

Sitting Relaxation

Sit in a chair with your spine straight and your back supported. Let your legs extend outward from the chair, with your feet flat on the floor.

Do a simple check-in of your emotional state, your thoughts, and what you are feeling in your body. Just notice what is happening, without judgment or expectation.

Focus on the sensations of your hips and thighs sitting on the chair. Notice the solidity of the chair, and the surface that supports your weight. Feel the soles of your feet, noticing the whole surface where they are in contact with the floor. Give yourself permission to give in to gravity and let the chair and floor support your weight.

Take a few slow, deep breaths, in through the nose and out through the mouth. Focus on the feeling of the breath, the movement of your chest, rib cage, shoulders, the expansion of your lungs. Now imagine that you are breathing through the soles of your feet. As you take breath, imagine that you are bringing warm, healing energy to every cell of your body. As you breathe out, imagine that cleansing your body of tension, pain, and old, left over emotions.

As you breathe in, imagine filling your feet up with this positive, relaxing energy. Notice the warm, pleasant sensations moving into your toes, the balls of your feet, your arches, heels, insteps, and all through your feet. Give yourself the time you need to allow this to happen. Continue to focus on your feet until they feel completely relaxed and comfortable.

Take another breath in, and imagine it filling up your ankles and lower legs. If you can't immediately sense a part of your body, you might try rubbing or kneading it. Continue to move up through the calves and shins. Always take the time needed to work your way through the given part, allowing yourself to sense the shift in sensation. Move gradually into your knees, feeling the warmth move into them, then the backs of your thighs, tops of your thighs ... pelvis ... buttocks ... belly ... the small of your back ... midriff ... middle back ... chest ... upper back. Imagine the warm, relaxing energy moving through all your internal organs. Fill your lungs with the healing energy. As you continue to breathe, let the energy move into your shoulders, and upper arms, into your elbows, lower arms, wrists, palms, and fingers. Allowing the arms to remain relaxed, return to the shoulders and, again, fill them with warm, healing energy. Let the breath take this warm, relaxing energy up into the back of the neck, taking all the time you need to let the relaxing sensations massage and relax the neck muscles, then into the front of the neck, the throat, the tongue, the jaw, cheeks, the muscles around the mouth, nose and eyes, the temples and around and inside the ears, the scalp, the base of the skull. Take all the time you need for the relaxing sensations to fill and warm each part of your body.

Continue to breathe, and imagine your whole body is filled with glowing, golden light. You might imagine you are sitting on an elevator, and that, as it descends, floor by floor, you become more and more deeply relaxed. Just notice the changes you experience in your body as this happens. Appreciate the sense of peacefulness and calm and the pleasant sensations that you feel. Tell yourself that you can remain relaxed throughout the day, and that you will return to the room feeling calm and peaceful, but alert and energetic.

If you can't feel the warmth in parts of your body when you first try this exercise, or if there are parts of your body you can't feel at all, stay with it. You are working on establishing the connections you need to sense what is occurring in your body, which is crucial for healthy physical and emotional function.