

Hi everyone. Anchors are important tools in meditating. As a reminder, an anchor is something that we focus on to help us stay grounded in our meditation. When our minds inevitably drift away into thought, our anchor is what we return to, to bring ourselves back to meditating. I think it's important to teach as many different anchors as possible to help you find what's right for you.

This is even more important for a disabled audience because some anchors will not be accessible to everyone. But I also think it's important to everyone, because some will just work better for you than others. Switching up an anchor can also be a great way to deal with boredom if you're experiencing that during a meditation.

Continuing on with our series on meditation anchors, tonight we will use sound as our anchor. If that's inaccessible or uncomfortable for you, you can try and focus on your breath like we did last time. I hope by the end of this series you'll find an anchor that works for you, and if not, please talk to me and we'll brainstorm options.

I'm going to start the meditation by ringing a bell once, and I'll ring it three times at the end of the meditation, but I'll let you know before I do in case you're sensitive to sudden noises.

[BELL RINGS]

To begin, if you'd like, you can close your eyes. Or if you prefer, you can soften your gaze or also stare at something fairly neutral like a wall.

Meditations generally start by tuning into your body. Is your body telling you that it needs anything before the meditation begins? Ideally, we will be able to maintain our position for about 20 minutes. So if you need to make any shifts or release any tension in your jaw, in your shoulders, or your brow, or anywhere else in your body, do that now before we start.

Paying attention to your body may be uncomfortable or inaccessible to you, and that's okay. You can also just try and relax and let go of whatever has been occupying your mind.

Let go of the day and just drop into the present moment.

Once you're ready, if it's accessible to you, begin by listening for the sound that's the farthest away that you can hear.

There's no need to identify the source of a sound or give it a label of a good sound or a bad sound. Just listen for what's out there.

You may not be able to hear anything far off in the distance, and that's okay too. Just gently note that to yourself.

Alternatively, you can try and imagine what you might hear if you were able to hear something far off in the distance.

If you live in the city, this could be sounds of traffic or other urban sounds.

If you live in the country, you might hear sounds of nature.

Moving in closer. Try and hear what's just outside your house. Don't force it. Just listen for what's there.

Next, see what sounds you can hear inside your house, but not in the room that you're in.

Perhaps a family member or roommate is moving around or you have a pet playing.

Drawing closer still. What sounds can you hear inside your room?

This includes the sound of my voice. The sounds of your computer or maybe you have a fan running.

Remember, again, we're not looking for good sounds or bad sounds. Just any sound that you hear.

If you find yourself distracted by a sound or maybe annoyed by it, that's okay. Just refocus your attention to nonjudgmental listening.

And now. See if you can hear what noises your body is making.

Can you hear the sound of your breath? Perhaps a gurgle in your digestive system?

Maybe your heart beating. Or some piece of assistive equipment that you use.

What else can you hear?

Now refocus and just allow whatever sound you hear to come in near or far.

I'm going to leave you here for a little while. And it'll come back when we have about half of our meditation left to remind you of your practice.

[Halfway Point]

There's about five minutes left in the meditation, this is just a reminder that if your mind has drifted into thought. That's totally normal and don't take it personally. Just gently refocus your attention on sounds.

[One minute remaining]

The next sound that you'll hear will be the ringing of my bell three times. When the meditation is over, you can slowly bring yourself out of the practice at a pace that's comfortable for you.

[BELL RINGS THREE TIMES]

If it's accessible to you, you might wanna stretch to your body or yawn. Or any way of slowly bringing yourself back to the present moment. Thanks for your practice, everyone.