

INTRO TEXT & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: This meditation gently invites us to directly experience our inner peace, spaciousness, or emptiness. If we do not experience spaciousness, then this meditation invites us to cultivate our patience and self-compassion by mindfully and kindly being with what is.

This meditation is based on a direct pointing meditation by Wisdom Teacher Mooji, and incorporates language by clinical psychologist Katherine King who wrote the excellent article *Trauma-Informed Guided Meditation*.

For all who wish to do so, we now begin a guided meditation practice that will last about thirty minutes. At the end of practice, I will ring this chime three times to signify it is over.

Investigating Emptiness Meditation

Intermediate Level • Trauma-Informed • 30 min

1967 words • 66 words/minute • 11 pages = 2:40/page

Ring Bell

If you feel uncomfortable during this meditation, you can stop meditating at any time, get up, exit the room, and give yourself whatever you feel you need. You may also choose to sit with us but engage your mind in another manner.

If you want a break from this mediation at any time, you could bring your attention to the sounds or colors in the room, or to other external objects.

This meditation is your time to practice, and we create this experience together. As I offer cues, please do what feels safe for you, and ignore the rest.

(1:20)



We start the meditation by gently invoking some loving intentions for our meditation. I invite you to rest your awareness on your heart space and try to feel the meaning behind these words that I chant...

*We do this practice for the **benefit and welfare** of all beings and all life **everywhere**, including our own.*

*May we know the peace of **accepting** the **truth** of reality as it is.*

*May we know the security of **having** our **intentions arise** from unconditional, **boundless** love.*

*May we know the freedom of **renunciation** which **liberates** us from greed.*

*May we know the joy of living **skillfully** for the **benefit and welfare** of all beings and all life **everywhere**.*

*May all beings and all life **everywhere** be **free** of delusion, suffering, and dissatisfaction.*

*May all beings and all life **everywhere** be **loving**, **peaceful**, **compassionate**, and **joyful**.*

Setting Posture

I invite you to lovingly bring your attention to your physical posture.

Gently find a seated position where you can rest comfortably for about thirty minutes.

(4:05)



Breath Meditation

When you are ready, we begin the meditation by bringing a kind and loving attention to the breath.

Gently take several long, easeful, silent breaths.

If it is comfortable for you, breath through the nose and deep into the abdomen.

Calmly notice where you feel the breath in your body.

You might feel your abdomen rise and fall, the movement of the chest, or the air inside and beneath your nostrils.

Gently notice what it feels like to rest quietly with your breath.

Gently check in and notice the feeling tone of your experience: is it pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral?

If your breath becomes difficult or unpleasant to focus on, bring your attention to an object in the room of your choosing.

Compassionately respect and allow whatever experience is arising, and take care of yourself during this time.

When you notice that thoughts or feelings arise, remember there is nothing wrong with this, and kingly remind yourself they are not needed now. Then experiment with lovingly returning your attention to the breath, or your chosen object.

Relaxing the Body

If you would like, gently scan your awareness through the body and invite all parts of the body to relax and soften. (6:50)



If you find any pain, you might offer those areas your kindness, love, and wishes for health and healing.

If during this meditation you become uncomfortable or experience pain, you have a choice in how to respond. You may choose to wait out the discomfort to see if it subsides, or you may adjust your posture to maintain a feeling of physical ease.

If you make adjustments, I invite you to experiment with how mindfully, quietly, and kindly you can make those movements.

Emptying the Mind

I am now going to offer you suggestions in an effort to help you empty the mind. Whether you experience an empty mind or not, use this time to practice relating to yourself with kindness, compassion, and love.

Whether you experience an empty mind or not, use this time to relate to all thoughts, feelings, sensations, moods, and other objects that arise in your awareness with peace, ease, and a compassionate recognition that they are merely impersonal objects of your awareness.

Setting Aside Future and Past

For the duration of the meditation, I invite you to calmly set aside all thoughts about the future. All plans, worries, and to-do items are not needed for this meditation, so gently put them down.

Same with all thoughts about the past. What you did, what you wish you had done, what others should have done, none of this is needed right now. Kindly set it to the side.

(9:35)



If such thoughts do arise, calmly label them "futuring" or "pasting" accordingly, and do not engage with them. You can pick them up later, but just for now, they are not needed.

Letting Go of Self-View

Having let go of past and future, we are left with the present.

In the present, we find sounds, sensations, thoughts, feelings, moods, and possibly colors and shapes if we have our eyes open. Whatever objects are being know, try not to identify with them. Be aware of them, but don't mistake them to be who you are.

We are our awareness. We are not the objects awareness knows.

The eye knows it exists because it sees, but the eye is not the colors and shapes that it sees. In the same way, our awareness knows it exists because of what it is aware of, but awareness is none of the objects that it knows.

Be the awareness. Know all else to be impersonal objects of awareness.

By compassionately remembering the impersonal nature of all objects, we do not identify with, or get entangled with them. We patiently allow them to be as they are.

So let all objects of present-moment awareness be as they are. For now, do not engage with them.

If you are ready to, also put down any self-views you have. Tenderly set aside any roles you play: parent, sibling, worker. For the time-being, these roles are not needed.

(12:20)



Gently set down the stories you tell yourself about who you are and what you are doing. Any definition you have of yourself. Such thoughts are not important right now.

If such thoughts arise, then kindly label them "selfing," recognize their impersonal nature, and patiently leave them alone.

Let Go of Craving and Aversion

When you are comfortable, I invite you to then let go of all desires; all stories of what you want, need, and must have; all stories of what you must avoid, dislike, and cannot stand; all relationship attachments; put them to the side. Do not engage them.

If such thoughts arise, label them "craving" or "aversion," recognize their impersonal nature, and calmly leave them alone.

Any desire, and the one who desires, set aside. Be empty, empty, empty, so there is no shape at all.

Let Go of Fixed-Views

Everything that you can think, imagine, or experience, leave that to the side.

Everything that you have collected in memory leave to the side. You can pick it up again later.

No imagination at all. No ideas as all. For the time-being, these are not important.

Even your name and your age. Leave it all to the side. Just feel into the spacious emptiness that is left.

(15:05)



You Exist in the Emptiness

As you become empty of all these things, gently notice that you are still here.

Kindly notice how even without past, present, future, selfing, craving, aversion, and fixed-views, you are still here.

To be empty means to not identify with any thought or idea at all.

When you are empty, nothing can stick to you. You are just a sense of space. Still you know you exist.

Lovingly be with this emptiness, this spaciousness, this stillness, this formlessness.

Still Not Empty?

If you are not experiencing emptiness, that is fine. Just continue be with whatever is present with as much patience, kindness, and compassion as you are able.

If you need to take a break, you are welcome to rest your awareness on your breath, or on another object of your choosing for as long as you need, and rejoin us at any time.

Investigating Emptiness

If you are experiencing emptiness, pay attention to this emptiness.

I am going to ask you some questions, and I invite you to tenderly do your best to feel or intuit the answers from your direct experience.

(17:50)



Investigating Emptiness

As we take all the mental objects away, is something left that cannot be taken away?

In the spaciousness, does awareness remain? Again, try and feel and experience the answer.

Can you remove your awareness?

You may find, that even if you try to take awareness out, it remains. Patiently notice the truth of that in your direct experience.

What is the relationship between your awareness and this emptiness? Again, don't use your mind. Feel and intuit the answer directly, and it is OK if no answer comes to you.

Calmly pay attention to the emptiness:

Is this emptiness an object?

Is it a mood?

It is a feeling?

Is it information?

Does it have a boundary where it no longer exists?

Feel it and just be with it.

Can it be sick?

Can it be depressed?

(21:10)



Can it ever be against you?

Did you create it?

Let your direct experience and intuition answer these questions.

Does it have a beginning?

Does it have an age?

Was it created?

Was it born?

Can it die?

You are in touch with this now, but has it been with you all along?

How much distance is there between you and it?

Can it be lost?

Can it fade?

Can it be hidden?

Our True Nature

When you answer these questions, you are answering questions about your fundamental nature.

(24:20)



Maybe you gained some insight into the nature of your true self during this meditation, or maybe you did not. Either way, various wisdom teachers tell us our true self is aware, alive, uncreated, unborn and undying. It is the source of all form, all energy, all life, and all love. It not separate from us, but is always with us. It is our deepest and truest nature. It cannot be sick or harmed.

Just be with that for a moment.

For perhaps the first time, consciously, you are becoming aware of your true self. Forms come and go, but the formless emptiness has always been.

Nothing can touch, hurt, or injure the empty awareness which we are.

The more aware of the formless we become, the less we will be disturbed, confused, or upset by the constantly changing forms we interact with.

Even the most powerful changes that take place cannot overwhelm the unchanging emptiness which underlies all form.

You don't have to try to be with the formless, it is there already. You only need to remember that. And to respect that. And be present with that when the ego is active.

Happiness, peace, and love are the core of who we are. Ego confuses us about this. Stillness, spaciousness, formlessness, emptiness reminds us of this truth.

(27:10)



Sharing of the Merits

I invite you to calmly feel whatever sensations you feel in the heart area. Take a moment to offer yourself gratitude and respect for all that arose, and your efforts to kindly, flexibly, and skillfully be with it.

You may feel your heart space, and try to feel the meaning behind the kind words I chant, as we lovingly share the merits of our practice with all people, all beings, and all life everywhere.

*We share any merits gained from this **practice** with all beings and all life **everywhere**.*

*May all beings and all life **everywhere** be free from **suffering** and **misery**.*

*May all beings and all life **everywhere** abide in a deep and **lasting** peace.*

*May all beings and all life **everywhere** know the highest forms of **happiness** and be at ease.*

*May all beings and all life **everywhere** know their deepest **essence** to be: joy, peace, compassion, and unconditional, **boundless** love.*

*May all beings and all life **everywhere** be liberated, fully liberated, **permanently** liberated.*

Ring Bell
(30:00)

