



Video Transcript

Walking In Nature Meditation

Join me as we go on a walk together.

Walking can be therapeutic on so many levels. You're going to get a chance to get away from screen,

to simply use your eyes to look upon the most beautiful parts of nature around you.

We need a break, not only from the electronics that we're exposed to.

But your eyes, they long to be used. They want to see a horizon line.

Your eyes want to see landscapes and views that are far-reaching.

So if you happen to be in a cityscape, like I am most of the time,

Take moments to look up and look at cloud.

Take in the sky and

give your eyes the opportunity to shift and to know that they don't have to just keep focusing on the screen in front of you.

And when you give your eyes the opportunity to work, to see long distances,

and then to shift and to look at... that's closer to you,

anything that spontaneously draws your eyes to it.

That's when you can also change your perspective mentally,

not just literally your visual field,

but when you allow yourself to take in horizons and vistas that are expansive.

you can expand the visionary capacity of your mind.

So take about 30 seconds of silence just to use your eyes.

There. Notice how your brain's activity is starting to shift.

And if it's hard to feel your brain and you're wondering, well,

what does that even mean, Mel? What do you mean my brain's activity? Think about the speed of your

thoughts.

As you're walking and delighting in spontaneous viewing,
allow that to become a disruption to the constant chatter that goes on in our minds.

When you are delighting in the unexpected, in your expansive visual field.

That's when you can start to ease into a completely different state of being.

You're no longer driven by a calendar, a task.

Your level of stimulation is going to change.

Let this ease you into a slower pace.

Begin slowing your steps.

Remember, this is about creating a sense of expansion and
relief for

your body and your mind.

So start to slow down. Literally, just take slower steps and be kind to yourself.

If you find this to be difficult, it's normal. You might start taking really slow steps.

And then you might find yourself falling back into a much faster pace. And that is okay.

It's totally normal. Don't worry about it. This is a walking meditation.

So simply bring your focus back. And in fact,

congratulate yourself for noticing, hey, I was just starting to speed up.

But I don't have to do that right now and slow down again.

Doesn't that feel good?

It's liberating to your body and your brain to not have to keep running on somebody else's
dictated

time schedule or table.

You are now the boss. You are in charge of this pace and you have complete influence over this
experience.

Notice how walking slowly and trying to maintain a slower pace can influence your breathing.

Is

it possible for you to start? slowing down your breath.

Let's play a little game together. What if you were only to walk on your inhale?

I'll walk you through that part. Pun intended.

So as I inhale, I'm going to let my left foot make complete contact with the ground.

And then I'm going to completely stop as I exhale.

Then you can start picking up the right foot, inhaling,
completing the step, and then pausing completely on the...

We're going to be at this for a while, so not forever, but I really want you to sink into this
pace. Okay. Left foot. Inhale.

Exhale. Pause.

Right foot. Inhale.

Exhale. Pause.

One more time with me. Inhale. Left foot.

Exhale.

Pause.

Inhale.

Right foot.

Exhale. Pause.

Now, that's with me dictating that rhythm. I'm going to give you just a little bit of silent time to try finding a rhythm that works for you or stick to what we were just doing.

Try it for another 30 seconds.

You're doing really well.

Even if you find yourself experiencing some resistance to moving this slowly.

Please know that that is normal. We don't really move that slowly ever.

And we're trying to create a contrast experience to the pace we typically use, particularly during a heavy workday or even week.

But slowing down with such intentional connection to the breath can...

bring you into a deep awareness about the speed and rhythm you've been operating under.

And that's okay that you have been if it's been very fast. But now it's time to switch gears.

And it can be so helpful to swing the pendulum of your experience far in the other direction for the sake of creating awareness.

So what if you allow your breath and your steps to find a rhythm that's not as slow as the one we

were just experiencing,

but one that's maybe a little faster, but not as quick as the one you started out with?

Yeah, remember, you're the boss. We want to bring some awareness to this walk, to this pace.

And when you do that, and you practice that here, you're going to have a way better chance at having influence over the sense of urgency and speed that sometimes sneaks up on you when you're

under stressful conditions. Whenever you need to magically slow down time.

And whenever you want to create a sense of expansion for the space around you, just slow your breath and walk the way you were a moment ago.

Great job.

Now that we've brought so much attention to your walking in this slowed down place, can you feel your feet?

Why don't you take a pause wherever you are, as long as it's safe, of course.

And can you bring your feet into alignment underneath you? Make them about hips or shoulder width apart.

And then I want you to rock ever so gently into your toes and then shift your weight back into your heels.

And do that a few more times. Shift the weight into the toes and you can...

Test your balance. You might shift your weight so far that you can feel your toes curling up underneath you to support you. That's fine. Soften your knees. There's no reason to strain those joints. And then you can slowly rock back into the heels. And you can really test your balance there by allowing the toes to pick up a little bit. Yeah, you can catch yourself anytime you need to. Don't worry.

I sometimes... like to really test how far I can pick up my toes.
Maybe I'll do one foot at a time.
And then when I press my weight into the toes to pick up my heels, I use it as an opportunity to do
a full calf raise.
Not because I'm working on my calves, although we're always working on our calves,
but because it's kind of fun. It's a little playful and whimsical.
To just see how far you can take that weight-bearing activity.
To create a sense of sway in your body. And of course,
that sense of sway, how far you go forward and back,
should meet your body's needs and limitations. Respect what you can do in this moment and have
gratitude for the fact that you have feet. And you can do this.
It's the simple things, really.
Continue to rock into the heels and the toes.
But take in any sensory information that you find pleasurable.
This should be delighting to your senses.
What are you looking at? Can you find a beautiful flower?
Can you observe different shades of green?
Is there a body of water to gaze upon.
Take a moment to yourself as you continue to gently sway forward and back
and enjoy letting your eyes feast upon the nature around you.
Begin to slow that sway and find the middle of your feet.
Become aware of your weight-bearing habits. Now that we're putting more weight into the middle of
our feet, Can you take a moment to shift into the right hip,
the right leg, the right foot, and
then you can shift into the left leg, the left foot, letting the hips move a little bit.
It's nice to let your hips have a moment of expression and freedom,
and that can be really useful for stiff backs or knees or ankles.
And then evenly distribute your weight over both feet as best as you can.
And then start walking again.
Notice how it's different this time. Notice that all of that work we just did,
which was kind of fun.
It wasn't heavy work.
But it was work that made you aware of your weight bearing, of your feet,
and what we've just done together. we snuck in a little proprioceptive work.
Proprioception is the fancy word we use to describe the process of nerve feedback that tells your
brain where your body is in space at all times.
Most of your proprioceptive nerves are in your feet.
They are not the only nerve pathways. They give feedback to your body.
and to your brain about its position in space. But the contact with the earth through your feet is

primary to a sense of centering and grounding. And all of that weight shifting forward and back, side to side, it woke up the muscles in your feet, made them a little worse up, started to activate those proprioceptive nerves. And you might have even woken up some of the mechanoreceptors in your fascia. Yes, you're getting a little bit of science today too.

Delight in that information.

Delight in the fact that the simplest use of your body can breed amazing shifts in perspective and

a state of being.

Enjoy walking. with this enhanced sense of awareness. Can you create a visualization to go along

with it?

Can you imagine light under your feet that lights up the ground as you walk?

Sometimes when I want to feel really connected to the earth, I imagine myself attached to the earth's surface with taffy. So even though I can pick up my foot freely,

I've always got a little bit of a sticky attachment, an elastic attachment to the earth.

I find that to be very, very balancing and really useful if I'm having an emotionally intense time.

Anything we can do to come back to the present is going to be super useful.

to any practice you have that's meditative or breath work or maybe even yoga.

Anything you do in which you move your body to help you become more present. And when you layer

that experience with a visualization and you use your imagination,

then you further amplify that sense of becoming present.

It's good to add a little fantasy. and to daydream a little bit. It keeps you supple mentally.

It allows for creative thinking. So play with some imagery now. Come up with something.

Whatever works for you is what matters.

Why don't you take a moment to pause again and stretch your arms overhead.

Yeah, it feels good to involve the whole body. We've been having such a focus on our grounded experience that you might have forgotten about the sky. Can you look up and reach into the sky and

invoke a little bit of its energy?

It's okay. You're grounded. You can let yourself lift up a little bit and become a little more

active in your nervous system and energized by reaching up and stretching. You can even pick up an

opposite foot to the arm you reach up with as you do this. Or you can swing the arms around you a

little bit and become aware of other parts of you.

You might want to roll over into a forward fold or try standing on one leg and bringing a knee towards your belly. And I'm using my hands to do that. You don't have to get too fancy.

It's not a test of your movement, just a way for you to express through joints that may have gotten

a little stiff today.

Yeah, good. Especially when you bring those arms overhead, you can take deep breaths as if your

armpits have nostrils. One of my favorite teachers used to say that, and it would instantly open me

up in a different way. It was fantastic.

Hey, let's make sure that the way... treating your body also translates to the way you want to treat your face. You might want to do a little bit of head, neck, and shoulder movement in this pause.

I'm sighing and expressing my pleasure at doing something as simple as stretching my neck and

rolling my shoulders. It feels delightful.

Start to finish up our walk

by listening to anything that's around you right now.

This is not about looking for a particular bird song or hoping that you don't hear any kind of vehicle. If you happen to be around other humans or you're in a city, that's going to happen. It's about allowing your ears to tell you the story of where you are.

You're just focusing on another sensory organ so that you can further enhance your sense of present being.

And as you listen, you might hear really lovely things like a bird song or maybe somebody's radio.

And that's great. But you don't have to speed up.

Just take a few extra moments with me to soak it in.

And if you're somewhere where you feel safe to do so, you can close your eyes, keep walking. This for a couple steps and listen. And what happens to your sensing when you are led

by the ears?

I should probably be quiet for another 30 seconds to let you experience that fully.

Where I am, I can hear raindrops that have collected in leaves.

And now when the wind blows and it stopped raining,

All that water begins to cascade. It's beautiful. But it's not something I would have noticed had I been so caught up in my mind and my thoughts. That's why it's so important to be in the body, to remember your senses.

We didn't even get to fully immersive experiences around smells.

You might have gone by a rose bush or smelled a different kind of flower.

You may be walking with water, can use the sensation of the water in your mouth and what it tastes

like to bring you to the present. Any of your senses are perfect to use whenever you need a break

from the rat race mentality or intense productivity standard that tends to plague all of us.

These are very... basic, traditional uses of the senses for modern-day problems.

And I hope you remember this. You can use it anytime, not just when you're walking.

Anytime you just need a little break, go to your senses.

I'm so grateful that you hung out with me, that you took this walk with me today.

Thank you.

I hope you continue forward in peace and delight and that you practice this again.

Take care of yourself and be well.