

Examples of Guided Meditation for Young Children

(courtesy of Rosalinda Weel)

The following is an example of a fairy tale guided meditation for young children, “The Dream Cloud”. This kind of story is good to be used with children when instructing at home, but also great at the end of a yoga class. This meditation takes 15 minutes but it can be shortened depending on your time availability.

A few pointers regarding fairy tale guided meditations:

- The wonderful thing about this kind of meditation is that you can create pauses within the story that are meditative. The children don't meditate exactly for 15 minutes, but they experience meditative moments, especially at the end. The teacher/parent/caretaker can feel how long a child can stay in that moment.
- The following fairy tale is written with a certain technique: Let children ‘fly’ or ‘travel’ to a special place where they can make a wish, feel, or see something.
- Begin by asking them to sit or lie down, close their eyes, and find a comfortable position. Let them make a heart connection by asking where they feel thankful for this day or if they remember when they felt very happy. Let them smile. And then invite them to listen to a story. For example, instead of saying “let’s meditate,” you can say “let’s dream.”
- A guided meditation story like the following one can also be used to give a child a personal mantra, like a primordial sound. In “The Dream Cloud” meditation you can give the child ‘the magic word’ when they are on the dream cloud and let them repeat it along with the dream fairy. It really works!
- If a child is more experienced with meditation, you don't need to use a fairy tale meditation; you can use other meditation techniques. It depends on the age of the children, how mature the children are, and how long they can meditate. A common guideline is a minute per year (8 years old, 8 minutes). And of course you can still guide them by telling them a nice story. They love it.
- Look at the children to discern what kind of story they need at that moment. Sometimes they need more confidence, other times they need letting go, and other times a story that helps them express themselves.

- Sometimes when children are not used to meditate they feel more comfortable listening to a story so they can just sit back and relax. They don't feel like they must do something. With a fairy tale guided meditation the children are invited into a world of fantasy and adventure.

The Dream Cloud Meditation (Approx. 15 min.)

- Anything is Possible -

Mary is standing in the doorway of her bedroom. She just finished brushing her teeth, putting on her pajamas, and now it's time to go to sleep. But... she doesn't feel like it. She takes a few more steps into her room, and sees her mother. She smiles mysteriously at Mary and says: "Come on, let's go pick out a dream cloud. Climb on my back and we'll fly there together."

Mary gives her mother a surprised look. Since she doesn't feel like going to sleep, she climbs on her back. She wraps her legs tightly around her mother's waist, and loosely wraps her arms around her neck. Her mother spreads her arms, as if she's about to fly. This promises to be an exciting trip.

Will you come too? Close your eyes, and imagine climbing on someone's back. Maybe the back of someone you'd like to fly with. Imagine this is happening for real. You are now Mary.

Mary notices her bedroom window is wide open. She tightens her grip. "There we go", calls her mother with her arms straight ahead. Together they fly straight out of the window.

"There's a strong wind, so sometimes we'll fly higher, and make a few turns too. Can you keep your eyes out for a nice dream cloud? One with your favorite color?" "Yes, mom, I will look very carefully", answers Mary, looking around.

Whoosh-whoosh-whoosh. There are strong winds. "Yes!" her mother cries, and suddenly she flies upward. To Mary it feels like she is smoothly flying up, up, and away. It's a wonderful feeling. "Look how everything below is getting smaller and smaller!" her mother cries.

Feel the wind blowing around you. Feel that you're flying. Look around to see if you can spot a nice, brightly colored cloud.

Mary and her mother flutter and fly. Just like a large bird carrying a small one on its back. Then Mary notices a lovely, brightly colored cloud. She blinks her eyes a few times, so she can see it better. What a beautiful color! "Look mom, there! There's a beautiful cloud. Can we fly there?"

Mary barely finishes talking as her mother swiftly flies towards the brightly colored cloud. As they get closer, they are enchanted by the shimmering hues. It is a big, soft, fluffy cloud and they see several children dancing and jumping on it. These children are not wearing pajamas. It looks like they're wearing fairy clothes. They are all smiling and the sun is shining, even though it's nighttime. "Ready for landing?" her mother cries happily. "Of course!" answers Mary excitedly. She can hardly wait to join in the dancing and singing with the children.

Do you see a beautiful dream cloud? What color is your cloud? Hold on tight for your landing, because you can be on the dream cloud too.

As Mary gets off, the bottoms of her feet are tickled ever so slightly. The cloud is downy, just like cotton balls. She can actually walk on it. She casually walks towards the other children, and before she knows it, she jumps and dances along. Just like jumping on a bed. She has forgotten all about her mother and enjoys everything that happens around her.

Mary looks down and notices to her surprise, that she isn't wearing her pajamas anymore. Now she is wearing a lovely fairy outfit too. The fabric feels very light and gently flows around her. It has a pretty color like the cloud and it even looks as if there are glitters on it. She feels beautiful.

What does your fairy suit feel like? What color is it? Do you like it?

Then she hears a soft jingling in the distance. It sounds like bells. She notices all the other children are listening to it while finding a place on the cloud to lie down. One of the children motions to Mary that she can find a place too. She finds a pretty spot on the cloud and lies

down. After some shifting she feels really comfortable. The adventure did tire her a little, so she doesn't mind resting.

Are you comfortable? Does the cloud feel nice and soft? Lay in a way that relaxes you the most.

Now the jingling is getting closer and closer. Jingle-jangle-jingle-jangle. Jingle-jangle-jingle-jangle. Mary is curious to see where the sound is coming from and looks up. Then she sees a beautiful lady appear in the sky with long, flowing, dark brown hair and wings on her back. She flies toward Mary and lands beside her on the cloud.

"Hello, I am the dream fairy", she says with a sweet, gentle voice, "I brought dream powders. My suitcase is filled with all sorts of little bottles with colorful powders. You can pick three colors. I will mix them and sprinkle them all over you. You may wish for a dream before I sprinkle the powders.

Fully amazed, Mary looks at the lovely dream fairy and all she can blurt out is: "Oh." The dream fairy reassures her. She gently touches her cheek and her voice almost sounds like a whisper: "Go ahead, pick three colors and I will make the dream powder for you." Mary thinks about it for a second and names three colors.

Pick the colors.

"Those are beautiful colors!" replies the dream fairy. She takes the three bottles out of her suitcase. Then she takes a shimmering, gold colored bowl and pours a little powder from each bottle into it. Then she takes a long, silver colored spoon and tells Mary she will slowly spin the powders around seven times until they blend in. Mary counts along.

You can count too.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Then the dream fairy stops mixing the powers, puts away the spoon and says: "Close your eyes and think about the dream you would like to have." Mary closes her eyes. She knows right away what she'd like to dream about.

Wish for your dream.

As if the dream fairy read her mind, she says: "I will count to three and then I will sprinkle the dream powder all over you. You will hear the sound of bells jingling. Then I will fly away. Keep your eyes closed, so you can let yourself fall asleep.

Mary keeps her eyes closed. She feels the dream fairy's warm hand stroking her head. She knows this means 'goodbye'. She hears the dream fairy count: 1, 2, 3. Suddenly, she feels a slight tingling on her head, as if tiny grains of sand are trying to tickle her face. Those are the dream powders, of course!

She feels the tiny grains in her neck, on her shoulders and her arms and fingers too. She feels them on her belly. Then she feels them being sprinkled on the top of her legs. Now the tingly feeling is on her knees, under her knees and slowly the powders move towards her feet. She even feels the grains slipping in between her toes. From top to bottom, even in her hair and behind the ears she feels the dream powders. It is a great feeling!

Her head feels like it is getting heavier and it is as if her back pushes more into the cloud. Her legs feel heavier and heavier too. It's like she sinks deeper into the cloud. She hears the jingle-jangle of the dream fairy in the distance; she feels a gust of wind on her cheek and realizes: the dream fairy is gone. *My dream can start.*

(From "Dream clouds, Float away with 7 enchanting children's stories for relaxation and bedtime" by Rosalinda Weel - Kluitman Publisher)

Examples of Guided Meditation for Teens

(courtesy of Donna Miesbach – from “Tools for Teens”)

The following guided meditations are for teens but they can be adapted to different age groups by shortening it and changing the tone and language to a more playful one.

Ocean/Consciousness Guided Meditation (Approx. 12 min.)

A Guided Meditation is a journey you take in your imagination. It's a way to be quiet and have a special experience.

So let's just sit back and get comfortable now - If you'd like to lay down on the floor and stretch out, that would be good, too (Give them time to do this) --- When you're ready, when you're comfortable, I'd like you to close your eyes - and take a few deep breaths (Breathe audibly with them) - and settle into the silence all around you - as you move into a warm, comfortable space - a space in which you are completely at peace...

Now in your mind's eye, I want you to visualize a beautiful Spring day - feel the soft warmth of the sun - see the clouds floating gently overhead - There is a light breeze stirring - and in it you can feel the promise of new life - of new energy --- Just take a moment now and bask in the beauty of this fresh Spring day...

As you are basking in this new day, you realize you must be near the ocean, for you can smell the fresh salt air that betrays its presence - You are delighted, for you love the ocean - so you begin walking toward it --- Soon you can hear the murmur of the waves - before long you come up over the crest of a hill - and there it is - the great, wide ocean ----- See how the sunlight glistens on it --- An occasional sea gull flies by - as you walk past the dunes - and onto the shore...

Happy to be at the ocean once again, you take off your shoes - and spread out your jacket - and sit down near the shore - listening - and watching as much with your inner ear and eye as with your outer ones - as you breathe in the immensity of this great body of water...

After a while, you decide to wade into the water - so you get up and go to the water's edge - -- The waves are very gentle - the water is warm and inviting - and so you venture in - little step by little step - until the water is almost up to your knees --- You can feel the waves

lapping against you - Their rhythm is very soothing, very comforting - very inviting - so much so that you decide to just float on the surface - and so you do... Just allow yourself to lay down on the water - Let the buoyancy of the water support you - and uphold you - and rock you with its eternal rhythm - so that more and more you feel relaxed - and very much at peace...

After a while - when you are feeling very much in tune with the ocean - and its rhythm - and its buoyant support - in your mind's eye allow yourself to be one with the ocean - to just merge with the water and the rhythm of the waves --- Feel yourself as part of this larger body - this larger being - so that you are the ocean - and you are the wave --- You are this vast being - and you are its expression --- You begin to see how this great ocean symbolizes the vast sea of human awareness of which you are a part - how its unlimited nature is your larger identity - and the personal "you" with whom you are most familiar is its unique expression --- Yes, you are the sea - and you are the wave --- You are pure consciousness - and you are its expression - and you rest in this realization - allowing it to penetrate into the deepest corners of your being...

After a while - grateful for this gift of understanding - you bring your awareness back into your body - floating there on the ocean - in tune with the rhythm and harmony that is supporting you --- and then, after a while,- you bring yourself back to the shore - step by quiet step - until you are sitting once again, looking out at the infinite vista before you --- You contemplate how you are part of this vast infinity - and how it is part of you - and you ponder this infinite aspect of your nature - as you sit there quietly on the shore...

It is time now to come back --- so when you are ready, just allow your awareness to return to this place --- back to this room --- and back to this body --- and after you have rested a moment in this awareness - when you feel you are fully back - you may gently stretch - and slowly open your eyes...

~~When everyone is back from their meditation, ask:

- Was the meditation comfortable?
- Are there any questions or comments?

**Connection with the Universe Guided Meditation -
A Seed Meditation (Approx. 8 min.)**

Just sit comfortably now and close your eyes... and imagine that you are holding a seed... It can be any kind of seed, whatever you'd like... Just take a moment and look at your seed carefully --- Learn everything you can about it - Imagine touching it - smelling it - tasting it - listening to it. --- Can you imagine the life force inside that seed? - Can you feel it? --- For just a moment allow yourself to be that seed --- and in your mind's eye imagine you are being gently planted in the ground - What does it feel like to be there in the warm and gentle earth? - Is it comforting? - What are you thinking as you lie there being that seed? --- What are you feeling? --- Can you feel the desire rising within you to reach toward the sun? - Allow yourself to do that now ---

As you begin reaching toward the sun, there is also a part of you that is sending forth roots into the warm and friendly soil - Just feel yourself doing this now - Let your roots reach down into the soil that is your home --- And with this foundation securely in place beneath you, feel yourself reaching even higher toward the sun --- Just feel that first green shoot as it breaks through the soil into the sunlight --- Allow yourself to bask in that sunlight --- Feel yourself growing - and growing - and growing --- Can you feel the desire for branches within you, for stems and leaves? --- Allow the breeze to gently sway you --- Allow the rain to water you --- Allow your roots to reach deep into the ground --- Allow them to feed you - to nourish you - to stabilize you...

Now let your attention move back to your branches, for something new is happening - Blossoms are beginning to appear! - Blossoms! - Let yourself bask in the feeling of these beautiful blossoms - Can you smell them? - What color are they? - What do they seem to be saying? - Just give yourself time to enjoy the fullness of these blossoms...

Days and weeks go by - and now your blossoms are falling to the ground - Can you feel yourself releasing them? - Letting them go? - Do you see them floating to the ground? --- And now something new is appearing on your limbs - slowly but surely fruit is appearing on your limbs - Luscious fruit - Fruit that is full of flavor - Fragrant fruit - Colorful fruit - Fruit filled with juice - and pulp - and seeds - Seeds! Did I say seeds? - Somehow the distant memory echoes within you --- Without even knowing how, this fruit was borne of you! - It came from

your own deep center - And now your branches are so filled with fruit it is beyond counting - You rejoice as the abundance of the universe expresses itself through you in this very special way - You marvel at how the wisdom was within you - The knowledge was within you --- The abundance was, too --- and as you rest in this knowledge, you also know that this same wisdom - this same abundance - is within all of creation - just as it is in you - Right here - Right now --- You know this knowledge is planted in your heart - and it is just waiting to come forth from within you --- It is just waiting to blossom - and bloom - as you find your special place in this world...

And so you bask in this knowledge - and this sunlight - for just a minute more --- and when you are comfortable - when you are ready - you begin bringing yourself back to this time - and this room - and this space - and this body --- Just rest in your body for a moment. --- Give thanks for this instrument you have been given so you can have this earth experience --- You might even want to thank your body - and your mind - and your heart - and even your spirit ---

And now - whenever you are ready - you may slowly open your eyes.

~~Process the meditation with the group:

- Have you done anything like that before?
- You can connect like that with anything - a flower, tree, a rock, even a pencil.
- If you'd like, try this on your own, and if you do, be sure to write about it. It can be a very special experience every time you do it, and you can learn some amazing things.

The Unlimited Being Guided Meditation

Have them sit in their chair, settle down, and take a couple of deep breaths. - When everyone is ready, ask the group to close their eyes and chant OH together for a few minutes, with their attention gently in the area of the solar plexus. The Leader establishes the pitch. - After resting in the silence for a minute, begin chanting AH on a slightly higher pitch, with the attention in the area of the heart. - Pause in the silence that follows, then say:

Now, with your eyes still closed, just be aware of the silence --- Know that this is the Silence of your Soul - It is the Silence of Pure Being within you - and this Pure Being is the very dance of life --- Just see if you can feel that Presence within you...

That Presence is in All That Is - and as that All, it is your Source, the very essence of your being --- So allow yourself now to just be one with that silence, with that Source --- Breathe it - Let it fill you through and through --- Feel it -- Hear it -- BE it...

Now as you rest in the Allness of this Presence, know that this Presence, this Spirit - this Silence - is on a journey of soul making - and the soul it is making is you --- All this that is going on in the outer has its place in the scheme of things - but the real work, the most important work, is going on inside you --- For you are in a process of becoming - and what you are becoming is much more grand, much more wonderful than you can possibly imagine --- For you are special --- There is no one else quite like you in all the universe - and there is something you can do that no one else can do quite like you can --- You may not know yet what that something is, but it is there, in your heart...

Yes, the answer is in your heart - and as you learn to listen to your heart - and follow its guidance - you will become aware of your deepest heart's desire --- In that desire is all the joy you could ever want - all the happiness you could possibly ask for --- and the fulfillment of that desire is a gift to you --- It's a gift from the infinite source of all creation - even the very source that is creating and expressing itself through you --- So listen now --- Just rest in the silence and be very still... (Pause for a minute or so)

Know that your guide is within you --- Your guide is always within you - here in your heart - So just take a moment and listen --- Perhaps there is a question you would like to ask - If

there is, you may do so now ----- If there is something you would like to say in your heart, you may do so now...

Know now that you are loved with a love beyond description --- For you are precious - More precious than gold, or diamonds, or any other symbol of wealth - you are far more precious than these - for these wear down - they perish - but you are imperishable --- You dance with the stars and rise with the morning sun --- and even as you journey here - on this tiny, spinning planet - there is a part of you that sees and knows that you are on a journey of soul making...

Where you are going, and what you will be doing are yet to be determined - but the map you are following is part of the cosmic plan --- So as you embark upon this journey, remember always to reside in the present moment --- The past is over and done with - The future is not yet formed - So pay attention, then, to the present moment --- to its sounds - its tastes and smells --- Enjoy this moment - and just Be - and your path will unfold before you - and the way will be made known - and you will be secure as you move through time and space - as you participate in the unfolding of the cosmic plan --- For you are a citizen of the universe - a creation of God's own making - Where you will be going - and what you will be doing - will span the farthest reaches of your imagination - as you participate in the cosmic dance of life --- for the inner reaches of your soul are boundless ----- Rest now in this knowledge - and know that you are on a path of cosmic proportions ---So say to yourself, "I Am!" ... "I Am!" ... "I Am!"...

And now, as part of this cosmic journey, we're going to come back to this time - and this place --- Slowly we're going to come back to this room - to this chair - and this body --- Just rest in your body for a minute - think about how this vast universe is focusing in you ---- So let's just take a deep breath now - maybe even stretch a little --- And as I count from 5 to 1, you may slowly open your eyes. (Count backwards from 5 to 1 out loud.)

~~Take a few moments for Q&A or sharing afterwards.

Inner/Outer Space Guided Meditation

We're going to go on an exploration now, so this would be a good time to get comfortable in your chair, or maybe even lay down on the floor. Do whatever you need to do so you can be totally relaxed, because this is a journey of the mind. We don't want to have to be aware of the body for a while, so let's just get ready to do that now... (Make sure they are comfortable before proceeding.)

Now once you are settled, once you are comfortable, I'd like us to take a few deep breaths. As we breathe in, let's breathe in peace (breathe in slowly, leading the group), and as we breathe out, let's just relax and release all our cares and concerns to the universe (do it). The universe knows what we need, so let's just let go of all those anxious things as we prepare for our journey - Let's just close our eyes and do that again - breathe in peace... breathe out all those cares and concerns... breathe in peace... breathe out all our tensions... and once more - breathe in peace... breathe out and relax clear down to the depths of your being...

Now as you rest in this quiet, peaceful place, you may notice that at the edge of your awareness there is a path - It's the path of your imagination, and we're going to follow it now, so let's just take a minute to find that path - because it's going to take you to your very favorite place --- It might be at the beach - it could be a meadow - perhaps a cabin in the woods --- Just follow your path to some quiet place where you can begin your journey...

Once you are there, you'll want to find a place to rest your body - a place where it can wait for you as you move into the inner reaches of your mind - So just settle your body into that comfortable place where it can wait for you now...

Now that your body is settled, I'd like you to give yourself permission to enter the spaceship of your imagination - because we're going to begin moving away --- We're going to start floating out into space --- Your body is still resting in its comfortable place - and as you move away you see it getting smaller and smaller --- Soon all you can see is your special place - and the countryside around it - until even that, too, begins to move away --- and this continent comes into view - and the oceans and seas of this wonderful planet --- You see all of this as you move farther and farther away into the silent space of your imagination...

Farther and farther you go - away beyond the clouds --- Look! Do you see - the moon is getting closer! --- You marvel at the wonder of it - of seeing it so close --- You turn and look at Mother Earth --- See how beautiful she is - how special she is...

Now, with a deep sense of appreciation, you turn once again toward the stars - toward that vast, unending sky --- You marvel at the harmony, the beauty, the intelligence here --- What feelings does this create in you? --- Is it speaking to you in some special way? --- Perhaps there is something you'd like to say - If there is, you may do so silently now as you move through this silent space within you...

You are moving quickly now --- stars go by - whole galaxies come into view - You pass by them like ships in the night --- Truly, it is a wondrous thing - and it is all happening in you - in the vast reaches of your imagination --- and you realize that somehow the universe has its existence in you - just as you have your existence in it - And you ponder this now... (Pause)

As you continue your exploration - as you move inward through the vast inner space of your mind - you look around --- What else can you see here in this boundless realm - for this mind of yours is a veritable storehouse of unimagined treasures --- There are forms and figures here - barest outlines - some more complete than others - Do you see them? --- These are your very own thought forms - and they are growing within you! --- They are gathering substance - gathering energy - so they, too, can emerge and become part of your physical experience...

This is the growing edge within you - and these forms, these objects that are taking shape within you are your very own creation - So take a good look, for you have been given a gift - -- You are being given the opportunity to decide whether or not you really want these experiences to manifest in your life - whether or not you really want to experience these thoughts, these intentions --- You are grateful that you have such a choice --- You can change your inner world --- You can make it match the deepest desires of your heart --- And so you do that now - As you walk through your inner gallery - look the forms over carefully -- - Change whatever you'd like --- For you are shaping your life even now...

Here, in this deep level of your mind - this is where your dreams take on substance --- This is your own creative space --- In this space you can be whatever you'd like to be --- You can

do whatever you'd like to do - here, in your own inner space - Let's just spend some time being and doing that now... (Pause)

This is your place of inner knowing --- It is your place of pure potential --- Help can always be found here - in the silent reaches of your being - for this is where your answers are --- So let's just take a moment to listen to the silence now --- Is there something it wants you to know? --- Is there something it wants to tell you? --- Just be with it now - If you can, try to hear what it is saying ----- Is it about the purpose of your life? - Perhaps some insight about this phase of your journey? ----- This would be a good time to make a commitment to yourself - a promise of some kind - about the choices you'll be making - the path you'll be following - the way you want to use this earth opportunity --- Just listen to your heart - and let this time be whatever you want it to be..... (Pause)

It's been quite a journey - Let's just take a minute to reflect on all you have seen and done -- - You know now that all this is what you are --- the atoms and molecules that make up your body - the stars, the moons, the galaxies, the space --- and yes, the thought forms that have yet to emerge from within you - this is all you ----- How very special you are - to have all this within you! --- And it is yours to use any way you'd like --- All the resources you need are within you - and they ride on the inbreath and outbreath of your existence...

So let's just take one last look at this amazing inner space --- silently say whatever you haven't yet said ----- and when you've done that, just allow yourself to begin rising to the surface --- Just allow the forms and shapes in your inner gallery to fade away --- until once again you are aware of your body as your own personal garment...

Now let's take a deep breath (do it) as you take up residence again in this amazing universe - this universe that is so much a part of you --- And with yet another deep breath, allow yourself to become even more aware of your surroundings --- of this room - this time - and this place --- and finally, when you are ready, you may open your eyes...

~~Take a few moments for sharing & discussion following the meditation.