CE)



Counteracting Anger



Anger

- Focuses on negative and **dislikable** aspects
- Wishes to **harm**

Loving-kindness

- Focuses on positive and **likable** aspects
- Wishes to **benefit**

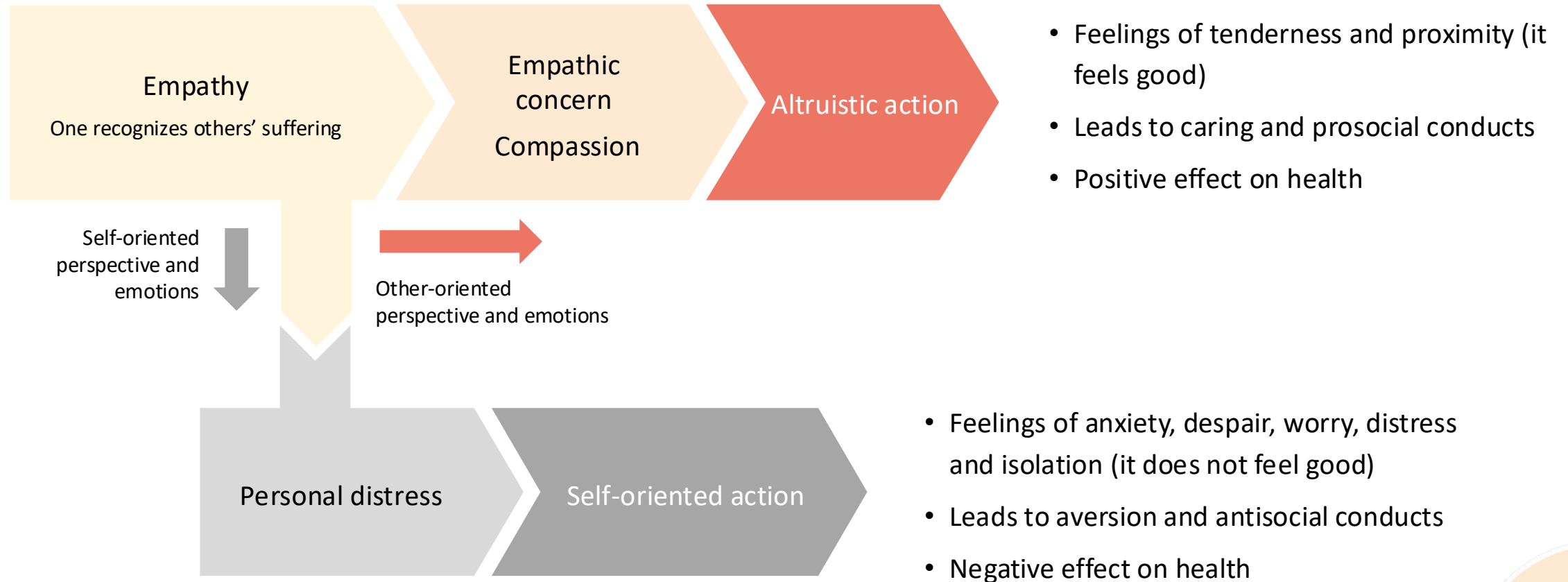


They are **contradictory** (cannot coexist in a single instant)

Anger and resentment **oppose** loving-kindness and **obstruct** its experience and development



From Empathy to Compassion



The Four as a Whole

	Counteracts	Close Enemy Of	How
Loving-Kindness	Hedonic Joy	Sympathetic joy	Loving-kindness focuses mainly in lasting happiness and its causes
Compassion	Indifference, apathy	Equanimity	Focusing on others' suffering with compassion moves the heart away from indifference and gives one the energy to overcome apathy
Sympathetic Joy	Pity, distress	Compassion	Focuses with delight on goodness and the happiness that comes from it. Sympathetic joy helps avoiding despair when seeing suffering.
Equanimity	Self-centered attachment	Loving-kindness	Is an unbiased mind towards others, going beyond the conditioning that comes from attachment, aversion, and ignorance.





Practice Time

Short Meditation on Compassion



A CARING ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHERS

- Recall a moment or a person who is suffering and that **connects you to compassion**
- **Stay awhile** on the experience
- If helpful, **verbalize it** (“may you be free from suffering”)
- **Extend it** naturally to others
- **Dedicate the positive energy** for all beings

