

The Sound of Nature.

The modern world is quite noisy. Years ago, humans were much more attuned to the sounds of nature. Today, on the other hand, many of us experience a constant hum of traffic, electronics, construction, and any other sounds associated with the industrial world.

This practice explores three different exercises that can help us to come back to the sounds of nature. The first invites us to be present with whatever noises are humming in our current environment – however ‘natural’ or ‘unnatural’. The second two are explorations of true nature sounds.

Practice 1

Take a moment to find a comfortable seat where you can close your eyes for a five minute meditation. Once you are ready to begin, let your eyes close gently and take a few breaths to ground yourself.

Open your awareness to all the sounds that fill your ears, focusing exclusively on your sense of hearing for five minutes. Note all the sounds that present themselves, whether near or far, soft or loud, pleasant or unpleasant.

If irritation or judgment arises, take a longer, deeper exhalation on your next breath, coming back to the sounds that flow through you. See if you can be present and patient with the discomfort.



Reflect:

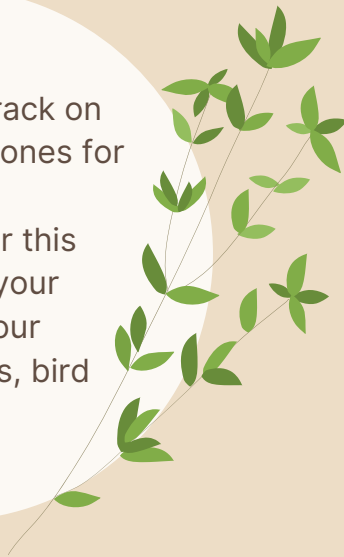
How did it feel to be present with the sounds of your environment? What judgments arose (if any) and how did it feel to consciously soften these?



Practice 2

For this second practice, you will need to find a nature track on an online source that you can listen to through headphones for five to ten minutes.

Find a safe and comfortable place where you can rest for this length of time and then tune out the world as you close your eyes and listen to the stream of nature sounds that fill your awareness. This might be a track featuring ocean sounds, bird songs, or any other tune of nature.



Reflect:

How did this time-out to explore the sounds of nature feel for you? Did you notice any shifts in mind or body as you listened to this track?

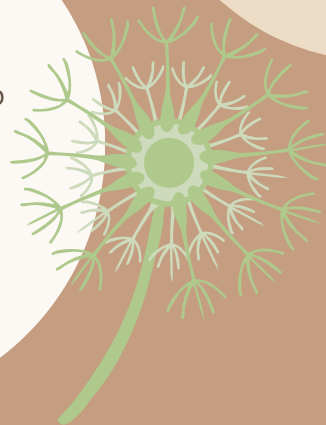


Practice 3

This final exercise requires you to find a place in nature where you can rest on the grass or on a blanket – as far away from the bustling world as possible. When you have the time and space to explore this, ensure you feel safe and comfortable as you lean back, close your eyes, and begin to take in the sounds of nature.

Let your attention be fully present on the sounds that fill the air around you. What do you notice? What do these sounds stir in you? Spend ten minutes or longer simply observing the natural world through your sense of sound.

If you notice the mind wanders, take a long, deep breath and then come back to the sounds of nature.



Reflect:

What was this experience like for you? How did it feel to be present with the truest sounds of nature? Did you observe any shifts in mind or body?

