

Breathing in, I know I am breathing in	In
Breathing out, I know I am breathing out	Out
Breathing in, my breath grows deep	Deep
Breathing out, my breath goes slowly	Slow
Breathing in, I feel calm	Calm
Breathing out, I feel at ease	Ease
Breathing in, I smile	Smile
Breathing out, I release	Release
Dwelling in the present moment	Present moment
I know this is a wonderful moment	Wonderful moment

Breathing in, I know I am breathing in	In
Breathing out, I know I am breathing out	Out
Breathing in, I see myself as a flower	Flower
Breathing out, I feel fresh	Fresh
Breathing in, I see myself as a mountain	Mountain
Breathing out, I feel solid	Solid
Breathing in, I see myself as still water	Still water
Breathing out, I reflect all that is	Reflecting
Breathing in, I see myself as space	Space
Breathing out, I feel free	Free

From *The Blooming of a Lotus*, by Thich Nhat Hanh

Suggestions for practice:

- Sit comfortably. The main considerations are that you are not experiencing discomfort and that the spine is lifting up from the pelvis and the chest is open. This might mean sitting on a chair with your feet resting on the floor, or perhaps sitting in the half or full lotus on the floor. The form of the sitting is of secondary importance to sitting in a way that is comfortable and alert.
- Close the eyes, and start to notice the coming and going of the breath. Never force your breathing, but rather allow the breath to find its own depth and pace.
- Notice where in the body you sense the movement of your breath. Allow your awareness to rest there.
- In addition, begin to pay attention to the sensation at the nostrils and upper lip as you breath in and out.
- As you maintain awareness of the movement of the breath and the sensation at the nostrils, begin to slowly relax your body, from the head to the feet. Take your time.
- Now begin using the words from the meditation. One word for the inbreath, one for the outbreath.
- You might like to keep a clock or watch nearby, as well as a printed version of the meditation. You might decide that you are going to spend 5 minutes on each section of the meditation. With practice, you will start to get a feel for how long 5 minutes is and you will find you have less reliance on the clock. If you spent 5 minutes on each section of the second meditation (In/Out, Flower/Fresh, etc) the meditation would last approximately 25 minutes.
- Another way of measuring how long to stay with each section of the meditation is through counting the breath. This is also an excellent technique for assisting in concentration. You breathe in and count 1, you breathe out and count 1. You breathe in and count 2, you breathe out and count 2. You continue up to 10, and then back down to 1. For example, you might say to yourself: "Flower 1, Fresh 1. Flower 2, Fresh 2" and so on. Depending on the speed of your breathing, you can work out how many of your breaths equals a particular period of time, and thus time your meditation.
- It is important that in the beginning you practice for only as long as feels comfortable. Create a meditation practice that you enjoy. This will encourage you to return to it and make it a regular part of your life.