

# Joy!

Bhante Bodhidhamma · Tips of the Day · 2 min read

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It's spring and the daffodils are out. So I am hoping there is a sense of joy in the air for you. Joy is one of the Illimitables along with love, compassion and equanimity. And just like them it can be developed without boundary, limitlessly. Often in a rushed and overly busy day or in a slow, dull one, our attention fixates on the downers. But notice that there are times when some form of happiness does arise. Often if we are used to excitement we miss out on the sweetness of a quiet joy. Excitement is the subtle enemy of this joy for it is an expression of that desire to be happy in an overly emotional way. High! Quiet, peaceful joy often arises, but because we are so used to joy as excitement we miss it and fail to appreciate it. Perhaps it comes when, after some engagement, you have a quiet cup of tea; or while walking from here to there in a park or along a quiet street; or stopping and resting from what you are doing for a moment. When you notice this calm joy, say to yourself, 'I am feeling a calm joy'. Sit with it and appreciate its qualities. And notice how you feel gently energised by it, not just physically but mentally. Then when you are settled in it and have drunk your fill, offer the cup to others and to all beings. 'May you be joyful and may your joy increase!' After all a joy shared is a joy squared, for now you are happy because others are happy. Then there's the power of 'positive thinking'. The Buddha is very much into this practice. Even when you feel down, you can note that. Offer yourself a blessing: 'May my unhappiness decrease. May my unhappiness come to an end.' After a little while, offer the same blessings to all beings. And then as it were, put it to the side. And start offering joyful blessings to yourself, something sympathetic to oneself. As you begin to lift, offer it to all beings. This is a much better strategy than one offered by self-pity and resignation. 'I am depressed. I am so depressed. May all beings be depressed!' Or at work: 'I'm bored. I'm so bored. May all beings die of boredom!' So throughout the day, train yourself how to lift the heart with goodwill intentions of joy and see how you feel at the end of the day.

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