Cultivating inner and outer connectedness

Most of us have already tasted or had glimpses of this interconnectedness to “the web of life” but may have not fully recognized that it was happening because we were so absorbed in the experience itself. Here are some examples: a time you spent watching a beautiful sunrise or sunset, or out on a beautiful walk in nature, or having an intimate moment with someone you love that made you feel so connected that everything felt just perfect. In such moments, most likely any sense of anxiety was gone and you had a sense that you were part of a big and beautiful universe and that everything was not just okay, but exquisite. Mindfulness practices that cultivate connectedness, like l[oving-kindness practice](https://www.mindful.org/this-loving-kindness-meditation-is-a-radical-act-of-love/)and the “web of life” meditation, can help you experience more of these moments.

This meditation will help you develop a deeper sense of connection—both to the present moment and those around you. Read through the entire script first to familiarize yourself with the practice, then do the practice, referring back to the text as needed and pausing briefly after each paragraph. Set aside about twenty minutes for this practice. Find a comfortable position on a cushion or chair or lying on a bed or the floor. Turn off your phone or other devices so you can remain undisturbed.

* ***Begin by checking in****. Begin by taking a few moments to arrive and settle in by bringing your awareness into your mind and body. Acknowledge how you are feeling and let it be.*
* ***Gently shift to mindful breathing****, being aware of breathing in and out. There’s need to manipulate the breath in any way—just breathing in and out, normally and naturally.*
* ***Shift attention to where you’re seated****. Begin to feel the connection of your body on the chair, cushion, bed, or mat, and feel its connection to the floor. Reflect on the connection of the floor to the building you are in and its connection to the earth farther below.*
* ***Let your awareness expand to include the earth below you.****Feel that sense of being held by the earth below you, and just allow yourself to be held by the earth. You are in a safe space and you can breathe in and out with ease in your body and mind.*
* ***Feel how the earth rises up to hold and embrace you****. There is nothing more you need to do, nowhere you have to go, and no one you have to be. Just being held in the heart of kindness and letting be.*
* ***Bring to mind someone you would hold this way****. Reflect on your loved ones being held in the same way—with safety and ease of body and mind. Reflect on how the earth holds all beings, whether they are acquaintances, strangers, or difficult ones—with no bias, no discrimination, no separation.*
* ***Reflect on how this earth holds all beings****, forsaking none—whether they be small or large. Reflect on how this earth does not exist in a vacuum, that it is connected to a solar system and vast universe. We all are interconnected. Our bodies and the earth, the sun and the stars, are composed of the same matter—the same basic particles, joined in different ways. Feeling into that sense of connection and interconnection that we are all made of stardust. Feeling that sense of being home within your body and mind with a true sense of belonging and connection.*
* ***Return your attention to the breath****. Just breathing in and out, feeling the grace of this universe—no isolation nor separation, feeling that sense of connection and interconnection and being at home in your being. Nothing more you need to do, go, get, or push away. Imperfectly perfect as you are, resting in the heart of this universe.*
* ***Let well-wishes form****. May all beings here and everywhere dwell with peace.*
* **End with smile mindfulness**; continue to sit with your eyes closed and I invite you to in your mind’s eye envision this smile. This smile will capitalize of gratitude and our good feelings. Imagine in your mind’s eye jumping for joy!
* You feel so good right now – we don’t need to spend time on the details of why you feel so good, just focus on the good feelings. Let a smile come to your mouth or smile on the inside. Let us just rest in this smile as we continue to breathe in and out…if your mind wanders, please thanks your mind for their thoughts and bring your focus back to your breathing, your smile, on the good feeling…..after some time bring the group back