



MIND

# TRAVELLING Light

"One of the really great things about being on holiday is the lightness we can feel."

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**W**hen on holiday we are forced to bring just the essentials, giving us the opportunity to experience relief from all the excess baggage of our lives, both physical and emotional. As this feeling begins to settle it's easy to let the accumulated exhaustion of the past year overwhelm us, sleeping away the first part of our holiday in a daze and stupor of de-stressing. The more we sleep, the more tired we feel and the first few days of our precious holiday can be dominated by recovery. If this feels frustrating try using the following Mindfulness approach.

Before going to sleep, make the determination to wake up at your preferred time 'smiling and feeling refreshed'. When you wake you feel the sensations in your body and keep smiling. Allow yourself to get up and then complete three gentle salutes to the sun before moving into the rest of your day. Your energy will feel so much more in balance.

Once we realise we don't need everything in our lives to survive, we can open to ask just what is really necessary. Use this opportunity to take a mindful pause during the day, taking stock of how you feel. Notice any sense of pressure for yourself or others to enjoy and get the most out of this much deserved holiday; it's so easy to neglect to leave room for unstructured and unscheduled time when we can be open to the spontaneous, something fun, unexpected and/or intimate.


## Mindful Pause

The first step is to recognise your intention to pause. Now smile, not because you feel happy, though you may well do, but to release the tension in your face that comes when we have not been present. See how your whole body awareness has just come alive. This may be enough, or if you wish do the soles of the feet meditation as well.

Our holiday is for us, just as much as for anyone else who might also be coming, but it's hard to put ourselves first at times. If it's difficult to let go of the habits and responsibilities we have left behind, particularly the feeling of being in contact, try this 24-hour approach to saying 'not now'. Switch off all electronics from midday one day to midday the next and repeat the following day. That way you can be available some but not all of each day. Making this conscious decision not to be in contact sends a strong message to yourself and others - your own nourishment is important too.

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Use the holiday to explore different approaches that can be supportive in daily life. Give yourself the permission to observe silence for 5 - 10 minutes, twice a day and gently listen to your breath. Reconnect to how you are actually feeling, the sensations in your body and see if you can witness the space between your breaths and then perhaps between your thoughts. Take the opportunity to be still. Connect into the sensation of being on holiday in your body. What is it that feels so good? The more you do this the easier it gets.

If you're tempted to view your holiday through the lens of a camera, recognise that our memories are strongest when connected to how we felt at the time. In capturing every moment, we lose the opportunity to witness the feel of things and after all we go on holiday because of the way it make us feel. Don't miss out now you are here.

## Soles of the feet meditation

1. If you are standing, stand in a natural relaxed posture, with the soles of your feet flat on the floor.
2. If you are sitting, sit comfortably with the soles of your feet flat on the floor.
3. If you are feeling emotional and associated thoughts are flowing through your mind, let them flow naturally, without restriction. Stay with the emotion and the physical feelings and reactions in your body and breath.
4. Now, shift all your attention to the soles of your feet.
5. Slowly, move your toes, feel the texture of anything that is covering your feet, the curve of your arch, and the heels of your feet. If you do not have shoes on, feel the floor or ground with the soles of your feet.
6. Keep breathing naturally however it is and stay focused on the soles of your feet.
7. Now expand your awareness up your legs and into the rest of your body, softly smile and listen to how your body feels.
8. Now move into the next moment with an enhanced awareness and sense of balance.

WRITTEN BY

### HUGH POULTON

HUGH IS BASED IN LONDON AND NORTH OXFORDSHIRE. HE IS LAUNCHING THE MINDFULNESS TRAINING 4 BUSINESS (MT4B) PROGRAMME IN 2014. CONTACT HIM FOR INFORMATION ABOUT MT4B AND GENERAL COURSES AND RETREATS AT [HUGH@YOGAUNLIMITED.CO.UK](mailto:hugh@yogaunlimited.co.uk) OR VISIT THE WEBSITE AT [YOGAUNLIMITED.CO.UK](http://YOGAUNLIMITED.CO.UK) AND FOLLOW ON FB AT YOGAUNLIMITED