

*Personal Practice: Love/ Lent*

**A Meditation for Reaching Out in Love** *(adapted from exercises by Sanaya Roman)*

**Supplies:**

- Paper or Journal, pen or pencil

John 13: 34 “<sup>34</sup>“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”

Let’s face it, some people are much easier for us to love than others. Yet we are called to love one another. This exercise, like prayer, may help you to grow in your understanding of others – a first step toward growing in love. For the purposes of the exercise, identify someone you know but may have some difficulty loving. Don’t pick the hardest person first. You can work up to that as you get more comfortable with the process.

Sit with your eyes open or closed. Adjust your posture so that you are comfortable, perhaps putting your hands at your sides. Begin by taking a few deep breaths.

Imagine your entire body relaxing, starting with your toes. Bring a feeling of relaxation into your feet, calves and thighs, then up into abdomen and lower back, chest, upper back, and shoulders. Next relax your arms, hands, neck, head, and face. Let the muscles around your jaws and eyes relax. Do this until you feel peaceful, focused and physically comfortable.

Adjust your posture so that your energy can flow more easily up and down your spine. Breathe a full breath into just your upper chest, moving your lower diaphragm and abdomen as little as possible. Breathe into your upper chest several times; notice how you feel. Now breathe into your abdomen several times, following this with several breaths into both upper chest and abdomen. Straighten and lift your upper chest with a deep breath, so your spine is more upright.

Now imagine that the highest, best part of you is sitting in a beautiful place, in comfortable surroundings. Invite a role model you associate with deep love to sit with you and help increase the feeling of love in you. That could be Jesus, Mother Teresa, or someone else who inspires this in you. Feel their peace, joy, and love all around you.

Think of the person you identified earlier. Invite them to join you. Now, without speaking, focus on your heart and feel it full with love. Take as much time as you need for this. Next, imagine a cord of light growing out from your heart and extending toward this person. Once your two hearts are connected, mentally tell the person you love and accept him or her exactly as she or he is. Express any other messages of love you want to send. When you are done, pull the cord back to your own heart, again feel the fullness there. Mentally say goodbye to the others present and open your eyes. Repeat this process with the same person several times over the coming week

Record in your journal any feelings or insights you gained. If you find the process helpful, try it with other people of varying difficulty.



First Congregational Church  
6 Kirby Road, PO Box 1285, Washington, CT 06793  
(860) 868-0569 [www.FirstChurchWashingtonCT.org](http://www.FirstChurchWashingtonCT.org)  
admin@firstchurchwashingtonct.org

