



Anxiety Workshop Meditation

*offered by the
MU Student Health Center*

Visualization meditation — The Beach

To begin, get into a comfortable position, uncross your arms and legs and rest your hands on your legs. Close your eyes or soften your gaze. Take a deep, slow breath in through your nose, hold... and out through your mouth. As you breathe in and out focus on how your body feels at this moment. Breathe in... hold... breathe out... Feel the pace of your breathing and heart rate slow as you enter into deeper relaxation. Breathe in... hold... breathe out. Feel your body sinking more and more into deep relaxation. Breathe in... hold... breathe out.

Relax your body by releasing any areas of tension. Allow your arms to go limp... then your legs. Feel your arms and legs becoming loose and relaxed.

It is a bright summer day. It is late in the day. You are sitting on a beach at the ocean. The sun is radiating warmth and comfort as it shines boldly. You can feel the heat on your face as you breathe in... hold... and breathe out.

The sky is clear and bright blue without a cloud in sight. The grains of sand beneath your feet shine from the sunlight and warm the soles of your feet, they tickle you as you notice your feet sitting gently on the sandy shore. You hear the sound of the waves washing gently, moving in and out of shore as you breathe in... hold... breathe out.

You continue to absorb the scene and as you breathe in, you can smell the faint, fresh smell of sunscreen. As the breeze blows you can smell the clean salt water, you can feel the light soft ocean mist as your face is gently cooled by the breeze and the ocean working together to provide you with the perfect temperature below the hot sun and you continue to breathe in... hold... breathe out.

As you look out you see the beach is wide and long, the water is a bright blue-green against the white clean sand. You can see the waves washing up onto the sand as you breathe in, you see them pause, and you watch the waves recede back toward the ocean as you breathe out.

As moves your breath so do the waves, washing up... and pausing... and flowing back down. Enjoy the ever-repeating rhythm of the waves... With each motion of the wave as it slides in pauses and then out, you find yourself feeling more and more relaxed.

The tranquility creates a sense of calmness, peace.

You can see far off in the distance, several seagulls swooping and diving toward the water, you can hear their calls. As you breathe in... hold... and breathe out... you watch as they seem to dance in the sky, moving up and down with such ease and grace.

You look around and see a line of trees behind you, notice how they sway gently as the light breeze blows. All parts of the scene, like all parts of your body, seem to be moving rhythmically and gently without a right or a wrong. And you continue to breathe in... hold... breathe out.

For a moment let yourself drift... let your mind's eye look around the scene for other things to become aware of, then bring your attention inward to become aware of how deeply relaxed your mind and body feel right now. Remind yourself that you can create these feelings on your own at any time during your daily activities.

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When you are ready to return from your vacation, do so slowly. Bring yourself back to your usual level of alertness and awareness. Keep with you the feeling of calm and relaxation... feeling ready to return to your day.

Open your eyes, stretch your muscles... and become fully aware of your immediate surroundings... notice how refreshed you feel... and how full of energy.

You can practice this visualization exercise as often as you wish, to provide yourself with a mental vacation whenever you need it. Visualization is a skill that can be learned. Just like our other skills, the more you practice, the more skilled you will become and more effectively you will be able to relax using visualization.