

Week One: Awareness of Breath and Body (8 minutes)

00:00 Welcome to this awareness of breath and body meditation. When practicing this meditation and any others throughout this program, please find a quiet place and time that works best for you to practice free from distractions and interruptions, remembering also to always care for yourself including easing up on a meditation practice or discontinuing it altogether if it ever feels too challenging for you, for whatever reason. And so now, beginning this meditation by simply settling into a comfortable seated position, one that for you reflects a sense of comfort in the body and a wakeful kind attentiveness, choosing to either gently close your eyes or keeping your eyes open with a soft fixed gaze, allowing your hands to rest comfortably wherever they will, feeling your feet in contact with the floor, perhaps aware of the weight of the body being held and supported by the chair, or maybe a sense of coolness or warmth in the room you're sitting in.

01:40: And now, when you're ready, if you'd like, taking in two or three deeper, fuller breaths. As you breathe in, inviting ease, and as you breathe out, allowing the out-breath to fully release. With each out-breath, as best you can, letting go of what's already been and is yet to come and allowing your attention to simply be here now. Letting go of the deeper fuller breaths now and becoming aware of the natural rhythmic quality of the breath. The body knows just how to breathe. So there is no need to control the breath or to manipulate it in any way. There is no right or wrong way to breathe while doing a mindfulness practice. The key is to simply notice how it actually is moment by moment.

03:10: So simply observing now with a kind attentiveness the felt sensations of the body breathing, the expansive feel of the breath as it enters the body, and the natural release of the out-breath. As if riding the waves of the body breathing, allowing your attention to be gently with each in-breath and each out-breath. When you notice that your attention has wandered away from the breath, which it inevitably will, as the mind is inclined to wander, simply become aware of this. And as best you can without feeding the thought or pushing it away or judging the fact that your attention has wandered, with kindness and care, simply escort your attention back to the breath. Noticing if the breath is now an in-breath or an out-breath and beginning again, fresh and new. Nothing has been lost. You've gained because you've come home again to just this breath.

04:54: Practicing now in silence, just this breath, just this moment, just as it is, with kindness and care. And now, when you're ready, allowing this focused awareness on your breath to recede a bit into the background. And enlarging your field of awareness to include the body as a whole sitting here now, aware perhaps of the sensations of your back resting against the back side of the chair, or the feel of your feet resting on the floor. Allowing your awareness to gently be with the felt sense of the body as a whole sitting here, now, simply being, simply breathing.

06:38 Taking a moment now to notice the overall quality and condition of the body, mind, and heart. As we bring this guided meditation to a conclusion, honoring your practice, honoring your good self-care. When you're ready, slowly move your fingers and toes, and if your eyes have been closed, gently opening them now. Perhaps taking a moment to look around the room you're sitting in, and when you're ready, slowly resuming

your daily activities. Remember, that at any time throughout the day, you can mindfully return to the breath. It's always there for you as a constant support and a mindful companion