

Mindfulness Meditation Scripts with Jai Prem Yoga

Cascading Breath

Begin by finding a comfortable seated position. This may be sitting on the floor with your hips elevated slightly, on the edge of a blanket, pillow, block, or bolster. Or you feel more comfortable sitting on the edge of a chair. Wherever you are, allow the spine to be erect. Your hands may rest either on your thighs, palms facing up or down, or perhaps allow them to lie gently on your lap. Wherever you are, find comfort in your seat.

Once you find a comfortable seated position, invite your eyes close. Or if you would prefer, gaze softly off the tip of your nose, in such a way that you are gazing, but not seeing.

Now begin to draw your awareness to your breath. For the next few moments, allow your breath to naturally flow in and out of your nose. Or if is uncomfortable breathing through your nose, breath in through your nose and out through your mouth, or simply in and out of your mouth. Begin to get curious about the quality of your breath. Does it feel short or long? Soft or jagged? Smooth? Rigid? Shallow or deep? Without judgment, simply draw your awareness to your experience of breathing, in this moment.

If and when thoughts begin to filter into the mind, acknowledge the thought, and let it go with the exhale, as you draw your awareness back to the breath. Just as persistent as your thoughts may be, the continual practice of bringing your awareness back to your breath will strengthen over time and practice as well.

Begin to bring your awareness to the sensations of your breath in your body. Are you aware of the rise and fall of your abdomen, or the expansion of your rib cage with your breath, or the rise and fall of your chest, or even the area at the tip of the nose where the air enters and exits through the nostrils? Wherever feels most present, bring your awareness to your experience of the breath in the body in this moment. What is that relationship of the breath in the body like for you in this moment? There is no one right or wrong way to experience the breath in the body. How can you be present and aware of your experiences in the here and now?

As you draw your attention to the sensations of the breath in the body, invite the breath to create a cyclical rhythm within the body. As you inhale feel, the breath move up the front of the body, from the pelvis to the crown. And as you exhale feel the breath cascade down the back of the body, from the crown to the sacrum. As you inhale the breath up the front of the body, pelvis to the crown. And as you exhale feel the breath flow down the back of the body, releasing any tension or tightness that may be held in the shoulders or upper back. Continue with this rhythm of breathing for three more breaths at your own pace... As you inhale up the front of the body, and exhale down the back of the body.

After your third exhale, reverse that rhythm of breath, and inhale up the back of the body from sacrum to crown, and exhale feel the breath cascade down the front of the body from crown to pelvis. Inhale up the back of the body, sacrum to crown, and exhale down the front of the body, crown to pelvis. Continue this rhythm for three more breaths at your own pace...

After your third exhale, continue with the rhythm of cascading breath that feels most comfortable for you. Whether that is inhaling up the front of the body or exhaling down the front of the body, check in with your experience as to what felt most comfortable. Settle into the cascading breath that feels most soothing and relaxing for you in this moment. Leaving judgment out of the practice, trust in your body's wisdom of this experience. Remember, there is no one right or wrong way to be breathing...

After a few more moments of breathing in this manner, let go of the effort of the cascading breath, and allow your breath to return to a natural rhythm. Feeling the sensations of the breath as the air enters and exits your body. Without judgment, begin to note your experiences in the breath, in the body, and in the mind. When you feel ready, begin to invite gentle movement in the fingers and toes. In your own time, allow the eyes to blink open as you return to the room. Taking a moment to offer gratitude for yourself for taking these mindful minutes to practice breathing.