



Caregiver Support Line – Relaxation Activity

Theme: Body Scan Meditation: Awareness and Healing of the Physical Body

The body scan meditation invites your attention to the experience of your physical body in the present moment. Practicing this meditation provides an opportunity to improve your awareness of your physical sensation as well as alerting you to the tension and stresses your body is carrying. It provides an opportunity to release the tension your body is holding and increases relaxation. A regular practice of this meditation can have a positive impact both on your physical and mental wellbeing in the present and can improve your ability to manage stress in the future.

This meditation is a chance to allow yourself to let go of the past or the future, to tune into the present experience, the sensations in your body, with an attitude of kindness and care. You may find your mind distracted or wandering away from attention to your body, this is natural, and not a sign that you are doing something wrong. Simply observe these thoughts and emotions and return your attention to the rise and fall of your breath and your focus on the body. If there is pain, tension or discomfort that you observe, meet it with compassion and care.

To begin lay down on a bed, a mat, or blanket on the floor. You may wish to place a pillow or towel under your knees or head for support. Whatever feels comfortable for you.

Place your arms at your sides, palms open to the sky.

Let your feet relax and fall away.

This is a time just for you, where you can fall away from the expectations and pressures, let go of the judgements and worries, and provide your body with a few moments of healing attention.

To begin take a deep cleansing breath into your belly, aware of your belly rising, your ribs expanding, then exhale.

Again, take a deep cleansing breath and exhale.

With each cleansing breath feel your body sink further into relaxing more deeply.



Allow your breath to flow like a wave, there is no need to control it, just allow it to flow naturally, aware of its ability to calm you as you ride the rhythm of this natural wave.

Observe your body. Observe any sensations such as tingling, tension, heaviness, temperature or pain.

Attend to the experience of your whole body while you ride the wave of each breath in and out.

Observe.

Notice the weight of your body coming into contact with the surface in which you are resting.

Notice the feel of your heels and hips, shoulders and head, against the surface.

With each breath in and out, allow your body to relax into the surface.

Feel the weight, pressure, heat and vibrations that your body offers.

Scan your whole body for any pain or discomfort; notice where it resides.

Acknowledge this discomfort offering it compassion and kindness.

As you bring an attitude of acceptance of what is right now, your resistance will give in and the discomfort will soften.

Breathe into the discomfort and with each exhale release its hold on you.

Follow the natural flow of your breath in and out.

We will move from attending to your whole body and focus now on bringing attention to separate parts of your body, beginning with your head, moving down to your feet.

You may find that your mind loses focus or begins to wander. Simply notice this and gently return to the part of the body that is being attended to.

Use your breath, in and out, as an anchor to the present moment.



Draw your attention to the crown of your head.

Breathe into the sensation of your head and notice the weight and vibrations.

Notice your eyes, allow your eyes to come to rest. With each breath in and out your lids soften and become heavy.

Notice your ears and allow the sound to drift from the center of your attention.

Feel the air of your breath as it moves through your nose.

As you breathe in and out, observe your jaw, its tightness, or clenching, and allow your exhale to relax and soften your jaw.

Follow your head down to the neck, breathing into any tension or tightness your neck carries.

Your head is at rest and your neck can relax and let go.

Now, breathe into your shoulders allowing any tightness or strain to relax and shoulders fall.

Let go of the burdens you carry and soften into the place in which you are resting.

Breathe in and release.

With each exhale fall deeper into harmony with your body.

Breathe in allowing oxygen to flow into your arms to the tips of your fingers.

Exhale slowly allowing the weight of your arms and hands to sink deeper into where you are resting.

Notice if there is tightness or tension in your arms.

Feel the sensations in your arms down through the tips of each finger.



Breathe in. As you exhale releasing the tension or turmoil to flow out your fingertips.

Your hands are soft and open.

Notice your chest and your abdomen as it rises and falls with every breath.

Is there sadness or strife that is held in your chest?

Breathe into your sadness and strife.

Is there tension or anxiety bound up in your belly?

Breathe into your tension and anxiety.

Wash over any distress with a cleansing breath in.

Release the hold of distress with each exhale.

In and out your breath is a healing river.

Now bring your attention to your hips and lower back.

Notice the sensation of their weight and pressure.

Notice any tension or tightness in your back and hips.

Breathe in and out allowing your hips to rest, feeling their weight sink into the surface of where you are laying.

Breathe into the muscles in your back and exhale any tension they hold.

Allow your lower back to soften and relax.

Move from your relaxed hips and back to your legs.

Focus on your upper thighs. Breathe into your legs then exhale and rest your thighs.



Notice the lower calves.

Is there tightness or tension?

Breathe into it and exhale.

With each breath, send refreshing energy down into your calves to the tips of your toes.

Exhale; releasing the strain and fatigue in your calves, ankles, and feet.

The toes tingle with this new energy and are refreshed.

Now return to observing with tenderness your whole body softened by the power of your breath.

You are relaxed by your kind attention and the healing waves of your breath.

Bring your awareness to this place of quiet, relaxing, peace.

Your body is restored to greater wholeness and connection.

Your body has been comforted and energized by the rejuvenating power of being present in this moment as you follow the lifegiving waves of your breath.

Notice this place of rest and carry it forward with you.

Gently guide your attention back to your surroundings. Slowly bring movement back into your body. Open your eyes, and wiggle your fingers and toes.

Remember this experience of rest and rejuvenation.

It is always available to you by simply bringing your kind attention back to the present moment, while allowing your breath to calm and heal you.