

PRACTICE CHALLENGE - USING YOUR BODY TO OPEN YOUR HEART

You can do this in 5 minutes, but please do not rush if you feel yourself enjoying it....

1) Read Henri Nouwen's prayer below. (Please use another term for the ground of all being if it better suits you. God is appropriate for Henri Nouwen as he was a Catholic priest - as well as an amazing spiritual director, but all spiritual traditions and inclinations are welcome here.)

2) Take 10 breaths with your eyes closed ... allow yourself to let go of all concerns and focus on the breath

3) Open your eyes and hold your hands in front of you. Clench them and squeeze tight. Take ten more slow breaths in and out, focusing on your fists.

4) Then open your hands and take 10 more slow breaths, holding your hands palms up.

5) Gently and without agenda or urgency, allow yourself spaciousness -- what arises for you?

6) Continue breathing slowly as long as you like, with hands open to the sky.

Once you are done, consider this simple truth - open hands may connect us to the deep gift of an open heart. Consider how your body can lead your mind in this way.

By the way, if you did not sense an ease when you opened your hands, this is absolutely perfect. It is an invitation to try the practice another time. And even another. No matter your experience, repeating this practice without pre-judgment will be beneficial. After all, it is called a practice. So it's normal to do it again and again. 😊

If you do not have hands, try this practice using a part of your body you can constrict and then release. In fact, those that do body scan meditation use this technique to become aware and open. It is marvelous.

For more open hand spiritual practice try this one, called "Into Open Hands Blessings Fall" -- <https://www.facebook.com/.../a.3941045526.../10155141017502694/...>

Quote source: Henri Nouwen, "The Only Necessary Thing: Living a Prayerful Life"

