



How to Relax + Meditate

Choose a quiet, warm space, with enough room to lie down and perhaps stretch; or alternatively you can sit in a comfortable crossed-leg seated pose; or in a chair if that is more comfortable for you.

The posture you choose should give you alignment, support and comfort; so perhaps using a cushion under your head; or a rolled-up blanket under your knees; or a lightweight blanket covering you as the body temperature naturally drops when you relax.

Switching off your phone and being in a place where you will not be disturbed is ideal. Sometimes we don't have the ideal set-up, but that should not stop us from resolving to give yourself this nourishing time just for you – perhaps a “do not disturb” sign on your door may work!!!

Why we need to Relax + Mediate

Relaxation and Meditation is an integral part of the yoga practice along with other techniques of posture, breathing, movement with breath, energy flow, classical postures, resolve – these aspects combine to influence our body-heart-mind in order to have an attitude of ‘yoga’.

YOGA means UNION and can be a healing practice of our physical, energetic, thinking & attitudinal levels of our being.

The result being more open to:

ABUNDANT LIFE (energy/life force/connection to source)

LIGHT (awareness/consciousness/true nature) and

LOVE (receiving/giving and connection).

What happens when we Relax?

Usually when we can let go of the externals that happen out there - (which we cannot actually control); reconnect to your inner world and connect with an inner healing space – where the body will naturally switch on the branch of the autonomic nervous system that activates the body's essential maintenance and repairs necessary for healing. That feeling of “all is well” is usually only present in the NOW! This is a deeply peaceful and healing attitude which we can cultivate and practice for our own well-being.

In this space, we get the chance to step out of our usual automatic mind and conditional self, where we can be prone to contractions of the body-mind in a reactive mode to all around us and inside our own mind. So, the winding down of relaxation which reinforces the attitude that all is well – you can make that journey inwards, to let go of the clenched muscles & jaw, consciously soften and let go of that held tension within and begin to unwind and relax – this is where the healing takes place.

What is the Autonomic Nervous System?

This system maintains homeostasis (internal harmony) in the body by controlling the respiratory, cardiovascular, digestive, hormonal, immune and other involuntary bodily systems.



It has two complimentary branches that work together like the accelerator and brakes in a car. One revs up certain systems to help us deal with imminent physical danger. This is the Sympathetic branch of the nervous system known as the flight-fight-freeze response and its needed for surviving external threats.

The other branch, the Parasympathetic, deals with rest and digest, responsible for our nourishing restorative capacities, the long-term maintenance of rest and repair which is responsible for ensuring our longer-term health and survival.

In fact, we do not have the resources to attend to both aspects of the ans at the same time - just like we can't use the accelerator and brakes at the same time. If we spend too much time in f-f-f mode, we are not able to fully digest our food and get the nutrients from it; or repair our damaged cells. Tiredness and poor health will inevitably follow.

Our nervous systems have not yet learned to cope with the profound changes in lifestyle brought on with today's technologies, the rapid pace of change and the over-consuming society. Most of us live a very stressful, highly competitive and over-doing life. This makes us feel anxious, confused, frustrated, unfulfilled – as there is never enough time to do all that is demanded upon you.

So, it is not surprising we get stuck in the f-f-f syndrome. Since there is no physical enemy out there ready to kill us or escape from, most of what stresses us is of a psychological nature. The result however is the same, the stress hormones remain in our bodies unused and can build up to dangerous levels, we all have heard that stress is a killer. We may think that the autonomic nervous system is beyond our control, but fortunately we can influence it through the practices of yoga – relaxation – meditation to regain internal harmony and balance so our body-mind feels safe again - giving it the time to rest and digest - heal and restore.

Make a resolve with yourself to bring harmony and balance into your life with regular Yoga practices – regular tuning in and giving yourself permission of letting go. Enjoy!

Below are FREE RESOURCES from some of my respected teachers - please keep up your practice - enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/c/ekhartyogatv>

<https://www.rickhanson.net/a-meditation-for-feeling-as-safe-as-you-reasonably-can/>

<https://www.irest.org/mp3/5-minute-iRest-alleviating-stress-tension-anxiety.mp3>

Guided Practices Free