

# Mindful Breathing Meditation 1

Thich Nhat Hanh

Your breath is the link between your body and your mind. When you are in touch with that link you are in touch with everything in yourself, body and mind. You are then the master of yourself in any situation. You are not carried away by anybody or anything, including your thoughts. Your mind is fully with your body and your whole being. When you start to know that you breathing in or that you are breathing out, you start to know what you are doing – whether you are sitting, standing or walking. So knowing you are breathing is very important. Having that connection with the breath is very important.

Breathing consciously, mindfully, is a very good practice. In our daily life, if we don't know how to breathe mindfully, how to stop thinking, we cannot get in touch with the wonderful things in life like sunshine, rivers, clouds, our family, or our friends.

Mindful breathing is easy to practice and very enjoyable. Practice the following with as silent a breath as possible and with a smile on your lips. Sit in the most comfortable position for you and your body.

**Breathing in, I know I am breathing in.**

**Breathing out, I know I am breathing out.**

*In/Out x 3*

**Breathing in, I see myself as a flower.**

**Breathing out, I feel fresh.**

*Flower/Fresh x 3 – imagine your favourite flower, freshly opened, in all its beautiful glory and colour.*

**Breathing in, I see myself as a mountain.**

**Breathing out, I feel solid.**

*Mountain/Solid x3 – when sat solid like a mountain you will not be blown away by any emotions, thoughts or winds from any direction.*

**Breathing in, I see myself as still water.**

**Breathing out, I reflect things as they are.**

*Water/Reflecting x 3 – Looking at a clear and still lake, you can see the sky and clouds reflected in the water as clearly as if looking up at the sky and clouds themselves. This practice though is about not distorting things – we are the water, the mountain and the flower. I reflect exactly what I see. I am clear, I am solid and I am calm. When we are calm, like calm water, we reflect reality well. When you are not calm and still, you perceive things incorrectly and distort them.*

**Breathing in, I see myself as space.**

**Breathing out, I feel free.**

*Space/Free x 3 – with space you feel so at ease. If people give you enough space and freedom, you will be happier. Breathing in – think of infinite space – space in which everything moves freely. You need this space to breathe and smile. When you are empty, breathing out, you do not keep anything within yourself – no hatred, no anger, no despair and no craving. As empty space you feel wonderful – you feel free.*

By using the images of flowers, mountains, water and space helps you to have better concentration and to feel refreshed, stable, calm and free.