

## New Years Day Tiny Mindfulness Practice

**Please join me at 11 am on New Years Day, wherever you are, so we can practice together in spirit** ( you could also do this at any point in your day :) ).

This should only take about 5 minutes but you can certainly sit longer in quiet meditation if you feel inspired. At the end I have also included a David Whyte poem that has been important to me this past year. I hope you enjoy this, our second, tiny yoga practice.

This is an easy yet powerful way to start your year!

Find a place to sit that is comfortable and supportive, where you can sit upright while staying relaxed. Anywhere you feel focused, like a kitchen chair, a cozy couch, or the floor.

### **WAIT! Before you sit down:**

- Bring your feet a little wider than hip width so you feel solid and relaxed.
- Stand up tall, inhale through your nose. Start with your hands in prayer position and then stretch and straighten your arms over your head, spread out your fingers and toes. Exhale through your nose and slowly bring your arms down to your sides, keeping them stretched out wide, like slowly lowering your wings.
- Repeat this 5 times. Inhale up with an open heart and slowly lower while grounding and relaxing into your feet.
- Think of your fellow yogi's, who may be practicing at this very moment with you and smile for them. How lovely that we share this mindful moment.
- Then create an imagine of a calm space like a bubble surrounding your body.
- Take a moment to close your eyes and bring your attention to the sensations inside your body, let your belly relax so that your breath drops lower and feels more satisfying.
- Next, hang forward and let your head and arms be heavy. Slowly move your neck side to side, sway your arms and let your knees bend as much as you need to. Take 5 deep breaths and let your body move with your breath, let it touch your back, your spine.
- Slowly roll up to standing feeling your weight in your feet and slowly straightening up to balance over your spine.
- Use the support of the earth to root your feet even further down, becoming stronger and heavier, At the same time let your spine, neck, and head become light. Allow your body to elongate between these two movements. Now breathe deeply out to the very edges of your body so that you are full of breath in every corner and when you exhale let all of the cells of your body exhale with you. Like a wave building then receding. This make take a few cycles of breathing to really feel so stay with it for 5 breaths.

## **Finally you can sit down :)**

- When you sit take a moment to feel the chair, feel your back, adjust your position, feel your feet on the ground.
- Smile (even if you don't feel like it, fake it!) Feel the breath at the end of your nose. Relax your forehead and jaw, roll your shoulders forward and then back, let them drop. Wiggle your fingers and toes.
- Remember that we are all smiling together on this wonderful new day!
- Take 5 deep breaths, breathing in relaxation and clarity, breathing out tension and distraction. Do this with intention and try to stay focused. Keep your smile, warm and gentle the whole time.
- Try to imagine a candle flame in the centre of your chest, where your heart is. It is warm and yellow, mesmerizing. Imagine you could gaze inward at that flame with absolute focus, imagine it steady, only flickering slightly. Let it warm your heart and body, let it soften your busy mind. This is your inner light which is alive and bright.
- Let's spend a moment thinking about 2015. What experiences stand out in your memory, all kinds of experiences or events, the people in your life, and the feelings and sensations around those experiences. Some may be pleasant or unpleasant. They are all in the past, they are behind you and they have become part of your story, your history.
- Now imagine these stories fading like a sun setting, slowly becoming dimmer. Take a moment to let 2015 fall from your mind and body. Rest in the quiet you have created. By letting go of 2015 you make space for new experiences. All kinds of experiences.
- Smile again. Although the sun has set on 2015 your inner flame is bright. Open your heart to the coming days and months of 2016. Know that your breath is always here for you and take comfort in your constant companion.
- Create your intention for the new year. I thought I would suggest the intention of compassion but feel free to add to it or change it to better suit you. Compassion can give us a new perspective and allows for joy and sorrow equally. Compassion encourages acceptance of all that it means to be human. We all need compassion because we are complex yet simple, flawed yet perfect, singular yet undeniably connected to everything around us.
- Think about how compassion for yourself would feel. How will that manifest in your life?
- Think about showing compassion for people around you. How will that manifest in your actions and thoughts?
- Let's finish with thinking the sound OM on your exhale. Holding your hands in prayer position, feel your fingers touching, feel the space between your palms, feel your breath under your hands. Relax your shoulders. Repeat this quiet OM with your exhale 5 times while keeping your inner flame calm and steady.
- Here we are! together for a moment of time and practice. Think of your fellow yogi's again and smile for all of us :)

*'I commit to practicing compassion towards myself and people around me'*

*May I be happy*

*May I be free from harm*

*May I be at ease*

*May you be happy*

*May you be free from harm*

*May you be at ease*

## **Enough**

Enough. These few words are enough.

If not these words, this breath.

If not this breath, this sitting here.

This opening to the life

we have refused

again and again

until now.

Until now

*David Whyte, Where Many Rivers Meet*