

Self-Kindness meditation

We're going to do a short kindness exercise. We'll start with a simple breathing exercise. Then we'll practice relaxing our body and connecting to our hearts. After that, we'll send some care and kindness to our bodies. Don't worry, you can't get it wrong, just having a go is more than enough!

So, make sure you are sitting comfortably on the floor or on a chair. Your back and your neck fairly straight and your shoulders nice and relaxed. If it's comfortable, let a gentle smile rest on your lips and breathe gently through your nose.

Free as a bird deep breathing

You're going to start by taking about 3 or 4 breaths, just a little bit deeper and slower than the breaths you would normally take. As you breathe in, you're going to raise your arms up to the side of your body like the wings of a bird and as you breathe out, you're going to let your arms fall gently. So, breathing in, raise your arms out the side of your body, and breathe out, let your arms drop. In your own time, raising your arms up, and letting them drop. You are like a bird gliding through the sky, smooth and powerful. Let your arms moving in time with your breathing. Gliding gracefully through the air, as free as a bird. Once more in your own time. And now place your hands in your lap and let your breathing return to normal.

Connecting to your heart

Close your eyes if that feel comfortable. Take one hand and place it over your heart. As you breathe in, imagine warm light flowing into your heart. As you breathe out, imagine your heart glowing with golden light, warm and bright. Breathing in, light flows into your heart and breathing out, your heart glows with warm light. Imagine your heart shining like a lantern in your chest, breathing in gently and calmly, breathing out gently and calmly. Feel your hand moving slightly up and down as you breathe. Notice the warmth of your hand on your chest.

Place hands in your lap again.

Sending kindness to body

And now, invite a feeling of kindness into your body. It feels warm and soft like a warm, friendly smile or a lovely hug from somebody you love. You're going to

send kindness to different parts of your body.

Let's start with your hands. First, stretch your fingers wide and stretch all of the muscles in your hands and then let them relax. Let your hands rest gently in your lap. Your hands allow you to do many different things. Perhaps your hands allow you to feel different textures, to draw a picture, build a model or stroke a pet. Send kindness to your hands. Whatever your hands allow you to do, send a warm smile and thank them. Let them relax and feel soft and at ease.

Now, become aware of your arms. Bring your shoulders up to your ears, hold them for a second, and then let them drop. If there is any tightness in your arms, let it go now and feel your arms become soft and completely relaxed. Your arms allow you to do so much – maybe you appreciate your arms for allowing you to throw a ball, to climb a tree, to hug your friends and family. Whatever your arms allow you to do, send a warm smile to your arms and thank them. Imagine them bathed in warm light. Feel them melt into relaxation.

Now, bring your attention to your face. Scrunch up your face, hold it for a second and then let it relax. Your face works so hard every day helping you communicate, showing your emotions, smiling, frowning, taking in all the sights, tastes and scents of the world. Just for now, let your face completely relax. Relax your forehead, relax all the muscles in your cheeks, let the eyelids feel soft, relax your jaw and feel your tongue become a little bit softer. Breathe gently and calmly. Say thank you to your face for all it does.

And now become aware of your lungs. Take a deep breath in, hold it for a second and let it out, breathing naturally again. Your lungs allow you to breathe in fresh air every day. And they give you the power to speak with your friends, to laugh, to sing and to giggle. Say thank you to your lungs for the strength and power they give you. Send them the warm light of kindness and feel them relax.

Let's move on to your heart. You might like to put your hand over your heart again for a moment. Your heart works really hard pumping blood around your body and keeping you healthy. Send kind thoughts and a smile to your heart – say thank you heart for all that it does.

Moving down to your tummy. Tense your tummy for a moment, then relax it. Feel it soften. Send love and kindness to your tummy. Your tummy works hard to digest your food every day providing you with lots of energy to do all the things you love doing. Send a smile to your tummy to say thank you for all that it does. Let it rest completely now.

And finally, put your hands back in your lap. Become aware of your legs and feet. Say thank you to your legs and feet for whatever movement they give you, send them kindness. Allow them to rest and relax. Feeling completely soft and at ease.

Now, let's take a moment to just sit with a sense of peace and kindness. Noticing your gentle calm breathing. You can say quietly to yourself, breathing in, I feel calm, breathing out, I feel relaxed.

Reflecting on kindness

Well done for being kind to yourself today. In a minute, you are going to open your eyes. You can take this feeling of calm and kindness with you as you continue with your day. At any time, you can place your hand over your heart, take some gentle, calm breaths and send kindness to your body allowing it to soften and relax. Doing this is really good for your mind and your body. It is a great way to show yourself some kindness. And if it feels right for you today, you might like to share your kindness with someone you know. This could be as simple as giving them a warm smile, some kind words or asking them how they are. When we are kind to people, we often see them light up like the sun and we find that being kind to other people can help us to feel even brighter too.

When you are ready, begin to open your eyes. Stretch your arms up to the ceiling, down to your toes and sitting up again.