

Resting back with sounds and aliveness - foundation I

To begin with, invite your body to be as comfortable and relaxed as possible, lying down or sitting on a cushion, bench, or chair. To help yourself fully arrive here, breathe out two or three times as deeply as possible. Let the in-breath happen by itself. Then just let the breath be: short, long, shallow, deep. Notice that the experience of the breath and body are not separate.

Enjoy the luxury of simply being: perhaps it is enough to be a human on the earth, with no need to compete, to “get it right,” to do or add or remove anything.

Relax into the back of the body as if it is a comfortable sofa. In an atmosphere of gentleness, tune into hearing. Allow sounds near and far to be received by a fluid attention. Notice the brilliant precision of attention, how clearly and immediately each sound is known and released. Notice if any image comes to match a sound—a mental picture of a bird for a birdsong, for example. Is it possible to know the difference between the image of a bird and the simple sound? Notice if any other reactions come in response to the sounds—the body tightening or the mind judging and commenting. These reactions are interesting in their own right, but for now open yourself again and again to the naked sounds themselves.

Whenever you remember, relax into the back of the body and allow attention to receive direct experience.



With the sounds more in the background, let this same receptive attention open to the body: its weight and posture, movements and textures, warmth and coolness. Let the experience we call “body” just float in relaxed attention.

Bring softness into first the head, then the chest, then the belly. Soften and receive direct experience. Where can you connect most easily? Let about 25% of your attention rest in that place, while also staying open to sounds, thoughts, and the whole body. All else being equal, the lower belly is preferable. Every time you notice that the attention has wandered, gently rest back "home" in your chosen place.

As you relax, you may start to feel joy, lightness, or spaciousness. Enjoy. Then rest into the aliveness “behind” or within the joy.





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