



[Mindfulness & Meditation](#)

How To Do Buddhist Loving Kindness Meditation Properly

Imagine if you had the power to make the world a place full of love, kindness, and compassion. You'd do anything to live in such a world, wouldn't you? And the fact is: you can, when you practice Loving Kindness Meditation.

In my [guide to 31 different meditations](#) I discuss why Loving Kindness Meditation (Metta) is one of the most important meditations in the world. It is a technique with which you can create feelings of love and kindness, warm feelings that make your inner world a place of compassion. Once your inner world is made of compassion, your outer-world will be too.

This lovely meditation has existed since the time of the Buddha, and it is very popular today.

As a meditation teacher, I love teaching people how to do loving kindness meditation. And I'm excited to share my teachings with you in this guide.

Contents [[hide](#)]

- [What's in this LKM Guide](#)
- [What does Loving Kindness mean?](#)
- [The History Of Buddhist Loving Kindness Meditation](#)
 - [Loving kindness Meditation is About:](#)
 - [How to do Loving Kindness Meditation](#)
 - [Buddhist Metta Instructions](#)
 - [Review of LKM–A Short Overview](#)
 - [The Health Benefits Of Loving Kindness Meditation](#)
 - [Spiritual benefits of Loving Kindness Meditation](#)
 - [Here's how it works:](#)
 - [Health benefits of Loving Kindness Meditation](#)
 - [Even more benefits of loving kindness meditation](#)
- [The Science And Benefits Of Kindness](#)
 - [Psychological Definitions of Kindness](#)
 - [Mental Health Benefits of Kindness](#)
 - [Physical Health Benefits of Kindness](#)

- [My experience with a student who lost weight with LKM](#)
- [How Loving Kindness Meditation Helped Me Personally](#)
- [Infographic](#)
- [Best Recordings And Books On Loving Kindness Meditation](#)
- [Loving Kindness: The Revolutionary Path Of Happiness by Sharon Salzberg](#)
- [Meditation On Loving Kindness by Master Choa Kok Sui](#)
- [How about a PDF?](#)
- [Help me out](#)

What's in this LKM Guide

In this guide I'll share:

- Buddhist loving kindness meditaion instructions
- Script
- Audio
- Infographic for you to save / print / share

I've crafted this post with love (and kindness...) so I hope you enjoy it.

Mind if I ask a favor in return?

My passion is to share meditation with the world. If that is a passion you believe in, please help me out. Share this article on social media networks and on your own blog.

Let's get started.



With a boundless heart of loving kindness, hold yourself and all beings as your beloved children.” – Guatama Buddha.

What does Loving Kindness mean?

Loving Kindness is traditionally called “Metta”.

Metta is a Pali word that means benevolence, friendliness, friendship, good will, kindness, and love.

The full name “Metta Bhavana” means “developing loving kindness”. So this meditation is used to develop love and kindness in the mind.

“Love” and “Kindness” are the same in the Buddhist tradition as they are to you and I. They are about loving people, loving animals, and loving the world. They’re about doing good, meaning well, and living from a place of kindness and compassion. I’m sure you’ll agree with me that these are some of the most important and best qualities a person can possess.

Buddhists consider Metta (loving kindness) to be a special state.

Metta is one of the ten [pāramīs \(perfections\)](#) that are taught in the Theravāda school of Buddhism, and it is the first of the four sublime states (the states described in Buddhism as the ideal ways of conduct towards living being).

The Paramis (Perfections) are:

- Generosity
- Virtues
- Renunciation
- Insight
- Effort

- Patience
- Honesty
- Determination
- Loving Kindness
- Equanimity

As you can see, loving kindness is one of these *perfect states*. It is an ideal quality that all enlightened people possess.

Do you already have high levels of love and kindness? Then you are on your way to [becoming an enlightened person](#).

The History Of Buddhist Loving Kindness Meditation

Guatama Buddha began to teach Loving Kindness Meditation over 2500 years ago.

The Buddha himself practiced Loving Kindness Meditation every day (I do the same thing myself).

Buddha would spend all morning meditating and [reciting mantras](#).

Towards the end of the Buddha's meditation sessions he would come to Loving Kindness. He would focus first on himself. He would extend thoughts and feelings of compassion, love and kindness to himself, perhaps because Buddha understood that love begins with yourself.

After giving loving kindness to himself, Buddha would look around him at the villagers and monks. They would be toiling away, trying to survive as best they could. The Buddha would imagine sending out positive feelings of love and kindness towards them. But Buddha did not stop there. Once he had mentally projected love and kindness to the people around him, Buddha would look for ways to help his community. Buddha would find ways to *act out* love and kindness.

Can you imagine if everyone did the same thing today? If everyone lived for love and kindness, if everyone spent their time helping others instead of

selfishly helping themselves. Can you imagine how much better the world would be?

Buddha's practice illustrates what Loving Kindness Meditation is all about:

Loving kindness Meditation is About:

1. Focusing the mind and relaxing
2. Extending love to yourself
3. Extending love to others
4. Finding ways to actually use that love to help other people.

I believe we should all practice loving kindness meditation, whether we are Buddhist or not. I personally believe in accepting and embracing all people. And I believe the world is better when we see the good in things, regardless of whether those things *click with us*. That's why I'd like to remind you: You do not *need to be Buddhist to do metta meditation. Regardless of who we are or where we come from, we can all benefit from learning how to do metta meditation.*

So let's now learn how to do loving kindness meditation.

How to do Loving Kindness Meditation

Are you quite new to meditation? Take a look at my guide to the [Basics Of Meditation to start](#). It will set you up for success.

Have you read that link? Great. Now you are ready to do Metta Bhavana meditation.

Let's do it!

Buddhist Metta Instructions

Get excited. You are about to learn how to do one of the best Buddhist meditation techniques. And you are going to create an inner world full of love and kindness. This is going to be a really special occasion. So go slowly and follow the instructions correctly.

1. **Find somewhere quiet** where you will not be disturbed for ten to twenty minutes. I've created a [guide to creating a meditation space](#) to help you out.
2. Sit, lie down or stand up.
3. Check your posture. Is your body in alignment? Strait spine? Feeling comfy but alert? Great.
4. **Focus on your breath:** Focus on your breathing for a few moments to quiet and calm your mind. Follow my [instructions for breathing meditations](#). These will relax your mind.
5. **Extend loving kindness to yourself:** Imagine seeing yourself happy and smiling.
6. Now imagine sending out feelings of love and kindness towards yourself.
7. Think of five positive things about that you love.
8. Now think of five ways in which you enact self love (perhaps you are kind to yourself by eating healthily, by giving yourself peace when you need it. . . think of ways in which you are kind to yourself).
9. **Say to yourself the Loving Kindness Meditation words:** "May I have loving kindness. May I have strength, peace, love and success. May I also have the strength to overcome all obstacles."
10. **Repeat with someone close to you:** Bring to mind someone close to you (family / friend) and repeat the process.

11. Imagine the person happy.
12. Imagine sending them love.
13. Imagine them sending love back to you.
14. Now think of five things to love about that person.
15. Think of five ways that person shows loving kindness to you.
16. Now say the **Loving Kindness Meditation script** “May (name of person) have loving kindness. May they have love, peace, strength and success. May they also have the strength to overcome all obstacles.”
17. **Now repeat the process and say the loving kindness meditation script with a neutral individual**
18. **Now repeat with a hostile individual:** This should be someone you have argued with or do not easily get along with (see my story above for a good example). Remember, the purpose of metta meditation is to feel universal loving kindness for *everyone*, and that include your noisy neighbor.
19. Return to the beginning and repeat.
20. **Always remember the sacred loving kindness script:** “May (name of person) have loving kindness. May they have love, peace, strength and success. May they also have the strength to overcome all obstacles).”
21. If you have a [prayer beads mala](#) you can use it to count the number of people you include in your metta bhavna meditation. Aim for 20 people or more.

22.If you notice that you experience anger or hate at any time during this process, you might like to use these [Buddhist Meditations For Anger](#).

And that is the correct way to do loving kindness meditation. After extensive research I can confirm that this is the best way to do Metta Bhavna meditation. Some online guides vary, but the above instructions are the best.

Have you tried it? You can truly feel that love and kindness, can't you? Isn't it beautiful? Every time I practice Metta meditation I feel absolutely wonderful.

I'm about to share with you some absolutely fascinating in-depth facts and info on the science and art of LKM. But first let's recap with a short review of loving kindness meditation.

Review of LKM–A Short Overview

Loving Kindness Meditation creates love for all.

It begins with self love. Here we forgive ourselves, find compassion for ourselves, and develop a truly loving relationship with ourselves.

This can have a big impact on our happiness and well-being.

Once we have achieved self love, we then extend our loving kindness towards others, beginning with those close to us, those people whom we love and respect.

This helps us to feel and to act positively towards the people in our lives.

For instance, I once taught a married couple facing divorce to practice extending loving kindness towards each other.

They both spent twenty minutes a day extending loving kindness towards one another. This helped them to accept the weaknesses and errors of the other, which led to a very healthy relationship. They're still together today and are now happier than ever.

Once we've extending loving kindness to people close to us, we move on to neutral people (people we know but feel indifferent towards). This includes colleagues, people we know but rarely speak to, and people about whom we simply feel indifferent. When we practice loving kindness towards these "neutral" people we begin to feel much closer to them. This in turn leads us to act more positively towards them, which often leads to new friendships and new relationships.

Finally we come to the most challenging part of loving kindness.

In this part we extend loving kindness towards those people towards whom we currently experience negative feelings.

For instance, a lot of people don't get along with their neighbors.

It's a tragic reality because your neighbors can be some of the best friends and most helpful acquaintances you have. But after a few years living next door to one another, with all that noise and the fact that they put up that ugly fence, it can be easy to fall out. By practicing loving kindness you can learn to see each other in a positive light, which cures any animosity and restores the positive relationship.

This final part of Loving Kindness can also help to cure seriously unhealthy relationships as well and emotional suffering.

The Health Benefits Of Loving Kindness Meditation

Take a look at this [guide to 100 benefits of meditation](#).

Some of those benefits are unique to Loving Kindness Meditation.

In addition to producing happiness and compassion, LKM offers many benefits for the mind, body and soul.

Let's take a look.

Spiritual benefits of Loving Kindness Meditation

Buddha taught that the practice of Loving Kindness Meditation will develop four traits in the individual:

- Metta (Friendliness),
- Compassion (Karuna)
- Joy (Mudita)
- Equanimity (Upekkha)

Here's how it works:

1. Loving Kindness Meditation (Metta) develops a warmth of feeling towards others.
2. This leads to compassion (Karuna). We develop heightened levels of empathy and so we feel happy for the successes of others and compassionate for their suffering.
3. This leads to Appreciative Joy—the appreciation of the good fortune of other people.
4. Finally, we achieve Upekkha, equanimity, the state in which we extend love and kindness to all living beings. This is one of highest states a human can achieve, and it is best achieved through the practice of loving kindness meditation.

Upekkha:

A state of equanimity (mental calmness) that is part of the process towards enlightenment in Buddhism.

Health benefits of Loving Kindness Meditation

Here's the deal:

Loving Kindness Meditation is *massive* for your well-being. That's proven through both spirituality and science.

Here's the spiritual bit:

In the Pali Canon (an ancient Buddhist text), it is said that Loving Kindness Meditation (Metta Bhavana) helps us to:

- sleep well
- [start the day positively](#)
- avoid nightmares
- feel a sense of emotional protection
- feel closer to others and to develop concentration.
- Loving kindness is one of the best ways to develop compassion.

Now the science:

Richard Davidson, a neuroscientist and Director of the University of Wisconsin Center, conducted research involving fMRI scans of monks who had been meditating for many years.

The research revealed that Loving Kindness has a profound impact on the brain as it significantly heightens our compassion for others. Loving Kindness was shown to heighten levels of joy, happiness and contentment. So it was scientifically proven that Loving Kindness makes people happier.

Puzzled?

You may be wondering why kindness and compassion are so healthy.

Science proves kindness and compassion are vital to good health.

These articles reveal how massive kindness and compassion are:

- [Studies Reveal Compassion Is Most Important Thing For Happiness](#)

Even more benefits of loving kindness meditation

Here are even more benefits of Loving Kindness Meditation

Loving kindness meditation increases positive emotions and decreases negative emotions

In 2008, positive psychologist Barbara Frerickson conducted research that showed that practicing loving kindness meditation (metta) for seven weeks led to increased love, joy, pride, contentment, awe, gratitude, and hope.

These positive emotions in turn lead to increased [mindfulness](#), increased sense of purpose, a decrease in illness, and an increased sense of social connection.

Increase vagal tone

A study in 2013 showed the effect of loving kindness meditation on emotions. The study revealed that loving kindness meditation affects the vagal tone, a physiological marker of well-being. This in turn shows that loving kindness meditation can help us to heal physically and emotionally.

Decreases migraines:

The positive emotions and stress reduction created by loving kindness meditation leads to less migraines.

Research conducted in 2014 Tonelli studied the effects of metta meditation on people who suffer from migraines, and observed a significant decrease in migraine frequency in those who practiced the technique.

Helps Chronic Pain

In 2005 research (by Carson et al.) studied the effect of metta meditation on people with chronic lower back pain. They showed that the reduction in stress led to less severe pain. *You can also use [these meditations for pain](#).*

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

In 2013 research (by Kearney et al.) showed that practicing loving kindness meditation for 12 weeks leads to less severe symptoms in post traumatic stress disorder patients.

Schizophrenia

A pilot study conducted by Johnson in 2011 researched the effects of metta meditation on individuals suffering from schizophrenia spectrum disorders. The results showed that meditation led to decreased negativity and increased positivity, and therefore was instrumental in recovery.

Emotional intelligence

By the science of neuroplasticity, the brain evolves based on the activities we perform. Regular practice of loving kindness meditation leads to increased compassion and thereby teaches our brain to be more socially intelligent. This is just one of six key ways [meditation makes you more intelligent](#). You can also use these [great tips for emotional intelligence](#).

Gray Matter increase

In 2013, Leung et al. showed that loving kindness meditation leads to increase gray matter in the areas of the brain related to emotional regulation.

Respiratory Sinus Arrhythmia

Another important benefit of loving kindness meditation is that it relaxes the body. This results in several physical benefits. Ten minutes of practice, for instance, leads to increased cardiac control, slow and more relaxed breathing, and increased respiratory sinus arrhythmia.

Decreases telomere length (it decreases the aging rate and helps you live longer)

Stress has been scientifically proven to decrease the length of telomeres, which are genetic materials that are a marker of aging. In 2013, Hoge et al. proved that loving kindness meditation led to longer telomeres and thereby slowed the aging process.

Social Value

Practicing loving kindness meditation makes you a more socially valuable person. In 2011 Leiberger et al. showed that loving kindness led to increased compassion, which in turn motivated individuals to behave in a way that was beneficial to society.

Compassion

One of the most important aspects of Buddhism is compassion for all life. So perhaps it's not surprising to hear that research conducted by Jones & Hutton in 2012 showed that loving kindness meditation significantly increased compassion.

Empathy

A study in 2013 showed that loving kindness meditation also leads to increased empathy.

Makes you less biased

In 2014 Kang, Gray & Dovidio showed that six weeks of loving kindness meditation led to less bias against minorities. This suggests that communal practice of loving kindness meditation would lead to the cessation of racism and other prejudices.

Increases Social Connection

This is the one benefit of loving kindness meditation that you will notice above all others. Loving kindness meditation makes you feel much more connected to the people around you. This was proven by research conducted by Kok et al in 2013.

Less self criticism

Part of practicing loving kindness meditation is extending thoughts of love and kindness towards yourself. This leads to less self criticism, which in turn raises self esteem and can help to cure depression and negative thoughts. This was proven by research in 2014 by Shahar et al. You can also use these techniques to become less self critical.

It works in small doses

In 2008, Hutcherson proved that just 10 minutes of loving kindness meditation was enough to provide the benefits listed above.

It lasts

Finally, the benefits of loving kindness meditation will endure. In 2011 Cohn et al showed that 35% of participants who practiced loving kindness meditation had improved emotions for 15 months.

Oh, and it will also [give you good karma and stop bad karma.](#)

The Science And Benefits Of Kindness

Psychological Definitions of Kindness

- Ellen Berscheid calls the strength of kindness “**Compassionate Love.**”

Daniel Batson’s definition tells us that **kindness involves empathy**, which is roughly translated as the ability to **assume the position of others or to understand how others feel**, being upset by another’s suffering and uplifted by another’s joy.

Kristin Neff’s research tells us that **self kindness involves three components: self kindness** (understanding our own short comings and not doting on failure / pain), **self humanity** (perceiving our own experiences as part of humanity rather than as reflections of ourselves as individuals) and **mindfulness** (holding in balance our sense of success / failure, happiness / pain etc.).

Patty O Grady has written a great article about the definition and effects of kindness on [Psychology Today](#).

So that’s a definition of kindness.

But just why exactly is kindness so important? I mean, other than the fact that we all want to be good people and love being nice?

Mental Health Benefits of Kindness

Kindness **helps maintain good health and diminish the effect of major and minor diseases and disorders.** ([PROOF](#))

Kindness **promotes the release of endorphins** that make you happy, promote calmness and improve your sense of well-being. ([PROOF](#))

Kindness can **reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation.** ([PROOF](#))

Kindness **decreases negative feelings like anger and depression.** ([PROOF](#))

Recalling previous acts of **kindness increases positive feelings.** ([PROOF](#))

Not to mention, kindness makes people like you and want to be with / around you. (No need for proof).

Physical Health Benefits of Kindness

Stress related health problems improve after kindness. (PROOF (see above))

Depression, anxiety and other mental health issues can cause heart attacks and other health problems. Kindness helps reduce the risk of these issues. **(PROOF (see above))**

Kindness **promotes the production of T cells in the immune system,** which help fight illness and disease. ([PROOF](#))

Did you know about this importance of kindness and the health benefits of kindness? Isn't it absolutely amazing?

Just being kind can have such a huge impact. And thankfully we're all really kind people (in my experience, 99% of the readers of The Daily Meditation are extremely kind people, so I guess that means you're all happy and successful too. Woo hoo!) Love you guys!

My experience with a student who lost weight with LKM

LKM helps with self forgiveness. And [self forgiveness is massive for weight loss](#).

I learned that with a student.

One girl I taught Loving Kindness Meditation to was struggling to accept the fact that she had allowed herself to put on weight.

She was hurt.

She was a beautiful and healthy but she'd gone through severe stress and had been comfort eating, which led her to put on 100lbs. She was still beautiful but she didn't feel that way. She hated the fact that she had allowed herself to ruin her own health. She was depressed because of what she'd done to herself.

With Loving Kindness Meditation I was able to teach her to accept what she had done and to forgive herself.

This was an important case of self love.

She forgave herself and accepted the fact that she was now overweight. And it's worth noting that forgiveness and self love are very important to weight loss.

Once she had gotten over the past and had found self love once again, she found it easy to return to her healthy habits and to lose weight. Now she's even fitter than she had been previously.

That's just one example of why self love and "self loving kindness" are so important: they empower us to behave positively towards ourselves.

Let me share a story about one student I taught loving kindness to.

How Loving Kindness Meditation Helped Me Personally

I'll give an example from my personal life.

About a decade ago my father had been on business down in Portsmouth (a port city on the southern coast of England). He was walking back to his hotel when two men ran down the road. One of the men pulled a knife out of his pocket. He slashed it down my father's face and through his throat.

They then ran.

My father, bleeding to death, managed to crawl into the nearest building, which happened to be a restaurant. By some miracle there happened to be a doctor in the restaurant when my father crawled in covered in blood and near death. The doctor managed to wrap the wound up to help control the bleeding. He then called the hospital, who through the modern miracle of health technology managed to save my father's life.

Three miracles. But I don't mention the story because of those miracles. Rather because of the fact that at first I had an extremely negative reaction to what happened. I (rightfully, perhaps) hated those two men who had attempted to murder my father. I felt mad at society too. But I knew that I could not allow those two men to destroy my state of mind. They'd already hurt my family more than enough. So I practiced Loving Kindness Meditation. I imagined sending compassion towards those two men who had tried to kill my dad. And in so doing I managed to forgive them and to move on.

When I talk about those two guys now everyone says "You must want to kill them". I could want to do that if I let myself. It would be easy, I suppose. But that would only lead to damage. Instead I've chosen to understand that they're the unfortunate result of an imperfect society. They themselves are almost definitely victims of some sort of suffering. You don't act that way unless you're truly hurting inside. So they're victims themselves.

Instead of hating, I figure it's better to try and understand them and where they come from, and to help cure their hatred and anger so things like this stop happening. In my mind that's just a healthier and more positive way to be. But I'm only able to be so positive towards those guys because I've been practicing Metta Meditation.

So, how do you do Loving Kindness meditation? Let's take a look.

Infographic

I decided to create an infographic to teach the most important parts of metta.

This infographic teaches loving kindness meditation. Feel free to save this image so you know how to do loving kindness meditation. You may also share this loving kindness meditation infographic on your own site provided you leave a link back to this webpage.



LOVING KINDNESS MEDITATION

Buddhist Loving Kindness Meditation enables us to promote feelings of love and kindness towards all.



Focus on your breathing for a few moments to quiet and calm your mind.



Imagine seeing yourself happy and smiling. Now imagine sending out feelings of love and kindness towards yourself.



Say to yourself the Loving Kindness Meditation words: "May I have loving kindness. May I have strength, peace, love and success. May I also have the strength to overcome all obstacles."



Loving Kindness Promotes:

Metta (Friendliness),

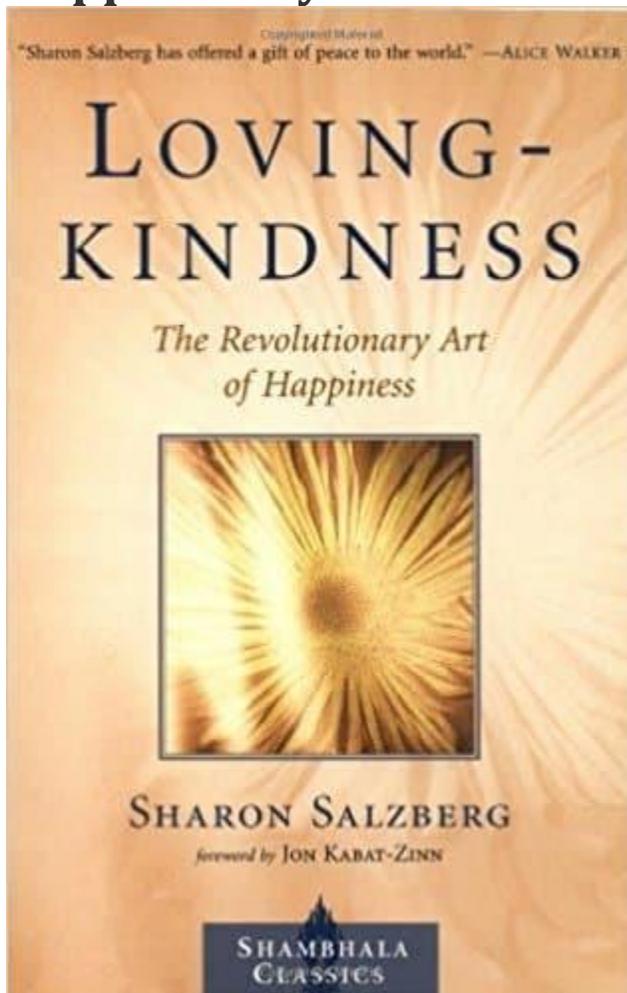
Karuna (Compassion)

Mudita

Best Recordings And Books On Loving Kindness Meditation

If you would like to learn more about loving kindness meditation or have help practicing, I recommend these two fantastic books:

Loving Kindness: The Revolutionary Path Of Happiness by Sharon Salzberg

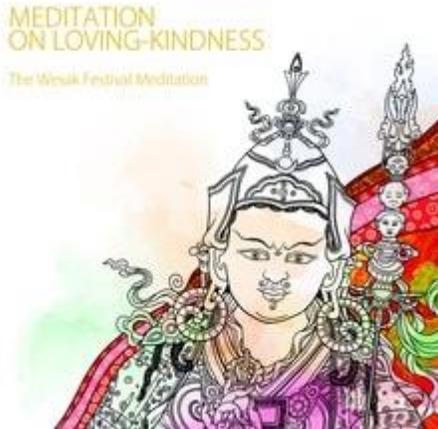


This is a truly beautiful and inspirational book by Salzberg. It explains why loving kindness means so much and how to bring loving kindness into your

life. A truly life transforming work.

GET IT ON AMAZON

Meditation On Loving Kindness by Master Choa Kok Sui



Master Choa Kok Sui gives a guided meditation on Loving Kindness. A world renowned expert and luminary this recording is a real treat.

GET IT ON AMAZON

How about a PDF?

Sure. Download the PDF [here](#).

Help me out

If you have found this article useful, please do me a favor. Share it. The only way I can keep producing content like this is if kind people like you help share these articles.

Thanks so much.

Leave a comment.