

Setting Intention Guided Meditation

This guided meditation will help you set an intention for the coming year. Intentions are different from goals or resolutions. Intentions are commitments you make to yourself that will help guide you as you make choices. For example, you may have an intention to take better care of yourself. Your commitment is to make the choices that will help you achieve your idea of what it means to be healthy. Your goals may include eating more vegetables, exercising more, and getting enough sleep. Your resolution may be to join a gym. All these flow from your intention to take better care of yourself.

The most important thing to do when setting an intention is to write down a few notes ahead of time so that you can allow your unconscious as well as your conscious mind to support you in experiencing and embodying your intention. So take a few moments right now to write down some ideas. You can pause this meditation and come back when you are ready.

Now let's get started on the guided meditation. Make sure you will not be interrupted during the next 30 minutes. Find yourself a quiet space that is free of distractions and helps you feel relaxed and at ease. If you wish, you can have calm music playing in the background. When you've done that and you're ready, find yourself in a comfortable position and take a few slow, gentle breaths. Focus your attention on letting go of your breath, easily releasing as you exhale. Take two or three relaxed breaths. If you notice any sort of pain or sensation that is uncomfortable just give yourself an instruction "release". There is no need to rush this process. Take as much time as you need to make sure your body is fully and completely relaxed.

[PAUSE]

Good. We are now going to go through your body and systematically relax each part until we reach the top of your head. As we go through your body you may notice that sensations will

arise. This may include feeling hot or cold, or noticing tingling. You may suddenly realize you are holding parts of your body tightly. You may feel as if you need to move. All these are expected. Notice them and if you need to, move around until you are relaxed and comfortable. There is no need to be concerned about these sensations. Whatever sensation is there is there. Now take one or two breaths and just allow yourself to be fully and completely relaxed and at ease.

Start by focusing your attention on your feet. Allow yourself to notice your feet on the floor. Become curious about what you are experiencing. You may notice that your feet are warm or you may notice something entirely different. Whatever is there is there. Let yourself completely relax and allow any sensations to be there without judgment.

Now bring your attention to your ankles. Just notice your ankles and whatever is going on with your ankles.

With your next breath, place your attention on your calf muscles. Notice if there is any tension in your calf muscles. If there is, gently say, "Relax". Good.

Now bring your attention up to your thighs. These are one of the largest muscle groups in your body. Allow yourself to fully and completely relax your thigh muscles. Allow the chair to fully support you. If you notice any tension or discomfort in your thigh muscles, just say "Relax".

Now move your attention to your buttocks and your genitals. As you relax these muscles, allow yourself to fully and completely let go of any tension that might be in this area of your body. Let the feeling of relaxation completely fill your lower body from your feet, through your ankles, up your calves, and thighs and to your buttocks. Good.

Continue to breathe in and out in a gentle, relaxed rhythm as we continue.

Now bring your attention to your lower abdomen. Completely and fully relax your lower abdomen as you exhale. You may notice some grumbling feelings or other sounds in this area.

This is perfectly normal.

Now bring your attention to your upper abdomen. Allow yourself to breathe deeply into this area expanding as you inhale and letting go as you exhale. Follow this process in your upper abdomen for several breaths inhaling and exhaling, inhaling and exhaling, inhaling and exhaling fully.

Now turn your attention inward and allow yourself to listen your heart beating in your chest. Allow yourself to fully experience the expansion of your chest as you inhale. Feel your lungs and heart working together. Notice the gentle rhythm, ceaseless and without any effort on your part. Breathing in and breathing out. Breathing in and breathing out.

Now bring your attention to your shoulders. If you feel moved to lift your shoulders and gently roll them in a circular motion forward or backward feel free to do this allowing your shoulders to fall gently as you exhale and rise gently as you inhale. Allow these muscles to stretch and release with every exhalation. Your body is becoming more and more relaxed. Your thoughts are slowing down. There is a feeling of spaciousness all around you.

Now place your attention on your upper arms. If you notice any tension in your upper arms just relax those muscles allowing your upper arms to become free of any tension.

Now relax your forearms and your wrists, releasing any tension that may be in your forearms or wrists. And now fully relax your hands and fingers as you exhale, letting go of any tension that maybe there. Good.

Now gently bring your attention back to your throat. You may notice a warm tingling in your throat or you may feel like swallowing. Allow your body to do whatever it needs to become

comfortable and relaxed.

Now move your attention up to your jaw and mouth. Allow your jaw to just drop loosely and release any tension you might be holding in your cheeks or jaw. Release as you exhale.

Now bring your attention to your eyes and the tiny muscles around your eyes. Allow yourself to fully and completely release any tension in your eyes or your forehead.

Now bring attention to the top of your head. Allow yourself to relax your scalp fully and completely.

You are now completely and totally relaxed.

Enjoy this feeling of total body relaxation. Take one or two breaths inhaling and exhaling the length of your body. Good.

Now you can expand your awareness and begin to set the intention for what you wish to accomplish in the coming year. As you continue to breathe easily and effortlessly, allow your mind's eye to imagine a bright light inside of you. It illuminates that part of your body that holds your hopes and dreams. This light has been burning within you ever since you were born. In this place of complete relaxation, see that the flame continues to burn. It burns with a special brightness and illuminates from within. It reveals what you hope and dream will manifest in your life. Take a moment to just look at this. Let it reveal itself fully in all its detail. As you explore this dream, allow your senses to become totally involved. You may find yourself drawn to a particular object or spot. You may hear or see words that have special meaning for you. You may experience a deep sense of acceptance. Whatever is there is there. It is meant only for you.

I will be quiet now as you allow yourself to explore and better understand this.

[PAUSE FOR TWO MINUTES] Good.

Now imagine yourself in the future and looking back on this moment. Imagine you have

already accomplished the intention you set. Imagine you are now remembering how you achieved this and are looking back over the process and how you set this intention 12 months ago. See with your mind's eye as if you're looking through a photo album or going through a gallery of pictures that captured each step as you achieved your intention. Note how your intention caught hold and anchored itself, giving you inspiration and direction. Notice how things developed as you expected. Notice how things changed in ways you never could have imagined, all because you were flexible enough to incorporate what you have learned along the way.

Now put the scrapbook or photo gallery away. In your mind's eye, go back to the place in your body where the light continues to shine and put this scrap book a very special place where you'll be able to return frequently to remind you of what your hopes and desires are.

Good.

Now prepare to return to present time. Allow yourself to breathe easily and effortlessly - -- in and out --- in and out. Notice the gentle rise and fall of your chest as you breathe. Listen to your heart beat. Experience the tingling of energy in your body as it flows from the top of your head to your feet. Feel yourself sitting in the chair and allow yourself to hear any sounds that are in the room. Allow your attention to return to your physical presence at this time in this present moment. When you're ready, open your eyes and return from this inner journey, relaxed and refreshed.

Now take a few moments to write down any thoughts or sketch any ideas that have come to you from this experience.