

The Heart of the Matter: How to Live with Compassion and Courage
An Immersive Online Retreat Taught by Pema Chödrön
Brief Instructions on Tonglen Practice

Please use the instructions below as a quick reference to the more in-depth meditation instruction presented by Pema Chödrön in Talk Two (Part 2). These instructions should not be used without having received the tonglen instruction presented in Pema's talk.

Start with a flash of *absolute bodhichitta*. Let go of distractions and thoughts to rest in a moment of stillness and openness.

As you breathe in, fully take on what is painful or uncomfortable for you—physical or emotional. Imagine you are breathing in that pain or discomfort for all of the people in the world who have the same experience, as though you could take it all onto yourself so that no one else would have to experience it.

As you breathe out, send out what is pleasant or comfortable. Offer it to yourself and to all the people in the world who could use a sense of relief.

You could also imagine that as you breathe in, your heart gets bigger, and as you breathe out, your heart radiates out to the world. Practice making the expansion of your heart as big as you can.

You can work with whatever personal turmoil is going on inside you in the moment. Be sure to allow balance between suffering when you breathe in and lightness or peace when you breathe out. Be aware if you find yourself too mired in the suffering, and bring more attention to a sense of relief and spaciousness.