



Owl and me - a mindful story

Over the last few months, the World around us may have seemed unpredictable. Things have been constantly changing and everything we know is a little different. That can make our minds and bodies feel tired. But, what I'd like you to remember is that you are very magical and very powerful. You can control your mind, and you can help your body to feel relaxed.

I'd like to invite you on a little adventure, and into a story. Your very own story. To take you somewhere where you can use your imagination and have a moment just to think about nothing, other than the words I am saying.

But firstly, make yourself comfortable. That can be sitting, lying, standing, whatever works for you and your body right now is absolutely fine. When you are comfortable, just notice how safe you feel - being held by the ground underneath you. Safe and secure.

Now, I'd like you to use some of that power that you have and make all of your muscles feel really tense. So, take a breath in and squish your face up. Close your hands and clench your toes. Squeeze everything, really tightly. Lift your shoulders up to your ears. And then, when you're ready, let everything go and push that breath out nice and slowly. Do that one more time. Breathe in and make everything squished, clenched and tight. And then, breathe out, letting it all go.

When you're ready, perhaps close your eyes, or just lower your gaze to the floor. You are inviting your mind to calm and your body to be still. And now, use your imagination, listening and letting my words wash over you.

It's a freezing cold Winter's night and you've been tucked up in bed fast asleep. But, at midnight you're woken by a clock striking 12 and a tap on the window. The tapping gets louder and louder. Wondering what it is, you decide to climb out of bed and peek behind the curtain to see what's there.



As you pull the curtain back a smile appears across your face. You realise it's your Owl. Not just any old owl, but your special Owl. Your friend from your very own garden. Take a moment to think about what he looks like. Is he a barn owl, all white and fluffy? Or maybe he's a brown owl with long feathers? Perhaps he's pink or purple? He's your Owl and this is your story so you decide.

You open your window and shiver as the cold night air hits you. But, happy to see your friend, you reach out a hand to stroke your magical Owl. As you do, he looks at you warmly and says, 'I'm sorry it's so late, but I had to wake you. Look up at the sky, see what's fluttering by...'

As you look into the dark you see a glistening light. It's been snowing since you fell asleep and now all you see is a blanket of white. Take a second to look at the view from your window. As your eyes adjust to the light, notice what you see. Think about how different it all looks under the fresh snow. It's peaceful and quiet out there, but is there anything you can hear? As you stand at the window, how does your body feel?

While you are there, gazing out into the night, your owl leans forward and invites you to take his wing. "Come with me, let's explore, I'll show you some of the wonders nature can bring." You gently hold onto your owl, his feathers so soft, and soar into the sky, wondering who you will pass as you go flying by.



Together you glide, higher and higher, rising above the snow clouds and into the frosty night air. Up ahead you see a scattering of stars and then, the full moon. Slow down, make a wish, you never know, it might come true.



Below you are houses and flickering lights – their roofs were once brown, but now are all white. It's not long until the lights fade and the forest is ahead. Owl says, "Down there is where we are headed, make sure you hold on tight." You dip lower and lower until you can reach out to the trees. How do they feel? Is the snow cold and wet or can you feel the bark and the leaves? Take a second, notice how the trees feel on your cold finger tips.

Finally, you land on a branch, just near the lake. The water has frozen, and you see a little duck trying to skate. As you look around, the snowflakes fall down to the ground, and then you notice a fox and a badger, a little deer too, none of them making a sound.

What else can you see on this magical snowy night? Owl said he was going to show you some of nature's wonders, and well, he was right.

Are there any footprints being crunched into the ground? If so, who or what is making them? What smells are in the air? Can you smell the pine, or has the snow covered the scent of the leaves, Winter flowers and trees?

When you've soaked up the sights and sounds of the forest, take a deep breath, right down to your tummy. And then, when you're ready, push it all out, relaxing your body. This moment is special, you know that for sure. You reach over and give your super soft Owl a hug, thanking him for bringing you here, surrounded by magic.



After you've sat for a while, listening and noticing, it's time to go. Owl takes your hand and says, "come along friend, let's get you home."



Back up you fly, feeling grateful for this magical night. For the snow, for the sky, the moon and the stars. For the trees and for the animals. But mostly for Owl, your special friend.

As you get closer to your house, your window comes into view. And then, you see your warm, snuggly bed. Owl helps you in safely, and gives you a hug. "Until our next adventure" he says. "Sleep tight," before he drifts out into the snow.

You creep through your room and into your bed. Take a breath here and notice the warmth, the different smells and sounds of your cosy home. Your soft pillow. How does your body feel after your night-time adventure? How does your mind feel? Take a moment to reflect, to feel thankful and then slowly, with a smile on your face, you drift back to sleep.

It's time now to welcome you back into the room. So slowly wiggle your toes and your fingers. Perhaps take a stretch.

Take a breath in, and then push that breath out. And when you are ready, open your eyes and smile.

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