



Meditative Relaxation for Heart, Mind and Body

Overview: In our work, we often contend with stress, difficulty and fear which impacts our bodies, minds and spirits. This activity helps us relax, center and find calm in a simple way.

Purpose: This activity is designed to help us relax our bodies and minds - to calm down after emotional process or to deal with conflict or to address difficult topics.

Time: 5 – 20 minutes

Materials:

- Meditation bell/ bowl
- Wooden stick
- Chairs

Credit: JASS Southeast Asia (JASS SEA)

Process:

1. Prepare the room.
 - Make sure the room is spacious and comfortable, and that the seating is not located where the lights are too bright or there is a lot of noise.
 - Position the seats in circle with enough space so no one is not touching anyone else. If you have many participants, create two semi-circles one behind the other.
2. Welcome everyone and let them know that they will be invited to calm down, get centered and relax.
 - Ask the participants to sit quietly, not talking, and soften their gaze, looking at the floor in front of them, not looking at others.





- Invite the participants to begin to relax, explaining that relaxing is not just about the body but also the mind. Begin to quiet the mind, just following the voice of the facilitator and bringing breath into and out of your chest. Ask the participants to let the mind and body relax in the silence.
3. Dim the light. Explain to the participants that there will be several steps and a sound will be made (with bowl or bell) to indicate each one:
- *When you hear the first bell close your eyes (if comfortable doing so) and focus internally. Let go of thoughts about events at home, in the community and in the news - neither bad nor good. Let it all pass by for now. It has already happened and is in the past. Now we sit with friends. See if you can breathe into your body and allow it to relax.*
 - The second sound: Invite the participants to sit quietly at the edge of a chair or if more comfortable, navigate to kneeling or sitting cross-legged with your palms on your knees. Have them give time to the silence - about 2-3 minutes. *As a thought or anxiety arises, let it go, see if you can relax into your breathing in the moment. You are surrounded by friends and allies.*
 - Take them through a relaxation: Invite them to focus attention on the muscles and other body sensations on their body. Using a calm tone and clear voice: *bring breath to each body part asking it to relax: brain relax, forehead relax, ears relax, two eyes relax, eyelids relax, nose relax, cheeks relax, lips relax, tongue relax, jaw relax, neck relax, shoulder relax, both upper arm relax, both forearm relax, both palm relax, both finger relax, torso relax, stomach relax, upper back relax, lower back relax, buttocks relax, both thighs relax, both knees relax, both calf relax, ankles relax, feet relax, toes relax. Body relax, mind relax. Mind relax, body relax.*
 - Repeat relaxation process one more time – look to see if their faces look relaxed.
 - Third bell is for the last 1- 2 minute to invite a last stage of concentration on breath and being in the present moment. Give 2 minutes' silence. Hit the bell twice. When they hear the sound hit twice, that indicates we are done. Ask participant to move slightly. Move the arms, move the legs, move torso to the right and to the left, keeping the eyes closed.
4. Invite everyone to gently open their eyes. When they are ready they can acknowledge each other and move to a different position or space, completing the activity.