



Breathing Meditation

Sit quietly, close your eyes and turn your attention to your breathing.

Become aware of each exhalation and each inhalation.

Notice how the air feels as it enters your nostrils, fills your lungs and leaves again.

Fill your lungs slowly, bottom to top, inhaling as though every cell in your body is breathing. Inhale until you feel you can inhale no more. Then, exhale as slowly as you inhaled.

If your attention wanders, bring it gently back. If what draws your attention away is insistent, store it in memory, promise yourself you'll think about it later and gently return your attention to your inhalations and exhalations.

You may find yourself becoming aware of your own heartbeat and pulse

You may become aware of the points in your body where you feel tension and discomfort.

Imagine as you inhale that your breath travels directly to those areas and eases the discomfort.

Now, turn your attention away from the physical self and inward toward the still center of your being. Let it draw you to it.

Let all else float away.

Once you have found your core self, rest there for a few moments.

(Allow meditators to meditate for several minutes. Take the opportunity to meditate yourself.)

Now, gently bring your attention back to your breath, the physical sensations of breathing.

Pay attention to your body and the sounds in the room.

Move, stretch and open your eyes.



External Object Meditation

Place your meditation object where you can see it easily. You can even hold it in your hand.

Sit quietly, close your eyes and turn your attention to your breathing.

Become aware of each exhalation and each inhalation.

Notice how the air feels as it enters your nostrils, fills your lungs and leaves again.

Fill your lungs slowly, bottom to top, inhaling as though every cell in your body is breathing. Inhale until you feel you can inhale no more. Then, exhale as slowly as you inhaled.

If your attention wanders, bring it gently back.

As you become calm and centered, focus your attention on your object.

Breathe deeply and evenly with your gaze on your object.

Notice its colors, its texture, its personality.

Imagine that you love this thing.

If you wish, you can close your eyes as you feel your heart reach out to embrace the object, to caress it.

Imagine the object loves you in return.

Feel it become part of you. You may realize that it always has been.

For a few moments allow yourself and the object to become one.

(Allow meditators to meditate for several minutes. Take the opportunity to meditate yourself.)

Now, gently bring your attention back to your breath, the physical sensations of breathing.

Pay attention to your body and the sounds in the room.

Move, stretch and open your eyes.



Movement Meditation

Stand quietly, close your eyes and turn your attention to your breathing.

Become aware of each exhalation and each inhalation.

Notice how the air feels as it enters your nostrils, fills your lungs and leaves again.

Fill your lungs slowly, bottom to top, inhaling as though every cell in your body is breathing. Inhale until you feel you can inhale no more. Then, exhale as slowly as you inhaled.

If your attention wanders, bring it gently back.

Begin to listen to the music.

Listen until you feel that some part of your body wants to move.

Pay attention to how your body wants to move and follow that impulse.

If nothing else, allow your body to sway gently.

Perhaps a hand might lift in a graceful arc.

When you are ready to move your feet, open your eyes and let the music move you.

For a few moments, feel the impulse to move that originates in your body—and let your body respond.

(Allow meditators to meditate for several minutes. Take the opportunity to meditate yourself.)

When you become tired, stop and just listen to the music, paying attention to how you feel and how your body feels.

Now, gently bring your attention back to your breath, the physical sensations of breathing.

Move, stretch and open your eyes.



Sensual Awareness Meditation

Sit quietly, close your eyes and turn your attention to your breathing.

Become aware of each exhalation and each inhalation.

Notice how the air feels as it enters your nostrils, fills your lungs and leaves again.

Fill your lungs slowly, bottom to top, inhaling as though every cell in your body is breathing. Inhale until you feel you can inhale no more. Then, exhale as slowly as you inhaled.

As you inhale, follow your breath all the way in to the point where it turns and you begin to exhale.

As you exhale, follow the breath all the way out to the point where it turns and you begin to inhale again.

Be mindful of this rhythm: inhale, turn, exhale, turn until you feel centered and at peace.

Expand your awareness to include the sounds your breath makes.

Listen to the sounds around you. Allow them all to be equally important.

Expand your awareness further to include touch. Feel your clothing against your skin? The texture of fabric beneath your hands or the weight of your hair on your head.

Be aware of every sensation. Let each one be equal in importance with every other and with all the sounds you hear.

Open your awareness to include the other senses one at a time. Smell everything.

Taste everything.

As you open your eyes, keep them still with a soft focus. Be aware of everything in your field of vision equally.

Allow yourself to be with all your senses fully extended.

If any one thing draws your attention, consciously let go of it and gently stretch out your consciousness once more to embrace everything within your perception.

(Allow meditators to meditate for several minutes. Take the opportunity to meditate yourself.)

Focus on the weight of your body in your chair.

Bring your attention back to a sharp focus on what is before your eyes.

Move and stretch.

© 2003 Jinjer Stanton



Zen Walking Meditation

Sit quietly, close your eyes and turn your attention to your breathing.

Become aware of each exhalation and each inhalation.

Notice how the air feels as it enters your nostrils, fills your lungs and leaves again.

Fill your lungs slowly, bottom to top, inhaling as though every cell in your body is breathing. Inhale until you feel you can inhale no more. Then, exhale as slowly as you inhaled.

Take several deep full breaths like this. *(Allow meditators a few moments to do this, focusing on your own breathing.)*

Now, as I walk past you and touch your shoulder, open your eyes, stand and follow. Stay a step or two behind the person in front of you and pay attention to walking. If it helps you can match your breathing to the steps you take.

(Walk slowly past the meditators. Inhale as you take a step and exhale for the next step. Touch each person. Keep your pace slow, but steady. Lead the meditators on a circuit that brings everyone back within 10 minutes [at least here]. When you get back to the starting point:)

As you come back to your seat, sit down, close your eyes and return your attention to your breath.

(Let them sit still for a moment before continuing.)

Gently bring your attention back to the weight of your body in your chair, the sounds in the room.

Move, stretch and open your eyes.