



The following meditation is led by Tara Brach. To access more of my meditations or join my e-mail list, please visit www.tarabrach.com.

As you come into stillness, let your attention come to the heart area. And you might feel your breath and feel it at the heart. We take these moments to reflect on our intention for being here. Say, you might ask yourself, what really brings you to practice? What is it that your heart longs for? What matters to you? I sense that there's a prayer or yearning in some way for more presence, more open heartedness, more connection with the sacred or wisdom, peace. Must feel what is sincerely there. What matters? You might gently scan through your body and sense if there's any part of your body that wants to let go a little right now. Where is it possible to soften or relax a bit?

Feel your whole body sitting here breathing and extending the breath now so that the in breath is longer, deeper, fuller, breathing in, and a slow out breath. Slow enough so you can feel the sensations of letting go. And again, a nice long deep in breath and a slow out breath letting go, letting go, letting go. And one more in breath, nice full deep inhale and a slow release, softening down the length of your body. Letting the breath resume in its natural rhythm. Sensing with the inflow that you can open and relax more. And with the outflow or releasing, relaxing outward.

Shifting your awareness away from the body and begin to listen to the play of sounds around you. Notice them all. So, you're listening not just with your ears but your whole body and your whole awareness, taking everything in evenly, globally. Noticing the close in sounds like the appearance of these words, the spaces between, the soft sounds in the room and those that are most distant. Just listen. You might sense that there's nothing to do. Sounds are known spontaneously. Notice how sounds arise and vanish, leaving no trace. Just letting sounds wash through including the sounds of these gongs or bells that I'll be playing. They arise and they vanish in the open space of awareness.

Sounds disappear and then appear. New open space of awareness. As you listen, let yourself sense, feel or imagine in any way you can, that your mind is not limited to the size of your head. Sense that your mind is expanding, becoming huge in awareness that is open light the sky, clear and vast like space. Sense, picture, or feel in any way you can that the awareness of your mind opens in every direction like the sky. Notice how the sounds you hear arise and pass like clouds and they open space of your own mind.

Relax in this openness and just listen.

Letting the sounds come and go like clouds in the vast sky of your own awareness, appearing and disappearing without resistance.



Sounds come and go like clouds or bubbles. You're the space of awareness.

As you rest in this open awareness, Notice too, how thoughts and images also arise and vanish in this space just like sounds. Let them come and go without resistance. Spacious awareness has no struggle. Pleasant and unpleasant thoughts and feelings also move through the space of mind like clouds. Ideas and memories, joy and sorrow arise and vanish like clouds. As you rest in the clear open sky of mind, rest in this spacious awareness. It is your home.

Now, let the spacious awareness notice your body as well. In this space of awareness, the body is felt as a field of changing sensations, pressure, and tinkling, hard and soft, warm and cool, vibrating and pulsing all floating in awareness. Relax and let the sensations float and change while you are at ease.

Let the awareness be vast like sky, open and spacious. Rest in this openness. Let sensations float and change. Allow sounds to come and go like clouds in a clear open sky. Let thoughts, images, and feelings arise and pass as they will like waves or clouds. The mind remains transparent, timeless and without conflict, allowing all things but not limited by them. Let thoughts and images, feelings, arise and pass like waves or clouds. Relaxing back into that openness of sky. The mind remains transparent, timeless, and without conflict, allowing all things but not limited by them.

Finally allowing yourself to experience this spacious awareness as boundless heart space filled with love and compassion, that warmth and tenderness of pure love, that compassion for all those who lose their way. Feel how this heart space includes our world. With the depth of tenderness, let this sky, this hard space be one of loving awareness. Relax into it. Trust it. It is your own true nature. It is home.

In these last few moments of silence, resting in this heart space and sensing your prayer for your own being and for all beings and when you next hear the sounding of the gong it will be the invitation to open your eyes and shift from formal meditation.

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