

SPEAKER: Coming in to stillness, just let your attention be right here. Let your senses be awake so that you can move from distraction or fragmentation to noticing what's right here. Sense the posture of your body sitting in a way that allows the attention to settle. The spine is upright and alert, but not rigid. Let the hands rest in your lap. Or on your thighs, whatever's comfortable for you.

Allow the eyes to close. Or to gaze gently downward a few feet in front of you. Scan the body to see if there's any residual contraction or holding going on. And just allow those places to loosen. Perhaps softening the flesh around the eyes. Allowing the brow to be smooth. Letting the jaw unhinge, creating a little space between the upper and the lower teeth.

Bring a soft attention to the muscles of the neck and the shoulders. And let the hands rest in an effortless way. The palms soft, full of ease. Allow the heart region to open. And then see if you can receive the next breath in a softened belly.

And you might bring your attention now to the breath in the body. Just noticing where it's most predominant for you. Maybe it's the intake of air at the nostrils. The slightly warmer exhalation of air. Or perhaps you're aware of the breath in the back of the throat. Or the movement of the rib cage with each in breath and each out breath.

Noticing the rise and fall of the belly with each breath. Seeing how the breath happens by itself. It requires no conscious volition on our part. Breath as the axis of attention. It's the nature of the mind to wander off from the attention on the breath.

So if you notice that's happened to you, just note where the mind has gone to thinking, planning, remembering, or commentary. And pause and re-relax the body. Softening the face. Letting the jaw unhinge. And the tongue rest in the mouth. And the shoulders softening. And the pelvic area relaxing. And the feet at ease.

And gently escort your attention back to the breath. And the body sitting here breathing. You might intentionally cultivate an attitude of curiosity about the breath. No two breaths exactly alike. Noticing the pauses between the in breath and the out breath. And the pause between the out breath and the next in breath.

And allowing the attention to just rest with this stillness and this movement of the breath. And any time you notice that the mind has gone off to a trance of thinking, to just pause and know that in that moment you have awakened from this trance of thinking and just feeling the difference between being lost in a story or a train of thought and waking up to this moment.

And scan the body to see if any tightness has crept in with the thinking. Not judging it in any way, but just noticing. And perhaps adjusting the posture to one of upright alertness and ease. And with kindness, escorting the attention directly back to the breath. This breath. And this one.

And you can come home in any moment by simply returning to the breath. Bringing mindfulness and clarity into that moment of your life as it's unfolding.

Any time the mind wanders off, so we simply let that be a moment of awakening, pausing, relaxing again. Relaxing the heart. And gently guiding the attention, the awareness back to the body, breathing. Not reacting to any thought or feeling. Just reminding yourself that whatever comes into your awareness is OK. We simply sit with it and breathe with it. Observe it. Staying open and awake. So that it's a continual process of seeing and letting be.

[BELL RINGING]