

Stress Management and Mindfulness

Happiness – INSTRUCTOR SCRIPT

During this practice, we are going to think about being happy! I'm going to be seated, but feel free to get comfortable in whatever position feels best, seated, lying on your bed, on the couch or on the floor. Before we begin, make sure to find a space where there is no distraction – a place where you can focus without interruption.

Let's get intentional as we plan to create some joy and elevate our mood with this Happiness meditation.

Allow your eyes to relax, bringing awareness to the breath and drawing the focus inward. As you begin to notice your breath, draw your breath into your belly, allowing it to fill up and round as you inhale, and to empty as you exhale. If it's comfortable for you today, inhale and exhale through your nose. As you find a comfortable rhythm or cadence, begin to count, inhaling to a 4 count and exhaling to the same 4 count.

Let's start to make a change to the rhythm of the breath. Breathe in for a count of 4, easily holding the breath for a 4 count if it's comfortable, and then exhaling slowly for an 8 count. If at any time this pattern of breathing is uncomfortable, return to your normal, natural cadence.

Repeat this process another time or two, breathing in for a count of 4, retaining or holding the breath for that same 4 count, then breathing out for 8.

Let's return to an easy, even breath – inhaling for 4 and exhaling for 4.

Bring your attention to your face. Do you feel any tension in your jaw, forehead or brow? Soften and relax. Allow your cheeks and lips to relax as well.

Now, let's begin to form a smile. It's easy to smile when you remember of a funny joke or an amusing situation. Sometimes a smile comes naturally when simply thinking of the love you have for your family or your friends. Perhaps thinking about simple pleasures like spending time in nature or the tastes and smells of your favorite meal would bring a warm smile to your face. Focus on whatever brings a happy memory or feeling to your mind.

As you continue to smile, bring your awareness to your heart and feel the smile – feel the happiness in your heart. Imagine that your heart is glowing brightly, showing your happiness and joy to the world around you. Focus on the smile you feel in your entire body, mind and heart.

As I speak these truths, simply repeat the phrases in your mind.

- I am relaxed and happy regardless of my circumstances today.
- I find it easy to be happy and smile often.
- I understand that I am responsible for my own happiness. No one else has the power to take that happiness away from me.
- When I smile, the whole world smiles with me.

Now bring your awareness back to the room. Open your eyes and notice - Are you feeling lighter? Are you feeling happier?