

Meditation for joy



Who is a source of joy in your life? This guided meditation invites you to think deeply and personally about joy. It helps you celebrate the people and places that bring light to your life while helping you explore a new – and perhaps unexpected – source of joy.

Using ancient words of wisdom found in the Bible, this meditation creates space for you to reflect on the concept of spiritual joy: how did ancient spiritual thinkers understand it, and what could it mean to experience God as a source of joy today?

You are listening to a meditation to help you make room for joy in your life.

Take a moment to make yourself comfortable.

You might want to close your eyes,

Rest your hands,

And let your shoulders relax.

Take a deep breath in,

And gently exhale.

In this meditation, you'll reflect on different sources of joy, all based on expressions of joy in the Bible.

Whether you feel high or low right now, open yourself up to meditating on this biblical joy and let it enter your life.

Let's begin.

The Hebrew songwriter says:

'You make known to me the path of life.

In your presence there is fullness of joy.'

For this writer, the presence of God – a transcendent being – brought full, total joy.

Think of someone who brings you joy.

What is it about them that makes you feel this way?

Call to mind how it feels to be around them.

Rest in that feeling.

What beauty in nature brings you joy?

Call them to mind.

Rest in that feeling.

What about things you do?

Think about activities that bring you joy.

Take a deep breath in,

And gently exhale.

Can you enter into the idea the ancient spiritual writers had about God as their source of joy?

What does it mean to you?

You're invited to enter into the idea the ancient spiritual writers had about God as their source of joy.

One writer reflects that 'God is light; in him, there is no darkness at all.'

Picture a bright light.

Call to mind the beauty it brings.

Reflect on the way it brings warmth,

The way it illuminates and reveals.

How does the idea of this image of God who is all light and all goodness make you feel?

Let that feeling fill your body.

Take a deep breath in,

And imagine yourself inhaling this light.

As you exhale, imagine yourself sharing this light with the rest of the world.

Another writer describes this source of joy as 'a sun and a shield.'

What might it mean for this higher being to be described as a sun and shield – a provider, a protector?

Take a deep breath in and imagine yourself being protected and provided for by this sun and shield.

Gently exhale and think of this spreading to the areas of your life where you need to feel this kind of joy.

Another writer talks about God as 'abounding in steadfast love.'

Think of times you've felt really loved – with faithful, constant, loyal love.

Invite God to make you aware of this kind of love.

Take a deep breath in and imagine yourself breathing in this unfailing love.

As you exhale, imagine yourself breathing out this love to the world.

Another writer reflects: 'you have changed my sadness into a joyful dance; you have taken away my sorrow and surrounded me with joy.'

Call to mind anything that might get in the way of you feeling joyful.

Now, invite this source of joy to come and find you in whatever circumstance you find yourself in.

As you inhale, imagine yourself breathing in joy.

Exhale and imagine yourself breathing out that joy to others.

Are you aware that you yourself are a source of joy?

Think of the friends, family and others in your life to whom you bring joy?

Take a deep breath in,

And a long breath out.

If this brings up difficult feelings, let these feelings rise up out in your breath as you exhale.

The Bible says that God himself expresses his joy over the people he created.

Open yourself up to feeling there's a great, big expansive being who doesn't need you per say but delights in you.

Take a deep breath in and imagine yourself breathing in this deep joy and love.

As you exhale, imagine yourself breathing out love and gratitude.

Let's return to our opening Bible verse:

'You make known to me the path of life.

In your presence there is fullness of joy.'

What does – or could – it feel like to have the path of life made known to you?

Is there any place you have uncertainty of fear?

Invite this presence of full joy to come and show you the way forward.

Do you ever have the feeling there might be a deeper sense of joy that you've never experienced?

If so, why not ask God – the source of joy for these ancient writers – to come and bring you that same sense of joy?

Rest in this space while you welcome this presence.

There are so many places to find joy in the world.

Open yourself up to seeing and experiencing it.

Go into your day, knowing there's a source of joy you can connect with anytime you want.

As this meditation draws to a close, prepare for your day ahead, opening yourself up to seeing and experiencing joy.

Know that you can find the source of joy whenever you want.