

Awaken to God's Presence | Embodied Lectio Divina

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

awareness, life, breath, presence, God, spiritual practice, rhythm, incarnation

SPEAKERS

Tyler Marz, Joelle Wight

Joelle Wight 00:00

A gift of peace in the midst of troubling times. Project Zion Podcast offers this series of guided practices to help you connect with the divine no matter where you are or what's going on around you, take a deep breath and allow your spirit to find calm in the storm of life.

Tyler Marz 00:28

Hi My name is Tyler Marz, Spiritual Director and Formation Ministries Specialist in Community of Christ. I find spirituality in everyday life. Join me today in a practice of embodied lectio divina, adapted from Christine Valters Paintner.[i]

In an ever-changing world that seems to move from one issue to the next, causing more and more tension, it can be good to take time to tune in to our bodies. To listen to where we feel the most stress, tension, pain, joy, and love. And to fill ourselves with the breath of God.

St. Gregory of Palamas reminds us that we are created in the image of God, and our incarnation is the unity of body and soul. Our flesh has been made an inexhaustible source of sanctification.

I invite you to get comfortable, and breath deep, inviting God's presence to envelope you.

Allow some time to settle in to your chair and sink into your body. Become aware of your breathing, gently deepening it. As you inhale, imagine the breath of God filling not just your body but also the whole of your life with enlivening energy. As you exhale, imagine letting go of whatever keeps you from being fully present to life.

Allow your breath to carry your awareness down to your heart center. Rest in this space for a few moments, perhaps resting your hand on your heart and relishing the rhythm of your heartbeat, which sustains your life.

Begin to "read" your experience. Scan through your body, beginning with your feet and slowly moving your awareness through your legs, hips, groin, back, stomach, shoulders, arms neck,

head, and face. Notice if there is one place in your body needing more attention. Be present to this place, bringing your breath there, softening into it, and opening to memories and feelings.

Listening to how your heart is being led. Make room within you to allow this place in your body to spark memories and feelings. Are there images, colors, or symbols rising up into your awareness? Be present to the feelings that are being stirred, and welcome them in.

Begin to shift your awareness, and open to the ways God is present to you in this place in your body. Is there a sense of how you are being called in your life to respond to this moment? What action or awareness is emerging from your reflection on your body?

Gently release everything that has been stirring in you. Connect to your breath again, and allow the rhythm of your breath to fill you with peace as you let go of words and images so you can rest fully into a few moments of contemplative presence. Give yourself some time to simply be, remembering that your life is about more than the sum of your experiences, and what you do in the world. Then release even this awareness and come to a place of deep stillness.

When you are ready to complete this time of prayer, allow your breath to gently bring your awareness back to your room.

In closing I read these simple words from Job, "In my flesh I shall see God" (19:26).

[i] Christine Valters Paintner "The Wisdom of the Body: A Contemplative Journey to Wholeness for Women." Pages 139-141.