Mindfulness of breath meditation

This guided meditation on the breath is intended to help you become familiar with mindful meditation and the calmness that can result from its practice. Find a quiet comfortable space where you won’t be disturbed for a few minutes. Sit in an erect posture either on a chair with a straight back or on a cushion. If you are comfortable in doing so, close your eyes, or if not just lower your gaze and fix on a spot on the floor or wall. Allow yourself to switch from the usual mode of doing to a mode of non-doing, of simply being. As you allow your body to become still, become aware of the movement of your breath as it comes into your body and as it leaves your body – simply being aware of it and the feelings associated with breathing. Draw the breath in through your nose and slowly out through your mouth. Observe the breath deep down in your belly – feel your belly as it expands on the in breath and as it falls back gently towards your spine on the out breath – just being totally in here in each moment with each breath. You are not trying to do anything or go anywhere – you are simply being with your breath, with each in breath and each out breath – giving full care and attention to each.

You will find that your mind will wander off into thoughts – this is normal. All you need to do each time this happens is notice it and gently bring your attention back to your breath. Being fully conscious of the duration of each in breath, and the duration of each breath. Each time you find your mind wandering just gently and without self-judgement brining it back to the present moment to the sensation of your breath. Using your breath as an anchor to focus your attention in the present moment and to help you tune into a state relaxed awareness and stillness.

As you continue to observe your breathing, you may also become aware of sensations in your body – see if it’s possible to expand the field of your awareness so that it still includes your breathing but also a sense of your whole body as you sit here.

Being here with whatever feelings and sensations come up, just noticing them, not judging them or reacting with them – just being fully here, fully aware – totally present with whatever your feelings are and with your body as a whole. And again whenever you notice that your mind is wandering off into thoughts, just gently bringing it back to the present moment and to your breathing and your body as you sit here, not going anywhere, not doing anything, simply sitting, simply being with your breath in each moment, sitting in stillness, being totally present and open to each moment as it unfolds - just being right here, right now.

And when you are ready to conclude the practice bring your attention slowly and gently back into the room by opening your eyes and allow the benefits of this practice to remain with you.