

## Lokah Samastah Sukhino Bhavantu

"May all beings everywhere be happy and free, and may the thoughts, words, and actions of my own life contribute in some way to that happiness and to that freedom for all."

Let's look more closely at the meaning of each word of this invocational mantra:

lokah: location, realm, all universes existing now

samastah: all beings sharing that same location

sukhino: centered in happiness and joy, free from suffering

bhav: the divine mood or state of unified existence

antu: may it be so, it must be so (antu used as an ending here transforms this mantra into a powerful pledge)

This is a prayer each one of us can practice every day. It reminds us that our relationships with all beings and things should be mutually beneficial if we ourselves desire happiness and liberation from suffering. No true or lasting happiness can come from causing unhappiness to others. No true or lasting freedom can come from depriving others of their freedom. If we say we want every being to be happy and free, then we have to question everything that we do-how we live, how we eat, what we buy, how we speak, and even how we think.

(adapted from Yoga & Vegetarianism by Sharon Gannon)