

## MtM Session – Trail Walking to Relax

This **relaxation script**<sup>1</sup> will guide you to take a relaxing walk - not just in your mind, but actually physically walking to relax.

Throughout this exercise, monitor your body. Stop or ease up if you experience pain or discomfort. **Keep all physical movements gentle, smooth, and relaxed.**

### **Readying**

Begin by preparing for your relaxing walk. Ensure that you have suitable clothing for the weather and are wearing supportive footwear.

### **In preparation to walk - limbering up**

Standing still in one place, take a deep breath in and then exhale. Take another deep breath.

Raise your arms above your head as you breathe in again... and lower your arms as you exhale.

Breathe slowly, deeply, and naturally as you do a few gentle stretches.

Keep your legs straight and bend forward. Place your hands on your knees. Feel the stretch in the back of your legs. Stretch further, placing your hands on your shins...reaching down all the way to your ankles if you are able. Hold this stretch.

Slowly return to an upright position. Shake your right leg gently, shaking out the tension. Shake your left leg.

Raise your arms out to the sides at shoulder height. Keep your arms straight out beside you; now turn your body slightly at the waist to look to the right. Face forward again. Now turn at the waist to face slightly to the left. Return to centre.

Now lower your arms, and shake them gently to shake out the tension.

### **Now ready to walk – six points of focus**

When you are ready to proceed with your walk, go ahead and begin. Walk at whatever pace is comfortable for you. Not too slow.... but not rushing either. Walk comfortably.

1. Focus your attention on the rhythm of your steps.

Left foot.... right foot.... left.... right....

Allow this rhythm to sooth and relax you.

Enjoy the movement of your body. Feel your body becoming energized as your muscles move. Feel your limbs moving.

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<sup>1</sup> Paraphrased from: <http://www.innerhealthstudio.com/relaxing-walk.html>

You can meditate as you walk by focusing your attention on your footsteps. Count your steps as each foot touches the ground. One, two, three, four, one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four....

As your attention wanders, direct your focus again to your footsteps.... one, two, three, four....one...two...

Continue to focus on your footsteps.

2. Feel **your energy** increase with each step. When each foot touches the ground, feel the energy rising all the way from your feet, up through your legs... your hips... body... arms.... all the way to the top of your head.

The slight vibration, when your foot lands on the ground, serves to increase your relaxation and helps you feel calm and energized.

Your legs feel strong, supporting the weight of your body. Notice the **slight weight shifts** that allow you to walk. From heel, to the front of your foot, and then transferring to the heel of the other foot, the front of that foot... back to the first foot.... notice these weight shifts - the shifting of your center of gravity

3. Notice the **ever-repeating pattern** of your steps. It is almost as if your feet are a wheel, rolling and rolling. One part contacts the earth while the other part is in the air. If time slowed down, you would notice that almost imperceptibly the weight shifts from one part of the wheel to the next, and the next, and the next.... until what was the bottom of the wheel is now the top. No part of the imaginary wheel.... and no part of your feet... remains on the ground for long before transferring the weight to another part of your feet. Continuous motion.
4. The **motion** is very relaxing. Imagine the rhythm of your feet.... it is like waves... flowing in and out.... ever repeating....

Allow your breath to flow smoothly, also ever-repeating like waves... in.... and out.... in .... out....

5. Hear the **sounds** of your footsteps. This is a calming and relaxing rhythm.... just listening to this repeated beat. Notice all the repeated rhythms... footsteps... heartbeat... breathing.... this smooth cycle of rhythms that allows you to proceed forward at a leisurely walk.
6. Turn your attention now to **your surroundings**. Notice the environment around you... the surface you are walking on.... the temperature.... the colors..... sounds..... smells.... enjoy your surroundings..... enjoy this relaxing walk.

When ending the walk you will feel alert, refreshed, relaxed, and invigorated.