A guided meditation to start off 2023

By Vu Le

Hi everyone, I know today is a rough day, since many of us are getting back to work after, hopefully, a decent few days off spending time with our family and/or watching White Lotus 2. That's why I have (poorly and at the very last minute) written a guided meditation to help you get back into the swing of things and start 2023 off right. Find a comfortable spot, such as under the cover in your bed, or perhaps in the fetal position in your supply closet, and scroll along.

Let us begin by taking in a deep, full breath. Breathe in. Hold your breath for several seconds. Now slowly exhale. Let any negative energy of last year go.

In and out. Today is a brand new day, it is a brand new year, and this is a brand new you.

In and out. Not that the old you was bad. Actually, the old you kicked some serious ass! In fact, let's take a moment to appreciate the old you.

Breathe in and out. See yourself fully as you were last year. Tired. Probably looking kind of haunted and disheveled, maybe freaking out about some report or meeting or some feedback you got or something. It was a difficult year, and you overcame countless barriers and hardships.

Take a deep breath and slowly exhale. You made it to this year without strangling anyone or leaving civilization to live off-grid in a bunker with a composting toilet. That itself is an incredible accomplishment.

Inhale. This is a year of being and resting. Of letting go and forgiveness. Forgive yourself for your various and inevitable mistakes and failures. Let any guilt you feel over the many shortcomings you have dissipate like a gentle rain.

Exhale. We are still in a pandemic, and just resting and simply being, that is often enough. You are enough, you smart and sexy unicorn, you.

Inhale. This week colleagues will ask you about your resolutions. Several will mention exercising more, or eating less sugar, or whatever "Blood Flow Restriction" is.

If you have resolutions you're excited about, that's great. If not, it's completely ok to have none. Your body is magical. It carries your mind and spirit and lets you experience the world and connect with people. It is wonderful and imperfect, like the rest of you, and if it just wants to lay on the couch in all its paunchy glory like a cat this year, that's completely fine. Feel gratitude for your beautiful, creaking, ageing corporeal form.

Take a deep breath and look around you. See the beautiful space you are in. Yes, it is a mess. But you have cleared a corner to look presentable on video meetings; take moment to feel proud. No one needs to know of the dumpster fire that is the rest of your place.

Breathe in. Let your mind wander to your email inbox. There are so, so many emails. Imagine each a grain of sand on a beautiful beach. Take another deep breath. Now think of the numerous things on your to-do list. Imagine them as endless stars in the sky.

Like the sand and stars, your emails and to-dos are infinite and will be there forever. Long after you are gone, an ephemeral footprint effaced by the tide, your emails and to-do items will remain. Visualize yourself walking on the sand and under the stars, sandwiched between two beautiful layers of infinity.

Exhale. On days like today it's ok and normal to have anxiety brought on by your work, anxiety filled with drudgery. It is valid to doubt that your work makes any sort of difference in the world. Acknowledge these feelings, and then imagine them melting like chocolate chips in the microwave.

Just know that your actions do make a difference, whether you're taking minutes, running programs, or stacking chairs, as surely a rock tossed into a lake at night creates ripples you may never see.

Breathe in deeply. You are alive in a world full of possibility and you're doing amazing work. Take a moment to admire your entire being and appreciate your awesomeness.

One last time, breathe in and out. You are brilliant and amazing and this year will be great. Take the rest of the day off.

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