

We will be going through the body, squeezing part by part, raising each part a few inches off the floor. When asked to release, just relax all the muscles of that part and let it drop to the floor.

Bring the awareness to the right leg. Stretch it out. Squeeze all the muscles of the leg. Inhale, raise it a few inches, & squeeze deeper for a few seconds then: Release. Gently roll the leg and relax it completely.

Bring the awareness to the left leg. Stretch it out. Squeeze all the muscles of the leg. Inhale, raise it a few inches, & squeeze deeper for a few seconds then: Release. Gently roll the leg and relax it completely.

Stretch out the right arm and spread the fingers wide. Make a fist, squeeze the arm, inhale, raise it a few inches & squeeze more for a few seconds then: Release. Roll the arm gently from side to side and let it rest with the palm up.

Stretch out the left arm and spread the fingers wide. Make a fist, squeeze the arm, inhale, raise it a few inches & squeeze more for a few seconds then: Release. Roll the arm gently from side to side and let it rest with the palm up.

Bring the awareness to the buttocks. Squeeze the buttocks muscles and squeeze more for a few seconds then: Release. Feel the hips sinking down.

Bring the awareness to the abdomen. Inhale deeply through the nose, puffing out the abdomen like a balloon. Take in as much air as you can & hold the breath then pause for a few seconds and open the mouth to release all the breath. Relax the abdomen.

Bring the awareness to the chest. Inhale deeply, expanding the chest. Take in a little more air and then pause for a few seconds then open the mouth & release all the breath. Relax the chest.

Leaving the arms on the floor, slide the shoulders up towards the ears and squeeze for a few seconds as you hold then release and relax them. Now lift the shoulders and squeeze them together in front of the chest for a few seconds then release & relax them. Next, slide the shoulders down toward the feet and press them for a few seconds then release & relax them.

Gently roll the head from side to side, relaxing the neck muscles. Return the head to the center & relax.

Bring the awareness to the face. For a few seconds: Gently move the jaw up and down to relax it; Squeeze the lips together in a pout & relax; Suck in the cheeks then relax; Wrinkle the nose & squeeze the eyes then relax them; Raise the eyebrows & wrinkle the forehead then relax. Now squeeze all the muscles in the face toward the tip of the nose & relax. Next, you will be focusing the mind on each part of the body, to release any remaining tension. If you detect any subtle tension anywhere, send a mental message to completely

relax it.

If necessary make any physical adjustments then settle back into stillness.

Without moving any part, become aware of the toes suggesting they relax. Soften the feet, ankles, lower legs, knees and thighs. Relax the buttocks and pelvis, the abdominal muscles, the internal organs. Relax the rib cage, chest, heart and lungs.

Bring the awareness to the lower back, and relax it.

Moving up the spine, relax the middle back, the upper back and the shoulder blades.

Bring the awareness to the hands, relax the fingers, palms, and back of the hands. Relax the wrists, forearms, elbows and upper arms. Relax the shoulders, neck and throat.

Relax the chin and jaw, the tongue, and mouth. Relax the lips, cheeks, the nose, the eyes, forehead, ears, temples, sides of the head, back of the head and the top of the head.

Observe the body noticing that it is completely relaxed and keep the mind alert.

Bring the awareness to the breath noting that the breath has become very relaxed and subtle. Let it flow in and out by itself and remain a witness to the breath for a full minute.

Become aware of the mind. As you notice thoughts let them pass without becoming involved - a silent witness to the mind.

(Guided Imagery)

Imagine you're going for a walk in the woods. As you get ready to begin, pause and just take in the scenery. Notice the sky - what time of day is it? Is it early morning - maybe just after the sunrise? Is it dusk, as the colors of the sunset dissolve into the vast night sky? Notice the temperature - how the air feels on your skin. Notice the sounds - birds... rustling of leaves and brush... what other sounds do you hear?

Notice the ground. Feel your connection to the earth below you. Do you want to take off your shoes and walk barefoot (if you do, it will be totally safe). Is there a clear path for you to follow, or are you forging your own? Notice the colors, textures, and elements of your path: is it rocky or smooth? Well-covered by grass or more worn by travel?

As you begin your walk, take in the plant life around you: the colors, the textures, the aromas. Look up - notice the canopy of the trees against the backdrop of the sky - shapes and movement led by the breeze... You hear water nearby - movement, perhaps the sounds of a small stream.

As you continue your journey, you see a great tree up ahead. It feels as though the rest of the forest has grown from it and around it. The trunk is so wide you can't even wrap your arms half-way around it. You decide to sit, and lay under the grand canopy of this tree. Grass and moss form a natural warm, fuzzy blanket - and the roots wrap their arms around you. Allow yourself to rest in the support of this tree. Spend a few minutes here.

(pause 2-3 minutes)

You hear a rustling nearby - you're not anxious, just curious. There is a presence approaching, you are not fearful. In fact you already feel a connection with them. With her. As she comes into focus, it is a mother otter. As her warm, deep brown eyes meet yours, you instantly know she has come to share something with you. Her fur is damp - her home must be nearby. She playfully wiggles her nose and motions with her paw for you to come. She wants to take you to her stream. You get up and begin to follow her. You hear the sound of the water getting closer, until you see golden reflections of light dancing on the surface of the crystal blue water. So clean and clear you can see the rocks, plants and life teeming below. The otter stops at the edge of the stream, and motions for you to sit next to her. You both take in all the beauty and life in the woods, the water, the sky above.

You sense the otter has something specific she wants you to know - a special message just for you. When you're ready to receive it, let her know. Take in whatever she wants to share and give.

(pause 2-3 minutes)

Perhaps there is something you would like to share with her. Take a moment to reflect, sit with whatever comes to heart and mind, and when you're ready, share it with her.

(pause 1-2 minutes)

The otter's gaze meets yours once more, and you know it is time for her to return to her home. You make your goodbyes for now, knowing you will see each other again. She gently glides into the stream and floats with the current, until she is out of sight.

You give yourself time and space to take in this entire experience. The sights, the sounds, the sensations. All that has been shared with you. All that you have so generously and courageously shared.

I am still here, but my voice will be quiet for the next five minutes. You'll hear me again when it's time to return.

(5 minutes of silence)

Start to bring your awareness to everything that is supporting you: the ground, bolsters, towels. Allow yourself to be held by it all a little longer, resting for a few more breaths. You might notice how the natural rhythm of your breath gently floats you up with each inhale. Allow the breath to begin to invite movement back into the body. You can explore tiny movements - maybe in the fingers or toes, medium-sized movements, full body movements, or a little bit of all of them. You might stretch, yawn and take up all the space you possibly can. Or you might curl up into a ball, giving yourself that big hug that you deserve. Take some time to move however it feels good, transitioning slowly to your more comfortable side, before transitioning to whatever seated position feels most comfortable.

