

20 Minute Meditation

What follows is a 20-minute body scan, which is a process of drawing your attention to different body parts to assist you in achieving a state of relaxation and meditative peace. This process will involve me directing you with breath, directing you to pay attention to different body parts, and then I will lead you in some guided imagery around savoring some positive experiences that you've had in your life. I would encourage you to consider doing this exercise lying down on your back in what's known as the shavasana position of yoga. Or if you're not familiar with that posture, just lie on your back with your palms up in a comfortable posture where you feel at ease and relaxed. We will pay attention to various body parts and breath in a systematic way to assist us in being more at ease and in touch with phenomena that are arising in the body and mind. This process can be used for a 20-minute revitalization relaxation exercise it also can be used to assist you in going to sleep or taking a nap. So let us begin.

We'll start by taking three nice, replenishing breaths. Go ahead and do that now. If you notice you are having any difficulty in any part of your body, you can bring that to your awareness now and try to notice the area that you might be having trouble with. If it's pain or tension or irritation or jitteriness, whatever it might be, give that area a little attention at this moment, and we will come back to it through the body scan. But try to just offer that area some breath, meaning breathing into the area that is troubling you, as if you could send energy, or revitalization, or healing to that area of the body that's causing some distress. Each breath has the potential to help us feel more at ease, more relaxed, and revitalized, so I will now direct your consciousness to the various parts of the body.

We will start with your left hand, the back of your hand, the palm of your hand, the left thumb, the left index finger, the left middle finger, the left ring finger, and the left little finger, left wrist, left forearm, left elbow, left upper arm, left shoulder, left chest, left abdomen, left waist. Moving down into the left upper leg to the left knee, the left calf and shin area, the left ankle. Moving down into the left foot, the sole of the foot, the top of the foot, the left big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, and fifth toe. Redirecting our attention now to the right side of the body, the right hand, the back of the hand, the palm of the hand, the right thumb, the right index finger, the right middle finger, the right ring finger, and the right pinky. Moving attention to the right wrist, the right forearm, the right elbow. Moving up to the right upper arm, to the right shoulder, the right chest, the right waist, the right hip area, the right upper leg, the right knee, the right calf and shin, the right ankle, the right foot, the top of the foot, the sole of the foot, the right toe, big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, and fifth toe. Will now focus on the back of the body, the left shoulder blade, the right shoulder blade, the spine, the left buttock, and the right buttock. Moving now to the front of the body,

starting with our scalp. Focusing on the scalp, the forehead, the area just above the eyebrows. Focusing on the eyebrows, the eyelids, the eyeballs, the bridge of the nose, down to the tip of the nose, to the nostrils. Focusing on our cheeks and the upper lips. Hello, our lips, the teeth, the tongue, the mouth, the throat, your chin, your entire face, so that your entire face is wonderful and deeply relaxed. So that your entire body is wonderful and deeply relaxed, every breath taking you deeper and deeper into a profound sense of deep meditative peace and relaxation, noticing each inhalation and each exhalation. Breathing your own authentic healing and cleansing breath. Resting and awareness with each breath, knowing that each breath takes you deeper and deeper into this profound state of meditative peace and relaxation.

I will now direct your attention again to the left hand, the back of the hand, the palm of the hand, the left thumb, the left index finger, the left middle finger, the left ring finger and the left little finger, up through the left wrist, the left forearm, the left elbow and the left upper arm, the left shoulder, the left chest region, the left waist, the left hip down through the left upper leg, down through the left knee and the left calf and shin, and down into the left ankle and into the left foot, into the top of the foot, the sole of the foot. That side of the body is wonderfully and completely relaxed. We now move into the right side of the body focusing on the right hand, the back of the hand, the palm of the hand, the right thumb, the index finger, the middle finger, the ring finger, the little finger, the right wrist, the right forearm, the right elbow, the right upper arm, the right shoulder, the right chest, the right waist, the right hip area, the right upper leg, the right knee, the right lower leg, the right ankle, the right foot, the sole of the foot, the top of the foot, the right big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, and fifth toe, the back of the body, the left shoulder blade, the right shoulder blade, the spine, the left buttock, the right buttock, the front of the body, starting with the scalp. Relaxing the forehead, relaxing the eyebrows and the eye lids and the eyeballs, relaxing the cheek right underneath the eyes, both cheeks, relaxing the bridge of the nose down to the tip of the nose to your nostrils relaxing the upper lip the lower lip, relaxing your jaw muscles, relaxing all the muscles in your face, relaxing your chin, your teeth, your tongue, your throat, your swallow mechanism so the entire face the entire head is completely and wonderfully relaxed. Relaxing the left pectoral region, the right pectoral region, the left abdominals, the right abdominals, relaxing the entire front of the body so that with every breath we feel more and more relaxed, more at ease, more and more resting in the comfort of our own bodies with our healing breath, our relaxing breath, our healing breath, so that every bit of bone and connective tissue, all of our vertebrae, all of our blood, all of our muscles, all of our ligaments, every bit of protoplasm, within the body is completely and wonderfully and completely relaxed and is deep and profound state of meditative peace and ease, resting in the moment with each breath. So that every cell, every bit of tissue, every organ, every part of your body, every subcellular bit of material and

activity, every nuclei I have, every cell, all of the fine structures within the nuclei of every cell, your mitochondria, your DNA, your RNA, all of the wonderful material within us, is aligned with this healing and comfort that comes with the wisdom and natural body wisdom of each breath, taking you deeper and deeper into a profound state of meditative peace and ease and healing.

Allow yourself to be aware of the breath, for each breath is like riding a wave of the greatest healing ocean with the gentle, calming, rhythmic motion of waves rising and falling, rising and falling, going deeper and deeper into this profound state of meditative peace, relaxation, and comfort. Allowing yourself a break. Allowing yourself to be at ease if thoughts, or worries, or difficult issues arise, we let them go by just like a bird flying by. We let them go by like a car going by or a cloud going by. You're becoming an expert at self-observation. You're becoming an expert at seeing the transparent, impermanent attitude, impermanent quality of thoughts, and feelings, and sensations riding the crest of the wave of each moment with your body, completely and wonderfully and totally relaxed, completely at ease, completely comforted by the wisdom and the knowledge that you have disability within you. You have this innate ability to be well, to be at ease, to be addressed, no matter what may arise, no matter what may surface in your consciousness. Let's rest in that awareness for a few moments. So as we rest in this awareness, we use every breath to take us deeper and deeper into the state of sublime awareness, of sublime mindfulness, and accepting, and noticing we know that the mind has a little bit of a difficult time to savor and record positive experiences. The mind has been set up to have dangerous and frightening experiences have precedence over pleasant calming experiences. This was an evolutionary device to keep us safe so that if we were frightened, worried, or concerned, the sympathetic nervous system would put us into arousal. Are you going to fight or flight? And we would be safe. We don't have as powerful of a recording mechanism for calming, peaceful, wonderful experiences and one of the new findings from the new positive psychology and neuroscience is that we can begin to build new neural connections in the brain in which we savor experiences in our history in which we felt a sense of calmness, belonging, comfort, safety, love, and happiness. So, while you are in this relaxed state, I'd like to ask you to recall a time when you felt safe, comforted, belonging, loved, and at ease. And I want you to bring as many sensory amplifications of this as you can. If you can remember who you were with, where you were, what were the sounds, feelings, visual cues of the situation. Try to bring it as alive as you can, enriching and enhancing the experience as much as you can, and with every breath. As you savor this positive experience, you can absorb it into your consciousness. You can help your brain make new neural connections, new pathways, so we have greater access and more handles to these positive experiences in our life, so we can use our mind to begin changing our own neurochemistry so that we have greater ease in accessing and reliving some of these positive experiences in our

history. And as we have greater access to these states, lastly, we can learn from this experience, and you'll be able to link this positive saving to times in your life that might be a little more difficult or a little stressful, you'll have your own little memory of this positive time when you are safe, accepted, peaceful, and loved. The acronym, by the way, for this is heal:

- **Have** the experience, and
- **Enrich and enhance** the experience,
- **Absorb** the experience, and
- **Learn** to link this to other times in your life.

Going back to the breath, focusing on the breath, each inhalation and each exhalation. For those of you that are wanting to use this exercise as an induction to have some deep replenishing sleep, go ahead and just let yourself drift off into a pleasant deep and replenishing sleep. For those of you that wish to now come back to your daily life, let's gently bring our attention back. Let's wiggle our toes a little bit, move your fingers around a little bit, begin becoming more and more aware, awake, and alive. Feeling relaxed, feeling refreshed, feeling at peace, more and more aware, awake, and alive, and you can open your eyes. Thank you.