



Jewish Compassion/*Chesed* Meditation

We all face many challenges of daily living. This Jewish meditation practice is offered for anyone who is seeking emotional and spiritual healing, including those who are bereaved or are in addiction recovery. You can hear the [audio on our JCFS YouTube page](#).

This Jewish Compassion/*Chesed* Meditation for Healing incorporates virtues and values from the Priestly Blessing/*Birkat Kohanim*: Blessing, Protection, God's Light, and Peace. As we offer simple phrases of these loving wishes in silent repetition, we open space for sacred healing for those around us as well as for ourselves. You are invited to experiment with these phrases; feel free to alter them in ways that support your own healing.

Jewish Compassion/*Chesed* Meditation Instructions

We may choose to mark this period of meditation with candle lighting, singing or chanting, prayer, or a supportive reading. Taking a seated or lying position that is both comfortable and alert, we then calm our bodies by watching the natural rhythm of our breath. When we feel ready, we begin by repeating these phrases to ourselves for three minutes, silently or in a low voice:

May I be blessed
May I be protected
May God's Light shine on me
May I know peace

After three minutes we pause and bring to mind a loved one. This loved one may be a person or a beloved pet; living or passed on. We see this loved one clearly in our mind's eye and offer these phrases to them, repeating for three minutes:

May you be blessed
May you be protected
May God's Light shine on you
May you know peace

After three minutes we pause again and bring to mind someone in our lives that we know as an acquaintance, someone we see frequently but with whom we do not have any particular relationship. This may be a co-worker, our mail carrier, or a distant relative. Seeing this person clearly in our mind's eye, we offer them these phrases:

May you be blessed
May you be protected



May God's Light shine on you
May you know peace

And finally, we take one more pause. We feel ourselves a part of all life and bring to mind a feeling or an image that represents all life. We may envision a globe or a map or an indistinct group of people and animals. For three minutes we offer these phrases to all:

May all be blessed
May all be protected
May God's Light shine on everyone
May all know peace

In conclusion we offer thanks for the opportunity to practice in this way, and then return to our daily activities.

This is the formal daily practice. We can also repeat the phrases at any time, alongside any activities such as sitting at a red light, waiting in a line, walking or resting, upon arising or at the end of our day. You might explore how, when, and where this practice is most supportive of your need for calm, for respite, and for peace.

This Jewish Compassion/*Chesed* Meditation was developed by Beth Fishman, PhD, Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Program Manager for addiction services at JCFS Chicago. Dr. Fishman can be reached at BethFishman@jcfs.org or 847-745-5422