

Incorporating Yoga, Radio Exercises, and Meditation in a English Medium Instruction-based Anthropology class

Debra J. Occhi

Abstract

This paper describes the evolution of an English Medium Instruction-based Anthropology of the Body class with incorporation of Yoga, Japanese Radio Exercises and other similar exercises from various countries, and Meditation as awareness raising and mitigation for problems students experience due to sedentism of contemporary young adult life. These measures were implemented and researched in my ANT3111 (Topics) Anthropology of the Body class. As an innovative part of my pedagogy, this unit has undergone continual revision in a PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) loop in order to improve contents and delivery throughout. The ultimate goal of this project is to expand offerings of exercise: radio *taisō*, yoga, and mindfulness meditation, in the university educational system, as seen in other universities worldwide, to mitigate the negative effects of academic life on the human body.

Introduction

The problem I initially observed in classes and wished to ameliorate presents as poor posture, often leading to sleepiness and attention deficit, especially in classes scheduled after lunch, when humans tend to want to nap (Lovato, 2018). I initially chose to include research on the effects of poor posture, and incorporated seated mindfulness meditation with good posture for stress relief. Although arising from Buddhist and Yogic practices, meditation has been stripped of its cultural context, and various studies support its potential for improvement of mental health disorders (Wolkin 2015). The research findings that were taught in the class (Bos and Cuddy 2013, Cuddy 2015) indicate that poor posture has effects not only on presentation of self but as a hindrance to self-assertion. However, lack of exercise remained a problem. In response to these problems, and to add to the anthropological topics of the course, Japanese *rajio taisō*, radio exercise in various versions and other similar activities in other cultures, as well as relevant information about the development of these practices, became part of the curriculum. This improved the situation somewhat but still needed refinement. In Spring 2020, Zoom courses conducted during COVID-19 breakouts encouraged me to

incorporate radio exercise more generally as an optional warm-up or breaktime activity in other classes. This meant that some students who had exercised then and later enrolled in ANT3111 for Fall semester had the opportunity to get used to doing exercise with peers before it was mandatory. And, upon completion of yoga teacher training in spring of 2020, I added chair yoga to the ANT3111 course when we started fall semester in face to face mode. Along with this expansion of the unit, I incorporated further meditation techniques, along with relevant topics of yogic science to give appropriate cultural recognition for yoga's Indian roots and anthropologically contextualize those practices as well. Student feedback indicated that this development was received well; I intend to make further revisions to this course and teach these methods more widely as appropriate.

It is common to think of college students to be at a peak stage of physical development as young adults, full of zest and vitality. It may even seem unnecessary for a university located on a hill colloquially known as 'bijin zaka' (beauty hill, so named for the imagined effects of walking up to the two-year junior college next door from the nearest train stop) and spread over three buildings ranging from three to five floors high, to offer exercise in the classroom to students. However, many of my students come by bus or drive their own cars to school, walking only from the bus stop or parking lot to class, and in the junior and senior years, may not be taking multiple classes that necessitate much movement around campus. And until the elevator was declared off limits due to COVID-19 in 2020, most students relied on it, avoiding the stairs. Lack of exercise was more common than engagement in sports. Especially for those students seemingly subsisting on canned coffee, cakey bread and cup noodles, lethargy creates motivational difficulties in class. Applied anthropology seemed to offer a way to confront these problems and encourage students towards better self-care, at least in one course I developed, Anthropology of the Body (ANT3111, now popularly known as 'the radio taisō class'). Three successive versions of the unit are discussed here, including the measures used, my participant observations, and student feedback that encouraged PDCA for the next version.

This is not the first teaching unit I developed using exercise in the university classroom. In 2006 following McDonalds' attempt at corporate responsibility by distributing DVDs of Yourself Fitness workouts, I incorporated TPR (total physical

response)-guided lesson materials into a unit based on viewing and analysis of the documentary *Supersize Me* (Spurlock, 2004) in a Cultures of the USA second-year course that is no longer offered (Occhi & Golliher 2006, Occhi 2016). The unit was originally developed in response to student concerns that they would gain weight during the following semester abroad. In cooperative lesson development with team teacher English specialists (Sylvan Payne for the pre-exercise version; Russell Fauss, Roberta Golliher) students learned body part vocabulary and motion verbs included in the exercise videos, as well as nutrition vocabulary for the self-analysis based on the documentary and a McDonalds lunch of their choice. We offered this unit in hopes of fostering self-awareness of caloric needs, exercise habits, and fast-food nutrition levels, along with reinforcement of quantitative and qualitative research and writing skills taught in a previous unit of the course. Students in small groups taught peers parts of the DVD exercises in participative presentation format. They then entered the Study Abroad semester with portfolio writing skills and exposure to self-care strategies that potentially helped them avoid the weight gains they feared. However, curricular revisions resulted in a reassignment of the course as a solo-taught English course, and the unit was shelved.

V.1

Similarly, in the unit of focus in this paper, I began with an attempt to foster self-awareness, incorporating exercise in further iterations of the course. In Fall 2016 I first taught a unit focusing on posture and stress relief in the upper-division course Anthropology 3111 (Topics: Anthropology of the Body), in an effort to encourage critical thinking about everyday habits and instill an ethic of self-care. We studied topics including the problems of poor posture leading to long-term fascial changes from excessive sitting and slouching. Along with self-study of sitting and exercise habits, we examined the research on the negative effects of poor posture on personal presentation, and of using small electronic devices like cell phones on self-esteem and willingness to ask (Bos and Cuddy 2013, Cuddy 2015). This fit in along with the other course contents: cultural approaches to illness and healing, and other appropriate topics such as genetic evidence for early human migration out of Africa. This unit has been expanded

since then, reflecting student needs, the changing social environment with COVID-19, and my professional development. The exercise component added a variety of exercises at the beginning of each class, depending on the weather and situation. These include Japanese radio taisō of various types, similar exercises from other countries (e.g., Singapore), and yoga (since 2020 when I earned yoga teacher training licenses), with the cultural details about those activities used as part of the content for the Anthropology focus of the course.

PDCA: The 2016 version of the course, however, contained only the self- and academic study of sedentism and mindfulness meditation. I had taken two mindfulness courses online with Monash University in 2015 and, finding beneficial results in lowering stress levels, wanted to share that with students. Though I had enjoyed the Australian accents of the speakers in those courses' guided meditations, many students reported that they found them hard to understand, and some fell asleep. So I switched to the UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center meditations (2017), printing the texts for students to read beforehand with vocabulary support, which seemed to help that problem. Then on the final exam of the Fall 2016 course, I asked students how they could mitigate the problems of sedentism. Here is an unedited example of a student response (name withheld for privacy) that convinced me to add exercise to the class.

**1. How can MIC help students keep healthy?
(knowing what you know sitting, facia)**

I think keep sitting feel tired during classes. Sometime I do not fit the balance between chair and desk. If I choose such a desk and a chair, I feel uncomfortable. I like the chair which can adjust the height position because everyone is different height between body and legs. In addition, all classes have a break during a class. It is good time to move or stretch the body.

I think the most important things to keep healthy is good sleep, good food, and exercise. MIC can help about food and motion. For example, there is a meal restaurant here. The restaurant can provide the good food which are thought of health. About exercise, I think that to make events is good for exercise. There is sport festival in MIC. It is good idea and it is good opportunity to move the body and in event people can enjoy with moving their body. It is good thing, but it cannot hold so many time. Focusing on the daily life, to pick up the trash which are falling on ground is good

exercise. Between the classes, most people move to different class. To pick up the trash, people need to squat. And to pick up the trash, school will be clean and everyone will feel clean also. It can be good health for mental and physical.

Student responses like this provide important feedback to improve future iterations of the course. Given that trash on the ground and sports festivals are relatively rare occurrences in contrast to everyday sitting in class, this response indicated that there was still room for improvement of students' movement habits.

V.2

In order to avoid perpetuating the absurdity of studying the problem of sedentism while continuing to contribute to it, with administrative approval in 2017 I actively incorporated exercise (the Japanese *rajio taisō* radio exercise routine) starting with English subtitles into the course contents, followed by mindfulness meditation (from UCLA MARC, 2017) that used simple scripts I had printed and distributed. This ensured that everyone would move, instead of offering open-ended break time during which many students curled up and tapped their smartphones; by studying the scripts, they could understand the meditation rather than feel disengaged and sleep. I chose radio exercises for several reasons. In the typical majority Japanese student class, many will have done these exercises as children and may know them by heart. For non-Japanese students, learning these commonplace exercises will enhance their cultural knowledge of Japan. The two routines are short and simple, and provide a gentle stretch, particularly expanding the chest and encouraging spinal mobility. This was important to counteract slouching and other poor postural habits. And, there are several versions available on YouTube, for instance in English or Japanese dialects, with actors dressed as cute characters, etc., that could alleviate potential boredom with the same motions. I also taught vocabulary related to body parts and movements as in the Cultures of the USA course discussed above, analyzing the English language versions of radio exercise as language input as well.

Various research studies support the provision of exercise to students, to the extent that many universities offer live and videotaped exercise classes. Bour et.al.

conducted research comparing the effects of 30 minutes exercise done in one chunk versus in 5 minute breaks every 60 minutes, providing “the first evidence that microbursts of activity during the day improve energy level, mood and fatigue level, while maintaining usual levels of cognitive function (Bergouignan, A., Legget, K.T., De Jong, N. *et al.*, 2016). These brief activity periods provided more sustained benefits including mood and fatigue levels throughout the day than a single exercise session done in the morning (ibid). Meditation also has measurable benefits (Wolken 2015) and has become increasingly part of college offerings to student health promotion, with the Monash University and UCLA research centers as indicative of this movement.

PDCA

Incorporating radio exercise as well as teaching the meditation script was a good idea; fewer students were drowsing off. It can be a challenge to the language learner to meditate in a foreign language, as my own experience as a meditator and as a teacher has revealed. Key body part terms that students did not know initially were “nostrils” and “abdomen”, to which a meditator’s attention is often directed in mindfulness scripts. The UCLA 5 minute script invites the listener to sit in an upright, relaxed position, observing the natural flow of breath, along with any internal sensations. The wandering mind commonly experienced by meditators is addressed with kindness and redirected to the breath:

...When one breath ends, the next breath begins
 Now as you do this you might notice that your mind might start to wander
 You might start thinking about other things
 If this happens this is not a problem
 It's very natural
 Just notice that your mind has wandered
 You can say "thinking" or "wandering" in your head softly
 And then gently redirect your attention right back to the breathing
 So we'll stay with this for some time in silence

Just a short time

Noticing our breath... (UCLA MARC:2017)

This five-minute meditation ends with suggestions to feel gratitude towards the self for doing the practice; both these strategies evoke the concept of ‘lovingkindness’ that mindfulness meditations have adopted from *metta* (“love” in Pali, *maitri* in Sanskrit) meditations associated with Buddhism (O’Brien 2020). Students reported that meditations calmed them, and the overall energy level of the class seemed to increase.

However, some students still seemed to resist the idea of exercise. Some wore shoes and apparel that was hard to move freely in or resisted by doing minimal movement, for example folding in at the elbow (which I called ‘chicken arms’). Much of the radio exercise was intended to open the front body with the arms spread wide, which was resisted by some despite my efforts to spread them out away from peers or the wall. This ‘chicken arms’ problem thwarts the intent of encouraging better posture through the radio exercises and other exercises. I resolved to be more explicit in the syllabus and verbally, that exercise was not optional, counting exercise participation as part of the overall class participation score. I also incorporated similar videos of other countries, for example the Great Singapore Workout in its variations, with discussion of the demographics of the participants in the 2015 video, and the cultural particularities of movement in the 2018 version. This seemed to help student interest and participation levels; the course remained in this format for the 2018 and 2019 iterations, with minor variations in the exercise videos used.

In spring semester the ANT3111 course is usually not on the roster, but during spring 2020 in the COVID-19 driven periods when classes were done on Zoom, I often started my other classes with one of these exercise videos. That took up the slack moments while students were joining the class; early birds could get the full benefit. I tried finding appropriate versions to each class’ topic, for instance, the radio *taisō* that a fan made using Beat Saber game software (NALALUNChannel 2020) was appropriate to use in classes on Japanese character culture and on avatar society. Most students were attending classes while at home in casual clothes and were willing to participate, even though I did not require them to do so. I did exhort them regularly to be sure to get outside and away from their screens when not in class as well. That said,

in the campus-wide course evaluation questionnaire conducted by our Institutional Research Officer, a student expressed the following sentiment about the Zoom classes: “Whenever I have to look at the long texts, my eyes, neck and back hurt.” (Yasuda 2020). In spring and summer 2020 I fought sedentism on my own time as well, and since it had become permissible to do so online, finally earned yoga teacher training licenses, registering these with Yoga Alliance and obtaining Japanese yoga teacher insurance.

V.3

Fall semester 2020 began in face-to-face classroom format during a lull in local COVID-19 cases. This meant students were supposed to wear masks (several had become complacent or resistant and needed reminders on proper mask wearing over the nose). Self-report data indicated that student sedentism had increased not only in spring semester (as I had suspected) but persisted even during the summer break. The combination of increased sedentism, warm weather and mask wearing made even the slight exertion of radio exercise seem unwise, so I began teaching chair yoga. I also taught them a cooling pranayama breath exercise in October, and a warming pranayama when it got colder. During summer break, I already had prepared a video of chair yoga postures in CEFR B1 level English (Occhi 2020), incorporating the body part vocabulary I had been teaching in previous semesters. We used other videos, and I taught live as well. These routines were well received generally, though many students who had gained weight with the even greater sedentism of COVID-19-affected life had problems with doing some of the seated lower body postures in jeans that had become tight. I encouraged them to wear or bring sweatpants, but this advice was not followed. I also offered simple English mindfulness videos on that same YouTube channel, but the background noise of ocean waves was too soporific for some students and thus was not used extensively. However, incorporating yoga afforded more variations in meditation scripts and discussion of yoga as an eight-limbed practice, with the cultural details about those for the Anthropology focus of the course. I aimed to take students beyond the current stereotype of yoga as simply another exercise women do in bras and leggings (which was the situation witnessed in Japan during the fieldwork of

McCartney, 2019). With that in mind, we occasionally practiced a video of Accessible Yoga showing people of various mobilities (Doughterty 2020), as well as a CEFR B1-adapted version I made and read aloud of Mirabai Bush's "Just Like Me" lovingkindness meditation script (see Appendix):

The face-to-face classroom situation of Fall 2020, in which reported COVID-19 cases were not high in Miyazaki, was stressful for me since many students had become sloppy or even resistant towards enforced mask wearing. One reason I included the accessible yoga video and meditation with drastic statements such as "This person will die, just like me" was that I felt it was increasingly important to foster compassion. After all, there were also students in the class who expressed to me that they had germ phobia, or fears that they may infect older relatives in the home.

As the weather cooled, the necessity of having the windows open encouraged us to do the radio exercises as well. Student enthusiasm for the more active military versions, as well as the Greater Singapore Workout, seemed greater than in previous semesters. After the winter break, we had an uptick in COVID-19 cases in Miyazaki and finished the semester online, maintaining the routines. This recent iteration will be revised before the course is offered again, likely in fall 2021. Overall, the reaction was positive, as measured by the incorporation of the topic as a no-wrong-answer writing prompt on the final exam in February 2021. Students reported various physical and mental benefits such as increased bodily warmth, flexibility, relaxation, and enjoyment. Several comments indicated that students were making efforts to be more mobile on their own time. Here are a few, verbatim:

when I do RT and yoga, it was hard at first, but the more I did, I felt that my body became more flexibel, and the muscles that had been tight were released and the pain that I feel in daliy life disappeared. When I did meditation, my mind cleared and I could fouce on the class.

There were many chances to do workout, meditation, and yoga in our every class. I am greatful taking this course becasue I do not really do such things by myself. Especially, it was precious time for me in this COVID-19 situation. I think this is no only my case, becasue the demand for workout and yoga are increasing in this tough time. The

most memorable one is the Singapore workout. It told me two important things. Firstly, it conveyed me the enjoyment of doing workout. Secondly, I could study Singapore culture through this workout. For example, the name of movements comes from Singapore's characteristics such as kias chope. Therefore, I can say that experiencing those exercise is valuable things for studying Anthropology.

In this class, I experienced some exercises such as yoga and radio exercise. First, I will show my experience of yoga. Yoga always makes me relaxed, and I do not think about anything unnecessary during yoga. Additionally, yoga warms my blood, because I breathe properly. Next, I will introduce my experience of radio exercise. I experienced some exercises, like Jieitai exercise or Singapore exercise. I could enjoyed doing them, because they have rhythmical music. After expanding COVID-19, I rarely do exercise by myself, so they were good exercise, and I could keep healthy thanks to them. After finishing this semester, I want to continue these exercises by myself, and I will do that with my family.

I learned a lot about yoga. Yoga has many benefits. First of all, yoga makes our body healthy. Deborah said she would do yoga every morning. So I'm convinced why she's always fine. Yoga is also good for your mental health. You can calm down and relax. However, yoga has a long history and is very difficult to study.

In the Fall semester 2020 round of the Institutional Research office's all-campus survey, 18% of students reported that online courses had negative effects on physical and mental health (Yasuda 2021b). Three teachers reported eye problems (particularly while forced to work from campus), and specific comments included: "Sitting behind the computer for long periods of time caused some health problems for me"; "Personally I had physical problems such as neck strain, eye strain and headaches"; and "Students often said that their eyes hurt and their heads hurt" (Yasuda 2021a). These surveys had different questions for students and teachers and also varied between semesters, but it is worth noting that these were the kinds of physical problems that may be alleviated by taking brief exercise, such as radio taisō or chair yoga, and meditation breaks (with the eyes closed or covered with hands) as we did in class. It remains to be seen whether we will teach online again; however, the problems experienced in online

education are not dissimilar to those of everyday office workers, so the need for mitigation of the physical effects of sedentism and screen use will remain for the teachers, and for many students reemerge in their working lives.

This is an ongoing project, both as a classroom practice and as a research project. In lieu of a conclusion, here is a summary of the current exercise and meditation scheme at the time of writing. Students are told in the ANT3111 syllabus and at the first meeting that exercises and meditation are part of the participation grade and that they should dress appropriately. Students also study their own exercise levels and postural habits as autoethnography, and complete a questionnaire about stress levels. With as much English support as is appropriate, we then do a variety of exercises at the beginning of each class, depending on the weather and situation. These include Japanese radio *taisō* of various types, other countries' similar exercises (e.g., Singapore in various versions, Taiwan, and China), yoga, and meditation.

Positive outcomes are available from observation and self-study. Student performance improves: sleepiness decreases, and willingness to participate increases. Students self-reported during class and in writing that their condition improved, and even that they incorporated exercise in their daily lives outside school after realizing its importance to their performance. Students who participated reported a greater sense of physical ease and self-awareness, as well as increased cultural knowledge about yoga and the various exercises. PDCA is in progress; I will create more simple English yoga and meditation videos, and make whatever other adjustments student evaluations suggest. Overall the unit has been successful with positive student feedback. Stating at the outset that these elements are required in the course creates a self-selection effect that no doubt underlies positive outcomes as well. Comments that indicate room for improvement will be considered for PDCA. Overall schoolwide student and teacher evaluations for the 2020 school year indicated that Zoom classes increased eye fatigue, stiff neck/shoulders, and back pain (Yasuda 2020, 2021a, b). It is not possible to know what ergonomic factors were involved for each individual, but these are problems that could be mitigated by the measures adopted and described here. Yoga is currently ubiquitous in Japanese popular media, and has become part of the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare's definition of fitness (e-herusunetto, n.d.) along with the claim that the original static poses, breathing exercises, and meditation (i.e., three of the eight

limbs set forth by Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras as asana, pranayama, and dhyana) have entered Japan via Zen (Sawada, 2020). It is indeed part of current practice at some temples to offer yoga classes (McCartney, 2019). Application of this research is suitable for any teacher or student who feels the impact of physical stress in their daily life and is willing to make some small effort to mitigate it (though I urge any prospective yoga teacher to get proper certification and insurance). As this project continues I hope to widen its reach so that students outside this specific class can have the opportunity to understand the importance of exercise and meditation in counteracting the physical stress of contemporary daily life. I do not think, however, that making exercise mandatory is a feasible proposition. Lifelong education courses would be another possible venue to expand this project and serve a wider population.

References

- Bergouignan, A., Legget, K.T., De Jong, N. et al. 2016. Effect of frequent interruptions of prolonged sitting on self-perceived levels of energy, mood, food cravings and cognitive function. *Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act* 13:113. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-016-0437-z>
- Bos, Maarten W., and Amy J.C. Cuddy. 2013. *iPosture: The Size of Electronic Consumer Devices Affects our Behavior*. Harvard Business School Working Paper, No. 13–097, May 2013.
- Brown, H. & Bradford, A. 2017. EMI, CLIL, & CBI: Differing Approaches and Goals. In P. Clements, A. Crouse, & H. Brown (Eds.), *JALT 2016: Transformation in Language Education* (pp. 328-334). Tokyo, Japan: Japan Association of Language Teachers. Retrieved from <http://jalt-publications.org/node/4/articles/6058-emi-clil-cbi-differing-approaches-and-goals>
- Bush, Mirabai. 2018. Just Like Me Compassion Practice. *Mindful: Healthy Mind, Healthy Life*. <https://www.mindful.org/just-like-me-compassion-practice/>
- Cuddy, Amy. 2015. Your iPhone Is Ruining Your Posture — and Your Mood <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/13/opinion/sunday/your-iphone-is-ruining-your-posture-and-your-mood.html>

Dougherty, Christopher. 2020. Yoga Sequences: An Accessible Yoga Practice You Can Do in a Chair. Yoga Journal: <https://www.yogajournal.com/video/accessible-yoga-practice/>

E-herusunetto (E-healthnet). n.d. fuittonessu (Fitness). <https://www.e-healthnet.mhlw.go.jp/information/dictionary/exercise/ys-078.html>.

HPBsg. 2018.

National Steps Challenge™ presents The Greater Singapore Workout!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRt3tXSg-U8>

Lovato, Nicole. 2018. <https://theconversation.com/guilty-about-that-afternoon-nap-dont-be-its-good-for-you-89023> January 26, 2018 6.12am AEDT accessed 16 Feb, 2021.

McCartney, Patrick. 2019. [エッセイ 10 : ひよんなことから No.4] Tales from Yogascapes in Japan
<http://rci.nanzan-u.ac.jp/jinruiken/essay/015327.html>

NALALUNACHannel. 2020. [Beat Saber] ラジオ体操第一 / Radio Calisthenics No.1 | Normal (Full Combo) Apr 25, 2020
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nlGUWUCfyMg>

Occhi, Debra. 2020. 5 Minute Chair Yoga for Upper Body in Simple English. Aug. 26, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IqMyHQO1wNw>

Occhi, Debra. 2016. Global and Local Perspectives on Discourses and Practices of University Internationalization. in Internationalization in Japanese Higher Education. John Mock et.al. ed. Rotterdam and Boston: Sense Publishers, 19-33.

Occhi, Debra and Golliher, Roberta. 2006. “‘Keep Your Muscles Feisty’: US Culture, Nutrition, and Exercise in the EFL Classroom” Working Together: Starting from Your Classroom meeting, sponsored by Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT) Learner Development and College and University Educators SIGs, & the JALT Miyazaki Chapter, Miyazaki.

Sawada, Susumu. 2020. Yoga. <https://www.e-healthnet.mhlw.go.jp/information/dictionary/exercise/ys-085.html>

Spurlock, Morgan. 2004. Supersize Me. Samuel Goldwyn Films.

The Good Life Cooperative, 2015. The Great Singapore Workout.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhW2ninDh2o>

UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center, 2017. Guided Meditations.
<https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/mindful-meditations>

Wolkin, Jennifer R. 2015 Cultivating multiple aspects of attention through mindfulness meditation accounts for psychological well-being through decreased rumination. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management* 8: 171–180.

Yasuda Masahide 2020. Reports on Survey for Students. Internal document, Institutional Research Center, Miyazaki International College.

Yasuda Masahide 2021a. Reports on Survey for Teachers. Internal document, Institutional Research Center, Miyazaki International College.

Yasuda Masahide 2021b. Reports on Survey for Students. Internal document, Institutional Research Center, Miyazaki International College.

Appendix

“Just Like Me” Lovingkindness meditation script

Begin by being aware that there is a person in front of you, either in your mind or actually sitting across from you.

A fellow human being just like you.

Silently repeat the following phrases while thinking about this person.

This person has a body and a mind, just like me.

This person has feelings, thoughts, and emotions, just like me.

This person has, during his or her life, experienced physical and emotional pain and suffering, just like me.

This person has at some point been sad, just like me.

This person has been disappointed in life, just like me.

This person has sometimes been angry, just like me.

This person has been hurt by others, just like me.

This person has felt bad or sad at times, just like me.

This person worries, just like me.

This person is frightened sometimes, just like me.

This person will die, just like me.

This person has longed for friendship, just like me.

This person is learning about life, just like me.

This person wants to be caring and kind to others, just like me.

This person wants to be content with what life has given, just like me.

This person wishes to be free from pain and suffering, just like me.

This person wishes to be happy, just like me.

This person wishes to be safe, strong, and healthy, just like me.

This person wishes to be loved, just like me.

Now, allow some wishes for well-being.

I wish that you have the strength, resources, and social support to navigate the difficulties in your life with ease.

I wish that you'll be free from pain and suffering.

I wish that you'll be peaceful and happy.

I wish that you'll be loved because you are a fellow human being, just like me.

Whether this person is right there with you, or you have brought this person into your mind, thank this person for doing this practice with you.

Give thanks in whatever way feels appropriate.

Thank you for doing this practice (adapted from Bush, 2018).