

Deep Breathing

GUIDED MEDITATION SCRIPT

Date / Time:

So far today, have you brought kind awareness to your:

Thoughts? Heart? Body? None

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to:

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



When was the last time you really thought about your breath?

Are you aware of how the way that you breathe holds power?

This meditation focuses on deep breathing, exploring the power deep breathing holds to impact our nervous system.

Though the breath functions without us needing to effort, you can guide the breath pro-actively to impact your 'involuntary nervous system', also known as your 'autonomic nervous system'.

There are three divisions to the autonomic system – two of which are the sympathetic nervous system and the parasympathetic nervous system.

The sympathetic nervous system governs our 'fight or flight' response, while the parasympathetic nervous system is known as our 'rest and digest' system.

When the sympathetic nervous system is dominant, your breathing is fast, short and shallow.

When this system is on overdrive, it can lead to chronic stress and anxiety.

On the other hand, when the parasympathetic nervous system is activated, you breathe slower, deeper and longer.

This system calms and soothes us, bringing balance when we feel stressed out.

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Through specific breathing practices, such as deep breathing, you can decrease the sympathetic nervous system and increase the parasympathetic nervous system.

This shift can help to restore your sense of calm and presence.

The goal in most breathwork practices is to change certain qualities of your breath – and the goal of this exercise is to focus on making your breath deeper, longer, quieter and slower, as much as is comfortable.

The more often you do this, the more often you put the parasympathetic nervous system in the driver seat, which calms the sympathetic nervous system.

So, let's try a short practice:

Begin by coming to a comfortable resting position. If you are new to deep breathing, it might be easiest to rest on your back.

You can close your eyes or keep them open, and begin by taking a few breaths at an effortless depth and pace.

(Pause for ~15 seconds)

Place your hands on your belly now, and as you breathe, see if you can guide your breath to move as deep as possible – so long as it feels comfortable for you.

(Pause for ~15 seconds)

Breathe with an intention to make your breath deeper, longer, quieter, and slower.

(Pause for ~15 seconds)

You do not have to force your breath. Let this exploration be gentle and gradual if you are new to it.

(Pause for ~5 seconds)

Continue to breathe deeply for a few more breath cycles.

(Pause for ~15 seconds)

Excellent. Well done.

You can resume your natural way of breathing.

(Pause for ~5 seconds)

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So, to recap:

You can use specific techniques of breathing to decrease the sympathetic nervous system and increase the parasympathetic nervous system.

In doing so, you soothe the 'fight or flight' response and bring more rest and tranquility to both body and mind.

And again: the more often you do this, the more often you put the parasympathetic nervous system in the driver seat, calming the sympathetic nervous system in the process.

I hope this practice has been useful for you.

Thank you for your mindfulness!

