

SUNSET MEDITATION

Title/Credits, slow fade of lights

Intro - Science of Stress/Meditation

I want you to do something for me... Slowly tilt your head down, towards the floor, and close your eyes. Now think about your four remaining main senses: smell, hearing, taste, and touch.

How does the chair or ground feel against your back? Can you still taste your last meal in your mouth? Take a deep breath in through your nose... Do you notice any pleasant smells? Can you hear the sounds of the room around you?

Fade up ISS

Without one of our most powerful senses, sight, we have no idea where we have been transported to.

So go ahead... open your eyes... and look up.

We are traveling 250 miles above Earth's surface along with the International Space Station where astronauts live and work. Being an astronaut is stressful at times – but astronauts have trained to prepare for commands and emergencies. And astronauts rely on proven techniques, like breathing deeply, to manage stress and keep calm. Of course this is not the only stressful profession and we often feel stressed by personal relationships and events in our lives. So how can we cope with this stress?

Meditation is a proven technique to help manage stress. Meditation has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety, promote emotional health, decrease blood pressure, and more.

Today we are going to lead you through a meditation exercise.

Meditation Intro/Breathing

For the next several minutes, we will go on a journey through meditation and we ask that you join us completely. All *you* have to do is follow my voice.

Disclaimer

Before we begin, you should know that I am here to provide you with skills which may help you decrease your stress and improve your mental health and resilience. This experience is not considered treatment or therapy.

Alright, let's get started.

Fly closer to Earth

Take a moment to allow your body to settle comfortably into your seat. Turn your attention and focus to your breath. Follow it as it flows in and out of your body. Follow it all the way down into your lungs and abdomen. At this point, do not change your breathing; just follow your breath. Notice the natural rhythm as you breathe. When your mind becomes distracted by things inside or around you, gently notice them, let them go, and turn your attention back to your breath.

Begin to take slower, longer, and deeper breaths. Fill your lungs a little more with each. Allow your stomach to naturally expand as you breathe in and relax as you exhale.

Allow your breathing to find its own, new pace; slower than before, longer than before, deeper than before.

Continue to breathe this way as we move along our journey together. Notice what changes in your body and mind - embrace it, let it go, and see what comes next.

Predusk

Slowly let your attention drift across the sky. Take your time and be curious. Allow your attention to rest if something piques your interest and inspires wonder.

What do you notice? What are you drawn to?

As you continue to take in the sights around you, take a moment to return to your breath. Continue to breathe slowly and deeply. Notice any thoughts and feelings that may be emerging in your mind and then gently let them go. This time is just for you. This time is for you to relax.

Appreciate the beauty and color around you. Notice the subtle changes of shapes and colors in the sky. Appreciate how amazing our planet is.

Bring your focus to the Sun. It is constant and steady, but slowly setting. Follow it as it gets closer to the horizon. As it does, you will feel yourself becoming even more and more relaxed.

Setting Sun

-----break in narration-----

Stars & Aurora Emerging

Stars and Aurora emerge

Take a moment to return to your breath. Continue to breathe slowly and deeply.

And appreciate the beauty and color around you.

As each moment passes, continue to relax - be still & present in each moment - and breathe.

Gently let any thoughts and feelings go.

Just appreciate the beauty around you.

Appreciate how amazing our universe is.

Outro

Shift your attention once more back to your breath. Notice the pace of your breathing and follow it with each breath.

As you breathe deeply, allow your stomach to naturally expand as you breathe in and relax as you exhale.

Now allow your breathing to find its own, natural pace. Continue to breathe this way as we conclude our journey together.

Take a moment to appreciate all we have experienced. Appreciate our universe, our planet. Your body and your mind. Realize that you can recreate these feelings just by slowing your breath and noticing the wonder that is in and around you.

As we conclude, focus on the sound of my voice, the seat you are in, and the sounds of the room. You may wiggle your fingers or toes to help your body and mind shift back to this moment. You may shrug your shoulders or tap your feet.

Slowly allow your mind and body to awaken to this new moment.

When you are ready, stretch and move around more.

Thank you for joining us on this journey together. We hope you have a wonderful day filled with curiosity and wonder at all that is in you and around you.

Fade out scene for credits

Credits

This program was developed as part of the Ball State University Meditation Partnership which provides meditation and mindfulness programs for campus and community members to improve mental health and resilience.

Directed & Narrated by Dayna Thompson
Guided Meditation Written by Timothy Hess, PhD, HSPP
Introduction Written by Dayna Thompson
Music by Luke R. Mitchell
Script Edited by Emily Hromi, Patricia Latus, Amanda McErlean, Elizabeth Peeler
SkyExplorerV4 programming by Dayna Thompson
The Milky Way Panorama by ESO/S. Brunier
Produced and rendered using SkyExplorer by RSA Cosmos