

Yoga Nidra for Anxiety Script

A nidra weighted toward the pairs of opposites, which is the part of the practice that does most for an anxious nervous system. Shorter rotation, longer contrasts.

18 min · 5 segments

Eighteen minutes, five segments. Weighted differently from a classic nidra — the opposites section is doubled and the imagery kept deliberately plain.

BEFORE YOU RECORD

- The opposites section is doubled because that is the part that does the work here — moving deliberately between two states teaches an anxious body that states are things it can leave.
- Keep the imagery mundane. Evocative scenes give an anxious mind material to elaborate on, which is the opposite of what you want.
- Rotation is shortened so the practice doesn't ask for twenty-five minutes of stillness from someone who is restless.
- Never let a silence run past 40 seconds. Long gaps invite spiralling.

01. Framing and sankalpa

3 min

[plain and level — an anxious listener reads performed calm as management]

This is a yoga nidra weighted for an anxious body. You don't have to feel calm by the end — trying to feel calm is usually what keeps the feeling in place.

Lie down or sit, whichever you can hold still in. If lying flat makes the feeling worse — and for some people it does — sit propped up instead. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

A sankalpa now. Keep it modest — not “I am completely calm”, which the mind will argue with. Something like: I can be with this. I am safe enough right now. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

Repeat it silently three times. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

02. Short rotation

4 min

[quick and unbroken — the pace is what stops the mind commenting, which matters more here than anywhere]

Attention through the body now, quickly. Hear the word, let it land, move on.

Right hand. Fingers. Palm. Wrist. Forearm. Elbow. Shoulder. Right hip. Thigh. Knee. Calf. Foot.

Left hand. Fingers. Palm. Wrist. Forearm. Elbow. Shoulder. Left hip. Thigh. Knee. Calf. Foot.

Forehead. Eyes. Jaw. Throat. Chest. Belly. The whole back. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

And the whole body together. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

03. Opposites — the working part

6 min

[the core of this version; give each state its full time and make the switch between them clean and unhurried]

Now something the anxious body is usually convinced it cannot do: change state on purpose.

Tension first. Tighten everything — hands, jaw, shoulders, legs — and hold it. *[pause for 8 seconds]*

And release, all at once. Notice that it went. It was there, and now it isn't, and you did that. *[pause for 35 seconds]*

Now heaviness. The whole body heavy, pressed down, too heavy to move. *[pause for 35 seconds]*

And lightness. Weightless, barely resting on anything. *[pause for 35 seconds]*

Now warmth. In the hands, the belly, the face. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

And coolness. Cool air at the nostrils. Coolness across the forehead. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

Let both go. You have just moved between four states in six minutes. Whatever you're feeling is also a state, and states move. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

04. Plain images

3 min

[deliberately dull imagery — name each one once and move on; anything evocative gives an anxious mind something to build on]

Some images now. Ordinary ones. Let each appear and pass without holding it.

A closed door. *[pause 8 seconds between each]*

A glass of water. A folded blanket. An empty chair. A window with grey sky behind it. A stone. A plain wall.

And the space between the eyebrows. Rest there. *[pause for 35 seconds]*

05. Sankalpa and returning

2 min

[honest close — don't claim the anxiety has gone; bring the voice up over the last three lines]

Your sankalpa again. The same sentence, three times. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

You may feel easier. You may feel much the same. Both are ordinary and neither says anything about you. *[pause for 15 seconds, then lift the voice]*

Come back to the room. Move your fingers and toes. Take a fuller breath.

Roll onto your side before you sit up, and go slowly for a few minutes. If most days feel like this rather than just today, that's worth telling someone — a doctor, or someone who knows you well.

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