

Guided Visualization

The Hunt



Start by finding a comfortable position for your body. You can close your eyes or shift your gaze downward to reduce visual distractions. Notice where your thoughts go as you bring your attention inward. Notice any feelings you have. There is no need to judge them or try to change them. Just acknowledge they are there as you shift your attention to your breath. Take a relaxing breath in through your nose, and out through your mouth. Pay attention to the breath going in and see if you can draw your breath a little deeper in your body and hold for a brief moment before gently releasing it. And again. On this next breath, shift your attention to where your breath settles as it leaves your body and hold for a short moment before your next relaxing breath. Try and have this breath settle a little deeper than the last.

As you breathe, feel your body and your mind start to relax. It is natural to have your mind wander; just gently notice it and bring your attention back to your breath.

Imagine you have arrived at your favorite hunting spot. It is just about dawn, darkness and silence are all around you and it is hard to see. The cold, crisp air is nipping at your face and hands as you gear up. You can smell the freshness of the woods as you quietly trek through the rustling leaves and over the fallen branches to get to your stand. It is only you and nature. Nothing else matters but this moment as you breathe it in.

As you get deeper into the woods, your senses are picking up on the shadows within the darkness and sounds around you. The tree limbs are faintly creaking as the leaves crinkle under the gentle pressure of the blowing wind. As quiet as you are, you can hear each step taking you closer to your stand. You hear a faint crunch off to the right and you pause your steps as your breath holds for a moment while your attention shifts to find whatever made the sound. Your eyes are scanning the area and then you see it. The outlined tail of a young buck who must have caught your scent as he silences his step and stares in your direction. He flicks his tail before running off into the woods.

Your breath becomes your focus again to calm your racing heart as you continue to move closer to your stand. You continue to breathe and walk with quiet intention as you reach your stand. You skillfully climb as you have done countless times before, taking care to be silent in your movements. You settle into your chair as you take in the magnificent view from your perch. You take a moment of appreciation as you let go of everything that weighs you down and focus only on the silence, the thrill of what is to come and just being in this moment of time as day breaks.

Your eyes track movement and your attention shifts and focuses on the five deer that are grazing and slowly moving closer to shooting range. You take three calming breaths as you view these beautiful creatures through your sights. They remain out of range as you give thanks for the chance encounter and the perfect day that eliminated the stress of the week.

Hold on to this feeling of contentment and relaxation as you return your awareness to the present. Take a breath as you feel your feet or body connecting to the surface you are touching. Feel yourself reconnecting with the sights and sounds around you as you take one more breath before moving on with your day.