



Open Awareness Meditation

I invite you to settle into a mindful posture. One that allows for relaxation by easing any tension that might be present, bringing softness to your experience; and a posture that cultivates attentiveness, with your shoulders slightly widened, spine straight but not rigid, raising your head so that the bottom of your chin is parallel with the floor. Gently closing your eyes if that feels comfortable for you. If not, just hold a soft gaze at a non-distracting spot in front of you.

Take a few slow, deep breaths. Full breaths in and long slow breaths out. Follow the air as it flows through the nostrils, down to the lungs, and expands the abdomen. Binding our awareness to the breath to allow the mind to slow down just a little. And then allow your breath to settle into a natural rhythm so that you're not altering it in any way. Just be with the breath as it naturally flows.

In this practice we will cultivate an open awareness, as we monitor our experience moment by moment, and remain present and receptive to any experience that arises. Here we will rest in awareness without restrictions to a specific focus or any boundaries. So that rather than fixating on one particular object of attention we will hold a spacious awareness, inviting whatever experience unfolds into your awareness. What is to be experienced right now?

At any time you can always return to the breath - the breath can be the anchor if you've been swept away by wandering or distractions. And after gathering your attention and settling the mind, reinitiating spacious awareness when you're ready to do so. What's here right now?

Cultivating a curious, impartial awareness to the experience that emanates on a moment by moment basis - whether the experience is pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. Not elevating or eliminating any aspects of your experience - encountering whatever arises, yet not attaching - just observing at a distance.

In open awareness practice we are not actively searching for anything in particular - we're simply being here in stillness and expanding awareness to whatever emerges. Noticing any urges to cling on to any experiences that arrive and practicing letting go. It can be helpful for some to briefly label what arises in a non-evaluative way.

Can you invite sounds into your awareness? Can you open up to feelings of touch - perhaps where your body makes contact with clothing or the air on your skin? Can you welcome other bodily sensations? Can you watch the flow of thoughts? Witnessing whatever unfolds in the stream of awareness, noticing experiences drift into our awareness and allowing them flow with the current out of our awareness. In this practice of spacious openness we are familiarizing ourselves with the natural tendencies of the mind. Every experience that arrives in our awareness, will also leave our awareness and fade into the background before the next one arises.

What's at the forefront now?... What about now?... And how about in this moment?

As we come to a close, take a few slow, deep breaths. Full breaths in and long slow breaths out. On each out breath expressing gratitude for having taken a few moments out of your day to be present.

Created by Dylan Zambrano MSW