**Guided Meditation: Releasing Stress**

Find a position for your body in which you feel deeply relaxed and at ease.

Let your eyes gently close and for a few moments just focus on your breathing, noticing the beginning of each breath and the end of each breath.

Follow each out-breath to its very end, sensing it dissolving into space.

Let yourself rest in that momentary pause between the end of one breath and the beginning of another.

Expand your attention and listen to what is happening in your body and mind in that moment.

Notice how many of your thoughts are preoccupied with events, people, meetings, and experiences that are not actually present in that moment. Sense this without judgment or resistance and see whether it is possible for you to gently release those thoughts and return to an awareness of breathing.

Notice the waves of agitation, tension, or anxiety that arise with the thoughts of the past and future and how they may be impacting your body.

Come back once more to an awareness of your breathing.

Resting in calmness and ease, consciously invite into your mind an event, person, or experience that you have been preoccupied with or obsessing about.

Surround that thought with a mindful attention. Look at it directly. Can you see it as just a thought, an event in the mind?

Sense how that event in your mind is co-existing in this moment with countless other events- sounds, sensations in your body- and how they are all arising and passing together.

Move your attention between the thought, the sounds, and the bodily sensations t hat are present in this moment.

Notice how they all appear, last for a time, and then begin to fade or turn into something else.

Sense the natural rhythm of this arising and passing.

Notice how when any of these events are surrounded by aversion, agitation, or resistance, their lifespan is extended. When the surrounding reactions are released, the events find their place again in the natural rhythm of arising and passing.

Attend mindfully not only to the events that appear in your mind and body, but also to those subtle pauses and places of stillness between events.

Just as you are able to notice the momentary pause between an out-breath and the next in-breath, sense what is present after the fading away of a sound, a thought, or a bodily sensation.

Allow yourself to rest in the pauses and sense the possibility of resting in all the events that arise in your mind and body.

When you are ready, let your eyes open and move out of the posture.