

A photograph of a pond with lily pads and a reflection of a building. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent dark green rectangle.

# *Just Breathe*

GUIDED SCRIPTURE  
AND BREATHING  
MEDITATIONS

To Lower Stress & Anxiety

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Cover design and photographs by Kristin Faith Evans

**Disclaimer**

The contents of this book are intended for informational purposes only and are not a substitute for professional medical or mental health treatment. If you suspect that you may have a mental health condition, promptly contact a provider. If at any time the breathing exercises feel uncomfortable, stop and return to normal breathing.



# Introduction

Dear Reader,

I invite you to come away from your day, for just a brief time, to rest with God. I have created these short devotions and exercises to help you connect with God and with yourself in a deeper way. Each devotion is broken up into four simple practices.

**Breathe**—Each devotional will begin with guiding you in deep breathing then in practicing a meditation related to the Scripture.

**Reflect**—Read a short meditation on the Scripture verse for the day.

**Apply**—Process and apply your reflections. Write in the space provided or grab a journal to write down your thoughts, ideas, and prayers. Even if you have never journaled before, these quick and easy writing prompts do not require any creativity!

**Pray**—Read the suggested prayer or say or write a prayer of your own. Express your thoughts and emotions to God and ask Him for His help.

These seven devotions are intended to last well past seven days. I encourage you to work through the book slowly, even repeating the same meditation several times until it begins to feel natural. I hope that you revisit the guided meditations and continue to practice the breathing exercises and reflections long after completing the book. It is my hope and prayer for you that these devotions will help you on your journey to a deeper connection with God and mental peace.

~Kristin

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\*If at any time an exercise becomes uncomfortable, return to normal breathing.

# Rest



"Then Jesus said, 'Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.' He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat. So they left by boat for a quiet place, where they could be alone."

~Mark 6:31-32, NLT~

**BREATHE**

We will begin with this same opening deep breathing exercise for each devotional. Settle into your chair or on the floor in an upright but comfortable position. Feel the seat beneath you. Now, take a slow, deep breath in through your nose. Hold it for two seconds. Then, slowly exhale with your lips pursed as if you are gently blowing through a straw. Breathe like this twice more.

Pause. Close your eyes and just observe your surroundings in this moment. What do you smell? What do you feel? What do you hear? Now, open your eyes. What do you see? Just sit quietly observing for just a little bit longer. Take two more slow, deep breaths in and exhale as before.

**REFLECT**

Jesus is calling to you, “Come away with me and rest for a while. Rest here. Simply sit with me.” You do not have to do anything or pray anything, just be here with Him. He desires you to go to a quiet place with Him not just to come away to a restful place, but to also come away mentally. Now in reality, you are most likely not able to get in a boat and go out in the middle of a lake to be far away from any distractions, as Jesus and His disciples often did. But if you are able, silence your phone and limit as many distractions as possible during these times. You might find it difficult to just rest. If so, notice what thoughts are fighting for your attention, observe them, accept them, then let them go for this short amount of time. Open your mind and heart to allow God’s Spirit to move in you.

**APPLY**

How have the past few minutes felt to you? In what ways did it seem challenging? Is there a pull that keeps you from being able to come away to rest with God each day? Name one obstacle that might prevent you from taking this brief time to just sit and rest and one practical step that you can take to build in this time to pause each day. Briefly journal about your thoughts and one step you plan to put into action.





# BREATHE



“The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the  
Almighty gives me life.”  
~Job 23:4, NASB~

**BREATHE**

Settle into your chair or on the floor in an upright but comfortable position. Feel the seat beneath you. Now, take a slow, deep breath in through your nose. Hold it for two seconds. Then, slowly exhale with your lips pursed as if you are gently blowing through a straw. Breathe like this twice more.

Just be with the One who gives you your every breath, the Giver of life. Continue slowly taking deep breaths for a couple of minutes. As you inhale, imagine God giving you that breath, filling up your lungs. Breathe Him in. He is here, giving life to your body and soul.

**REFLECT**

Breathing, the most basic action in life comes from the One who created us. When I was training for a triathlon, I realized that I needed help if I wanted to have any chance of finishing the almost-one-mile swimming portion of the race. For half of the first class session, the Olympic medalist instructed us to hold the side of the pool and simply practice learning how to blow bubbles and breathe in the water. She took us back to the most rudimentary, toddler-level skill of learning how to swim. Sometimes, I wonder if God is not calling us to come away with Him to take us back to simply breathing.

**APPLY**

How did it feel to simply sit and breathe in God's life-giving Spirit? Did it feel familiar to you or strange? How do you feel about trying this exercise again? Even if it feels foreign to you, I encourage you to give it a try at least one more time. How can you practice this spiritual breathing exercise throughout your day? Briefly journal about your thoughts and one step you plan to put into action.

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**PRAY**  
 God, I breathe You in. You give me my very life, my every breath. Help me to remember to stop and simply receive Your Spirit of life. In Jesus name, Amen.

# Still



“Be still, be calm, see, and understand I am the True God.”  
~Psalm 46:10a, VOICE~

**BREATHE**

Read through today's exercise in its entirety before you begin. There is no perfect way to practice the exercise. This is merely a prompt to get you started!

Settle into your chair or on the floor in an upright but comfortable position. Feel the seat beneath you. Now, take a slow, deep breath in through your nose. Hold it for two seconds. Then, slowly exhale with your lips pursed as if you are gently blowing through a straw. Breathe like this twice more.

Lie down on the floor if you feel comfortable or remain in your chair if you prefer. Close your eyes. Notice how your body is feeling. Do you feel tension or stress in any areas of your body? Just be in your body for a moment. Now, become aware of the tips of your toes. Squeeze your toes as if you are squishing mud. Squish, Squish! Hold for four seconds, then suddenly release. Now, flex your calves and hold for four seconds then release. Squeeze your quads, hold for four seconds then release. Do the same with your biceps. Then, clench your right hand as tight as possible as if you are squeezing all the juice out of a lemon. Squeeze, squeeze! Drop the lemon. Do the same with your left hand. Squeeze your abs for four seconds then release. Now, raise your shoulders up as high as you can and hold for four seconds. Drop your shoulders. Smile as tightly as you can for four seconds. Relax. Clench your jaw for four seconds then relax. Now, imagine a light shining down on your head, the warmth moving down all through your body until it reaches your toes. Then as if the light is pulling your body up, imagine the light moving back up your spine to the top of your head. Take a deep breath. Just sit and be still in your body for a moment. How do you feel now?

**REFLECT**

The beautiful lake in this picture is so still that it reflects a perfect mirror image of the trees above it. What if we could become so still for a couple of minutes each day that God could paint His image on our hearts and we could reflect our Heavenly Father’s beauty to others?

**APPLY**

What did it feel like to relax and just be in your body? How do you think practicing this exercise and just being still could help calm your thoughts and lower your anxiety? What is one step you can take to plan to carve out moments to rest in your body? Briefly journal about your thoughts and one step you plan to put into action.

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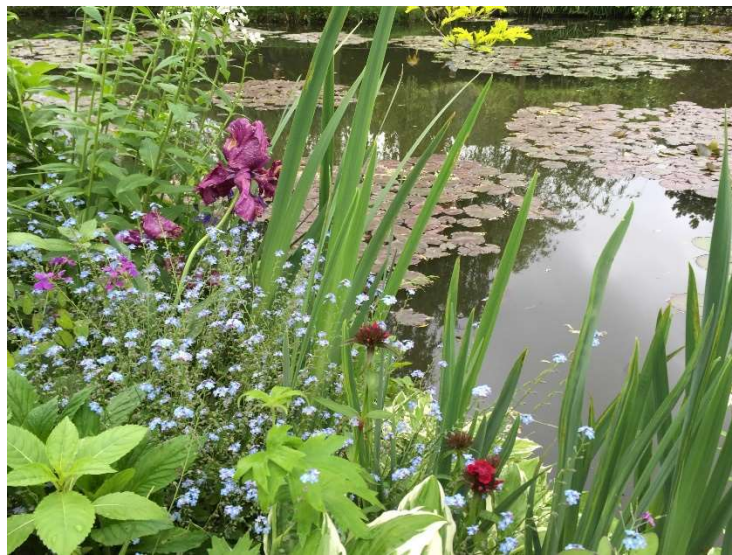
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**PRAY**

God, I pray that I would learn to be still in your presence so your love can reflect in me and outwardly to others. Help me make it a priority to practice stilling my body, thoughts, and emotions and simply rest in You. In Jesus name, Amen.

## Quiet



“He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me  
beside quiet waters. He restores my soul.”

~Psalm 23: 2-3a, NASB~



**BREATHE**

Settle into your chair or on the floor in an upright but comfortable position. Feel the seat beneath you. Now, take a slow, deep breath in through your nose. Hold it for two seconds. Then, slowly exhale with your lips pursed as if you are gently blowing through a straw. Breathe like this twice more.

Continue with deep breathing. Simply listen to the sound of the air as you slowly inhale through your nose and as you then slowly exhale through your mouth. Listen to your breath sounds. Do this for six more times. Close your eyes and just observe the sounds around you. Take one more deep breath and open your eyes.

**REFLECT**

We are bombarded by so much noise throughout our days. The simple beauty of quiet fades into the background—turning off the TV or music, silencing our phones, shutting our laptops, and simply doing one thing at a time. God desires for us to come with Him to sit by quiet waters. Now, most of us are not able to go away to sit by a stream or lake in the middle of our day. But there are other creative ways that we can find a quiet place. Getting outside even if just briefly, especially in nature, makes me feel closer to God. Sometimes, I put on my noise-canceling headphones and play sounds of nature like a mountain stream, rain, or the ocean waves.

**APPLY**

What is a creative way that you can come away with Jesus to sit and rest with Him by “quiet waters?” Is there a place that makes you feel closer to God? Where can you go to sit quietly? Briefly journal about your thoughts and one step you plan to put into action.

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**PRAY**

God, I know that you invite me to come away with you to quietly rest. It is there that you desire to restore me, mentally and spiritually. Help me to find ways to allow you to lead me there. In Jesus name, Amen.

# Be



“As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, ‘Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!’

‘Martha, Martha,’ the Lord answered, ‘you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.’”

~Luke 10:38-42, NIV~

### **BREATHE**

Settle into your chair or on the floor in an upright but comfortable position. Feel the seat beneath you. Now, take a slow, deep breath in through your nose. Hold it for two seconds. Then, slowly exhale with your lips pursed as if you are gently blowing through a straw. Breathe like this twice more.

Just sit and breathe. Notice thoughts that come up about your to-do list, responsibilities, emails piling up, or housework and the emotions of guilt, stress, and anxiety that are married to these thoughts. Observe the thought or emotion, name it, accept it, and imagine letting it go into the current of a stream. Simply sit and be, breathing in and out.

### **REFLECT**

Your worth is not in doing, producing, or working. We still have to complete our responsibilities as best as we can, and God desires us to take care of our families and put our faith into action. But God ultimately desires us to accept His love and grace without trying to earn it. In fact, we can never earn God’s favor. “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9, NIV). Give permission to yourself to take at least one moment



**PRAY**

God, sometimes it's hard for me to believe that you fully accept me and love me just as I am regardless of what I do or accomplish. Teach my heart to simply come away from all of my striving and responsibilities to just be with you as your child. Help me open my heart to soak in your love for me. In Jesus name, Amen.

# Release



“Pour out all your worries and stress upon him and leave them there, for he always tenderly cares for you.”

~1 Peter 5:7, TPT~

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

~1 Peter 5:7, NIV~

**BREATHE**

Settle into your chair or on the floor in an upright but comfortable position. Feel the seat beneath you. Now, take a slow, deep breath in through your nose. Hold it for two seconds. Then, slowly exhale with your lips pursed as if you are gently blowing through a straw. Breathe like this twice more.

Open your hands with palms up. With your eyes open, lift up your gaze. Observe your emotions. Are you feeling calm, anxious, sad, joyful? Allow your thoughts and emotions to just come up. Do not try to ignore them or push them away. Notice a thought or emotion. Label it. If it is a worry, anxious thought, or painful emotion, then pray, “God, I release (specify the thought or emotion) to you.” Breathe in His help and peace. For each thought or emotion that arises, label it then release it to God.

**REFLECT**

God does not desire us to carry our worries, stresses, and painful emotions on our own. He invites us to lay our anxieties and needs at His feet and trust Him to work in our circumstances. When we release our anxieties to Him, He can fill us with His peace.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And **the peace of God, which transcends all understanding**, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4: 6-7, NIV)

**APPLY**

In what ways do you find it difficult to acknowledge your anxious and painful thoughts and bring them to God? What would help you to be willing and able to sit with God giving Him each worry and fear? Journal your thoughts and one step that you plan to put into action.



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**PRAY**

God, I am anxious about these things: (name all of your worried thoughts). I release these anxieties to you, because I know that you desire for me to depend on you for help. Please fill me with your indescribable peace and strength. Help me to see my worries from your perspective. In Jesus name, Amen.

# Rise



“But those who wait for Yahweh’s grace  
will experience divine strength.  
They will rise up on soaring wings and fly like  
eagles, run their race without growing weary,  
and walk through life without giving up.”

~Isaiah 40:31, TPT~

“He gives power to the weak,  
And to those who have no might He increases  
strength.

Even the youths shall faint and be weary,  
And the young men shall utterly fall,  
But those who wait on the LORD  
Shall renew their strength;  
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
They shall run and not be weary,  
They shall walk and not faint.”

~Isaiah 40:29-31, NKJV~

### **BREATHE**

Settle into your chair or on the floor in an upright but comfortable position. Feel the seat beneath you. Now, take a slow, deep breath in through your nose. Hold it for two seconds. Then, slowly exhale with your lips pursed as if you are gently blowing through a straw. Breathe like this twice more.

Gaze up with your eyes open and hold out your hands with palms up. Imagine what it would feel like to receive God’s renewed strength—physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. What would fresh hope and joy look like in your life? Now, as you inhale, imagine God breathing new strength and hope into your life, igniting His inextinguishable joy deep inside you. Believe that He is. Exhale. Feel Him here with you. Breathe in, allowing God to continue filling you with His strength and hope.

**REFLECT**

Eagles have long and wide wings and can soar for hours with very little flapping or effort. They simply stretch out their wings, gliding on the wind. But eventually even eagles need to rest, and they return to their home. God promises you that if you wait on Him, have faith in Him, and ask Him to be the provider of your strength, He will give you renewed energy. Your difficult circumstances may not change, but He can help you rise up out of discouragement and exhaustion with new hope, purpose, and joy. He can give you the strength you need to endure and not become weary.

**APPLY**

What does waiting on God to give you strength look like in your life? What is one way that you can “wait on the Lord?” Briefly journal your thoughts and one step that you plan to put into action.

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**PRAY**

God, I need your strength. I wait for you. I believe in your promise that you will help me rise up out of my discouragement and exhaustion to new hope and joy. In Jesus name, Amen.

A meditation poem to practice

## Breathe in the One

Deeply  
Breathe in  
This moment  
In time

Rest  
And listen  
Closing your eyes  
To hear

His voice  
His still  
Quiet  
Voice

Long  
To just be  
Here now  
In this moment

Open your hands  
Releasing your cares  
Receiving  
More than enough

Soak in  
His grace  
His Lavish  
Peace overflowing

One moment  
One  
Remain  
In the One

Be still  
Right now  
With Him  
Just be

~KE