

## BODY WORK (YOGA NEDRA) MEDITATION



*This meditation aims at a state where the mind is awake and the body asleep. It can be called 'yoga nedra' or 'body-sleep'. In this course it is called 'Bodywork'. Unsurprisingly, meditators often have problems staying awake when their bodies relax. This meditation works on the principle that the mind always wakes up when it notices something new. In this meditation the mind is continually moving around the body noticing the slightly different sensations in each place. For example, you may focus on your thumb for a few seconds. Before you have time to get bored with it and drift off, you focus on the next finger. So the pattern is FOCUS – LET GO – FOCUS – LET GO and so on. The focusing keeps the mind alert. The continual letting go makes it difficult for other thoughts to get a foothold. As a result the body relaxes deeply but the mind stays more alert than it usually would.*

Get the body comfortably upright. Back upright, shoulders open, the head balancing easily over the body, the face soft....

And now go inside noticing how you are breathing. If your breath is tight, take a deep breath or two and sigh as you breath out....Tuning into the gentle ebb and flow of the breath and bringing it into focus....

And now moving around the body paying attention to the right thumb, noticing anything at all about it, sensations on the skin or within the thumb....Let that go and move on to the right forefinger, different sensations there...right middle finger...ring finger like you are shining a spotlight on each part of the body...little finger...back of the hand...the parts may tingle as you focus on them....palm...wrist...forearm...elbow...upper right arm...right shoulder, trying to feel the shoulder from the inside if you can...right upper back...right middle back....right small of the back...right buttock, feeling your weight against the chair...right thigh...knee...lower leg...ankle...heel...sole...top of the foot...big toe...second toe...third toe...fourth toe...little toe...sensing the whole right side of the body and letting the mind rest with that for about a minute....Weaving the mind into the right side of the body....Noticing if it feels different from the left side of the body.....

And now moving to the left side of the body...noting sensations in the left thumb...left forefinger...left middle finger...left ring finger....the parts may tingle as you focus on them...little finger...back of the hand...palm...left wrist...forearm...elbow...upper arm...left shoulder trying to feel the shoulder from the inside...left upper back...left middle back...left small of the back...left buttock

feeling your weight pressing against the chair...left thigh...left knee...lower leg...ankle...heel...sole...top of the foot...big toe...second toe...third toe...fourth toe...little toe...resting with the whole left side of the body for about a minute...Weaving the mind into the left side of the body and noticing how much the body chemistry has changed.....

Now moving slowly up the body trying to feel each part from inside if you can...Being aware of sensations in both feet and ankles...lower legs and knees...thighs and hips...the belly...lower back...chest and upper back...hands and forearms...elbows and upper arms...shoulders and neck and throat...the back and sides of the head...crown of the head...the forehead...the eyes, going around and behind the eyes...the ears and inside of the ears...nose and cheeks...mouth and jaw...sensing the whole face and the whole body and resting with that feeling for about a minute....letting the body go to sleep and the mind awake enough to enjoy it....

Now going inside...using your imagination if you need to....going inside the nasal passages and feeling the passage of air...inside the throat feeling the air moving up and down...inside the right lung feeling it expand and contract and noticing its apparent size...inside the left lung noticing if that feels any different...the heart...the liver half way down on the right hand side, try to sense its boundaries...the stomach...the backbone...the kidneys...the intestines...the sexual and reproductive organs...now sensing the whole inside of the body ...notice body chemistry – body asleep or awake ...

And move focus finally just to the chest and the breath gently moving up and down....Enjoying the gentle ebb and flow of the breath...Feeling the breath caress you from the inside....Letting your mind be subtle enough to catch the beginning and end of the breath....Feeling the energy rise as you breath in....Feeling it release as you breath out....When you breathe out, let the breath go, not trying to control the breath any more than you have to....Breath open and spacious....You can now COUNT each out-breath or FLOAT with the breath and the gap between each breath or CHANT with the breath any word phrase that suits to anchor the mind (See Mantra Meditation)

Noticing how your body chemistry has changed....Body heavy, still, light, disconnected....Body in resting mode, catching its energy....You may feel a slight tingling or warmth on the skin or you may pick up the hum of the body itself....The body asleep, the mind awake...But not very active, just noticing sensations come and go....

Letting your mind rest wherever it wants within the body....On the breath or in your heart....or even on an area of pain....Let it rest there feeling the vibration of life for the remainder of the meditation.....