Nourish

Intuitive Eating

# Interoceptive Awareness Meditation

 *[Facilitator: Read from script or play audio version: bit.ly/3d2AQNO]*

SCRIPT:

*[Facilitator: Speak slowly and take time to pause after each statement. Longer pauses are indicated in the script.]*

Begin by sitting comfortably in your chair and relaxing your hands either in your lap or at your sides.

I invite you to close your eyes or gaze gently at the floor in front of you.

Take a few moments to make any subtle adjustments you need to become more comfortable.

Turn your awareness to your breath. You are breathing in and out through your nose. Keep your breath relaxed and natural. You are not seeking to control your breath in any way.

*[Pause for several seconds.]*

With each exhale, see if you can relax more deeply into your chair – feeling completely supported by the Earth beneath you.

*[Pause for several seconds.]*

Today we are going to work on what’s known as interoceptive awareness. Or, more simply, body awareness.

This level of awareness is useful for more obvious body states, such as hunger or needing to go to the restroom.

But it can also help us become more mindful of our other states, such as our heart rate, our emotions, how our bodies feel after a meal in our digestive system.

With this awareness, we can make more conscious decisions about what we eat, understand how we feel in different environments, and make adjustments in our lives to feel more physically and emotionally balanced.

As always, if you feel any discomfort during this meditation, stop and allow your breathing to return to normal and relax.

Last, don’t worry if you have trouble becoming aware of certain organs or bodily states as we progress through this meditation. Just be mindful and follow as best as you can. Some parts of this activity will feel easier than others.

Now, for the next few moments, simply notice your breath, your inhalation and exhalation.

You may notice other aspects of the breath, such as your rib cage expanding on the inhale and contracting on the exhale.

You may notice your belly as it rises and falls.

You may even feel cooling sensations on your nostrils every time you inhale.

Simply notice the breath.

*[Pause for at least 15 seconds.]*

Before we move on, see if you notice any emotions in this area, such as serenity, amusement? Something else?

*[Pause for at least 30 seconds.]*

Now, I’d like you to draw your awareness to your stomach.

Notice if the area around your belly is experiencing any sensations such as relaxation or tightness. Notice if you feel hungry – if your belly is empty, or full – if you’ve just eaten.

What other sensations do you notice around your stomach and belly?

*[Pause for at least 15 seconds.]*

Try to observe them with curiosity and without judgement.

Once again, notice any emotions that might be linked to your stomach.

Oftentimes, people have beliefs around the food that they eat, perhaps feeling guilty if they’ve eaten a particular food, or proud if they ate healthfully.

Or, perhaps you feel joy as it calls to mind a pleasant meal you’ve just enjoyed. Simply notice those emotions without judgement.

*[Pause for at least 30 seconds.]*

Next, draw your attention to your brain.

Notice if your mind feels clear and alert or foggy and fatigued.

Or, maybe you are sensing something else altogether.

What is it? Notice if your head and face feel cool or warm.

What other sensations do you notice?

 *[Pause for at least 15 seconds.]*

And before we move on, are there any emotions that you notice that are associated with your brain? If thoughts surface here, turn them into clouds and allow them to float by. Return to noticing your brain.

*[Pause for at least 30 seconds.]*

And last, draw your awareness to your heart.

Can you hear your heart beat?

Or perhaps you feel your heart beating in your chest or in your head.

When you focus on your heart, what do you sense?

*[Pause for at least 15 seconds.]*

What do you feel in the area of your heart?

*[Pause for at least 30 seconds.]*

Return to your breath, simply noticing the inhalation and exhalation.

Pause here for a few moments, breathing with ease.

*[Pause for at least 30 seconds.]*

When you are ready, gently rock your head from side to side, wiggle your fingers and toes and come back into this moment.

Open your eyes whenever you are ready.