

## Introduction to Meditation Guided Meditation on the Body

Establish a posture that expresses alertness and physical presence, a posture that offers both stability and ease. Take some time getting into your body and preparing your posture. You can rock back and forth, forward and back, and get everything lined up. Feel your spine. Take care of your shoulders and get your hands just right. Tend to the many details of your body at the beginning of your meditation so that your body can support you.

Gently close your eyes. When you're ready take a few long, slow, deep breaths. This helps you to enter your body through feeling the massage and the movement of your breathing. As you exhale, allow yourself to relax. Let go. Let go of any thoughts and concerns of the day. Take a few long slow deep breaths to remind yourself of your body. . . . And then let your breath return to normal without any effort to breathe a special way. Only feeling breathing. Maybe the next exhale will allow you to soften some areas of your body. Send a softening to the muscles of your face. Perhaps you can let your mouth drop open briefly, softening your jaw, and then letting the teeth float together again. Can there be a ease across your upper back and shoulders? A gentle opening across your chest? Can you relax your belly?

Here and now, become aware of your body, as broadly and globally as you can, sensing its aliveness, vitality, warmth, pulsing, pressure, vibration and energy. You might be aware of uncomfortable sensations in your body. Can you simply be present with these dropping any commentary or judgments or assigning meaning to their presence? Can you let them be and become aware of the body in a broad expansive way, not focusing on any particular area?

## Introduction to Meditation Guided Meditation on the Body

Becoming aware of how the body experiences breathing. You might feel movements of the chest, the ribcage, the belly, and the diaphragm. You might be aware of the sensations of air going into the nostrils. Whatever way you can feel the physical sensations of breathing, the alternation of breathing in and breathing out. Centering yourself on those sensations, let your awareness take them in. Fully feeling, fully living sensations of breathing.

As you notice any commentary or judgment about the mind wandering, begin again feeling and sensing breathing. Simple, simple beginning again. Perhaps feeling the energy of your resolve to stay with breathing in and breathing out, one breath after the other. Letting go of your thoughts and absorbing, taking in the body's physical experience of breathing. You are inside the sensations of breathing, inside breathing, feeling it, sensing it, experiencing it.

Some people find it helpful to very quietly, very softly, whisper with the in-breath "in", with the out-breath "out", or with the rising of the chest or belly as "rising," with the falling as "falling". Staying connected.

Beginning again and again as notice yourself getting caught up in commentary. If you are, see if you can disentangle yourself in favor of being present for the experience of breathing. If anything is happening that is making it difficult to be with the breathing, be relaxed about that. Notice what that is, notice it without commentary without judgment, just this is how it is. A simple acknowledgment—and maybe it's easier to come back and be with the breathing if you acknowledge the difficulty. Only feeling difficulty.

## Introduction to Meditation Guided Meditation on the Body

Now stop paying attention to your breathing. Let go of any effort to be with your breath; instead turn your attention to the strongest physical sensation in your body. It doesn't matter what it is—it could be pleasant; it could be unpleasant. In a very soft, relaxed way, bring your attention to it, taking it in, being present with the strongest physical sensation in your body. If it fades while you're watching it, being present for it, then find the next one. And as you do this, stay present with feeling your physical experience.

Notice if there is any tendency to commentary, judgment, meaning-making. To the best of your ability, separate the two out, put aside the commentary and let yourself feel more fully, sense more fully, the sensation in your body. Notice what might happen to it as you remain present with it. Feel the strongest sensation in your body from beneath, from the top, the front, the back. Feel it and sense it almost like you can do it from different directions. Not so much watching it with the mind as sensing it from within the body. Let it come into awareness.

For the last minute of the sitting come back again to your breathing and then stay with the expression of your breathing. To end the meditation it can be helpful to take a few long, slow, deep breaths to fully reconnect with your body. When you feel ready you can open your eyes.