**Four Immeasurable Emotions: Summary**

Four immeasurable emotions, described in Buddhist practice, may be developed by anyone through *mindfulness* and *meditation*. They are loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity. They represent among the most beautiful and hopeful aspects of the human nature.

Also referred to as mind-liberating practices, they awaken powerful healing energies which brighten and lift the mind to increasing levels of clarity. As a result, these emotions or states manifest as forces of purification transforming the turbulent heart into a refuge of calm, focused awareness.

More specifically, *loving-kindness* is the capacity for love and the medicine for anger, agitation, and hatred. *Compassion* is the capacity to remain present in the face of pain and suffering, and the antidote to cruelty. *Empathetic joy* is the capacity for boundless joy and gratitude, and the counteracting force for envy and jealousy. *Equanimity* is the capacity to be with things as they are, as well as spacious balance, which supports the release of clinging and attachment.

Source: http://www.brahmaviharas.org/

Note: Rod Bucknell and Chris Kang in their book *The Meditative Way: Readings in the Theory and Practice of Buddhist Meditation*,translate *muditā* as ‘empathetic joy’ rather than the more common ‘sympathetic joy’, which is probably better. It is not so much a question of joy ‘in sympathy with’ the joy of another, and certainly not ‘sympathetically’ feeling sorry for someone, but of joy that arises due to empathetically ‘vibrating along with’ the joy of another. Bodhi translates the word as ‘altruistic joy’ in his new translation of the *Samyutta Nikāya,* but Ñānamoli translates it as ‘gladness’. (Based on class notes for *Buddhist Meditation and Psychology* ["5. Developing the 'Immeasurable' Emotions"] in the MA in Buddhist Studies offered by the University of South Wales.)