

Mindful Breathing Meditation 2

Thich Nhat Hanh

Your breath is the link between your body and your mind. When you are in touch with that link you are in touch with everything in yourself, body and mind. You are then the master of yourself in any situation. You are not carried away by anybody or anything, including your thoughts. Your mind is fully with your body and your whole being. When you start to know that you breathing in or that you are breathing out, you start to know what you are doing – whether you are sitting, standing or walking. So knowing you are breathing is very important. Having that connection with the breath is very important.

Breathing consciously, mindfully, is a very good practice. In our daily life, if we don't know how to breathe mindfully, how to stop thinking, we cannot get in touch with the wonderful things in life like sunshine, rivers, clouds, our family, or our friends.

Mindful breathing is easy to practice and very enjoyable. Practice the following with as silent a breath as possible and with a smile on your lips. Sit in the most comfortable position for you and your body.

Breathing in, I know I am breathing in.

Breathing out, I know I am breathing out.

In/Out x 5

As my in-breath grows deep,

My out-breath grows slow.

Deep/Slow x 5– recognise the quality of your breath. You don't want it to be long and deep, just recognise it as being deeper and slower now.

Breathing in makes me calm,

Breathing out brings me ease.

Calm/Ease x 5 – ease is like space, it is the feeling of being light and free. You cannot be happy unless you are light and free. Ease does not mean take anything too seriously; nothing is more important than your peace.

With the in-breath I smile,

With the out-breath I release.

Smile/Release x 5 – You smile because you don't take anything too seriously. When you smile, all the muscles on your face relax. You are able to see what is important and what is not important. As you release you are able to smile at the unimportant things and let them go. Release is the source of happiness.

Dwelling in the present moment,

I know this is a wonderful moment.

Present moment/Wonderful moment x 5 – You need only to allow yourself to be in the present moment. By being in the present moment you are able to touch happiness.

Peace and happiness are there to some extent, along with pain and suffering. But remember, like watching TV, you are free to select from the channels made available to you. You can choose peace and happiness.