

## *A Mindfulness Meditation*

*To begin meditation, select a quiet time and place. Be seated on a cushion or chair, taking an erect yet relaxed posture. Let yourself sit upright with the quiet dignity of a king or queen. Close your eyes gently and begin by bringing a full, present attention to whatever you feel within you and around you. Let your mind be spacious and your heart be kind and soft.*

*As you sit, feel the sensations of your body. Then notice what sounds and feelings, thoughts and expectations are present. Allow them all to come and go, to rise and fall like the waves of the ocean. Be aware of the waves and rest seated in the midst of them. Allow yourself to become more and more still.*

*In the center of all these waves, feel your breathing, your life-breath. Let your attention feel the in-and-out breathing wherever you notice it, as coolness or tingling in the nose or throat, as a rising and falling of your chest or abdomen. Relax and softly rest your attention on each breath, feeling the movement in a steady easy way. Let the breath breathe itself in any rhythm, long or short, soft or deep. As you feel each breath, concentrate and settle into its movement. Let all other sounds and sensations, thoughts and feelings continue to come and go like waves in the background.*

*After a few breaths, your attention may be carried away by one of the waves of thoughts or memories, by body sensations or sounds. Whenever you notice you have been carried away for a time, acknowledge the wave that has done so by softly giving it a name such as "planning," "remembering," "itching," "restless." Then let it pass and gently return to the breath. Some waves will take a long time to pass, others will be short. Certain thoughts or feelings will be painful. others will be pleasurable. Whatever they are, let them be.*

*At some sittings you will be able to return to your breath easily. At other times in your meditation you will mostly be aware of body sensations or of plans or thoughts. Either way is fine. No matter what you experience, be aware of it, let it come and go, and rest at ease in the midst of it all. After you have sat for twenty or thirty minutes in this way, open your eyes and look around you before you get up. Then as you move try to allow the same spirit of awareness to go with you into the activities of your day.*

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