



Winter Practice

Guided Meditation

Becoming more mindful, one breath at a time

Mindfully Greta

Winter Practice

Welcome to this guided meditation practice. When the season of winter arrives, we may find ourselves indoors more often. The days are darker. Shorter. Colder. We are less exposed to sunlight. And alongside the darker months, we are also constantly working. Struggling to find time to relax. And to truly nourish our bodies and our minds. And so the winter can make it difficult for us to remain positive. It can make us more prone to experiencing restlessness, anxiety, and stress. The goal of this meditation is to help to put a more positive outlook on the more undesired parts of our situation. I will guide you to overcome them through both acceptance and simple solutions.

So settle yourself into a nice and comfortable position. You may sit on a chair, a cushion, or the floor. Whichever way feels most comfortable for you. Just find a posture that is relaxed yet alert. And when you are ready, gently close your eyes.

Take a nice, relaxing breath in through the nose ... and long, slow breath out through the mouth.

Again, a nice, long deep breath in through the nose ... and a slow, gradual breath out through the mouth. Nice and steady.

One last time, a long, deep breath in ... and a slow, refreshing breath out. Empty your lungs. Release the air fully. Relax.

Let go of the breath now and allow it to flow as effortlessly as possible. Allow the breath to be comfortable here. Notice the body and the space you are in. Make any observations of how you are feeling. Notice the temperature in the room, whether it is light or dark. As you continue to observe, allow your breath to settle into a comfortable breathing pattern.

On your next in-breath, repeat the following phrases, *breathing in, I feel my breath*. On your out-breath, repeat, *breathing out, I relax*.

Take a moment now to gently repeat these phrases to yourself as you continue to take gentle breaths.

Breathing in, I feel my breath.

Breathing out, I relax.

Breathing in, I feel my breath.

Breathing out, I relax.

As you fall deeper into your relaxation, remember that any small distraction or minor discomfort is simply an observation. Whenever you feel like your mind has strayed, you can always return your attention back to your breath, back to the present moment.

Now, sitting so calmly and comfortably, allow yourself to imagine a perfect place. This place can be real, or it can be imaginary. Take a moment to bring this perfect place into your mind. See what is there. Maybe it's a warm, sunny beach. With the calming sound of the waves. The soft sand under your feet. Or maybe you are walking along a forest path. The sun is shining on your face through the trees overhead. Birds are singing their sweet melodies. And you can smell the fresh scent of pine and wildflowers. Wherever you may take yourself, allow yourself to stay there for a moment. Breathing gently and calmly.

As you continue to take relaxing breaths, imagine yourself in this beautiful and peaceful place as we will do a countdown. Repeat after me, in whatever way you wish. Either out loud or in your mind. We will count down from five to one.

So when you are ready,

Five; a perfect, peaceful place.

Four; bright and beautiful.

Three; calming your body and mind.

Two; enjoying this present moment.

One; peaceful and serene.

Continue to breathe calmly. Gently, allow us to repeat this countdown one more time. When you are ready.

Five; a perfect, peaceful place.

Four; bright and beautiful.

Three; calming your body and mind.

Two; enjoying this present moment.

One; peaceful and serene.

Know that you can always return to your perfect place whenever you wish. Whenever you ground yourself to the present moment and tap into the part of you that is always so peaceful and calm. Recognise that we may not always have the perfect surroundings, but our mind is a powerful tool that can help us return to a place that allows us to embrace our most pleasant thoughts. To feel more optimistic. And to experience more calm.

As this practice draws to an end, you may return to your beautiful and peaceful place. You can stay there for as long as you wish, or you may return to full wakefulness. Return to your physical body. And begin to stretch gently. Wiggle your toes and your fingers. Move your head from side to side. Shrug your shoulders gently. And when you are ready, open your eyes.