

WOUNDED HEALER MEDITATION

Week One:

Title: An Invitation to Reimagine

For this first meditation, just begin by relaxing as deeply as you're able while at the same time being as awake and as aware as you can. You can sit in a chair with your feet on the ground, or a meditation cushion or yoga mat if those are comfortable for you. Any position, really, where you feel both relaxed and awake simultaneously. Gently allow your eyes to close as you open now to the inner world.

Bring your awareness to the breath as it rises and falls in your belly. Allow your center of gravity to drop, to shift out of the rational, conceptual, thinking mode of perception and into the body, into that place of resource and grounded presence... bring your awareness now to your lower belly, as a way to ground into the earth and into this unique moment.

Feel your belly expand as you breathe in and contract as you breathe out. If you're able, ensure that you are breathing from the lower belly and not from the chest; in this way you can activate a relaxation response and bring soothing to your nervous system. For some it is helpful to place one or both of their hands on the lower belly to connect with this deepening of the breath at a tactile level. Feel your belly rising and falling as the life energy moves through you.

Imagine that you are fully in tune, in synch, online, and in flow with the heartbeat of the earth. Allow yourself to be held, by the stars, the oceans, the moon, the cosmos, and the divine.

So, together, let us take a few slow and deep breaths from the lower belly as you anchor into this moment, building a grounded resourcing presence that you can call on at any time. We'll take 5 breaths together now.

Just a few more slow, deep breaths with your awareness lightly on the expansion and contraction of your lower belly, attuning to the very center of being, and resting, alive, in that. If it feels natural, you can breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth, and allow the exhale to be audible, as a symbol of fully letting go and surrendering into the creative potential of this moment. If you're unable to breathe through your nose, that is fine; just do what is comfortable.

Now, let go of the breath and the belly and open your awareness to the mystery of this here-and-now moment. Open to whatever visitor is longing to come into the tavern, the tavern of your own soul - a voice, a feeling, an image, a sound, a sensation in the body. These are the soul-visitors in this moment, come not to harm or distract you, but for communion. If you watch

them carefully, you can see and feel and sense them being born, dancing for a few moments, and then dissolving into the vastness. They are evidence of the miracle of form as it makes its way into the world of time and space, with you as its vessel, with you as the *vas hermeticum* of the alchemist, the hermetically-sealed vessel in which the Great Work, or opus, can unfold. The open, luminous space in which the heavy leaden condition can finally be transmuted into pure gold.

Lightly meet whatever appears, touching it with a warm, curious presence. No need to understand or work anything out, or shift, change, or transform what appears in this moment. This is an embodied, sensual meditation where we practice intimacy with the manifestations of the soul as they emerge out of the unknown and into conscious awareness. As we slow down and our perception is cleansed, we begin to perceive this entire movement as the activity of love itself. Immerse yourself in the overall felt sense of the moment, a holy moment, with the breath as your friend, guide, and fellow traveler.

If you become too distracted by any particular thought or feeling or image, just notice that and rejoice in a moment of pure recognition... and gently bring your attention back to the rising and falling of the belly and the holding of the earth. Return to that place of embodied, attuned, grounded resourcing.

Underneath all of the thinking, the voices, the passing feelings and memories, emotions, and sensations, is a raw tender place that is a storehouse of tremendous creativity and power. You may notice a subtle ache here, or a burning, a soreness, or even a shakiness in the depths. You might feel this in your heart or belly or throat, or perhaps it's somehow not really located in any particular part of the physical body, but more of an energetic experience.

Imagine a source of light filling this achy raw tender place and that light expanding throughout your entire being... through your organs and cell tissue and into the subtle pathways of your inner body... all becoming filled with this golden substance.

Sink into this open, creative place of unknowing and allow an image to arise, an image which represents healing to you, or awakening, or union with God or the beloved or with the Self. The image could be one of an archetypal figure such as the Buddha or Kwan Yin or Christ or Mary, or an image from nature, such as the moon or a star or a tree or a river... or an unidentified guide or helper, even a friend from the ordinary world. It could be an unknown source of light or grace or mercy. Any image that evokes comfort, protection, nurturing, and holding.

This "image" may be something you "see" with your inner sight, or a sound or melody, like the beat of a drum; or just an overall felt sense that you are in the presence of something alive, something sacred, something holy. It could just be a sense of warmth and presence, an immense silence, or an inner intuitive knowing.

Rest in this presence and allow yourself to enter into communion with it, resting in a state of open receptivity. And listen. Feel. Sense.

Share with this presence the intention that you have at this moment in your life, to take care of yourself in a new way, to enter into the mystery, to attune to the wisdom of your heart that has been trying to reach you; to listen, finally, to the soul and what it is that *it* wants in this life. In words that will be unique to you, or by way of silence or in any other way that feels resonant, state your vow or intention or aspiration in the presence of this holy other, that vow to no longer abandon yourself, to no longer turn from your unique sensitivities and eccentricities, to no longer postpone full participation in the bounty of this world, to no longer pathologize the wound but to redeem it.

And then allow yourself to rest deeply in this spacious atmosphere of presence - listening, feeling, sensing, opening.

And after a few moments, allow this experience to completely dissolve, for the visualization and the meditation to disappear into the vastness. Bring your awareness back to the rise and fall of the belly, to your embodied presence on the earth, breathing slowly and deeply, for as long as you'd like.

When you're finished, if you feel drawn, write in your journal any reflections about the meditation, any insights or images that may have come, any dialogues with any figures that may have appeared, or any thoughts or feelings you have about your experience. Or, paint or draw what you have seen, act it out in movement or dance, write a poem or story about what you have seen, or express it in any other way that you feel called.