Lying Down Yoga Script

Introduction:
This practice of gentle yoga stretching is an invitation to enter more deeply into the life of the body, to experience the mind and the body together as a unit .
The movements are designed to be done on the floor. Lying on carpet may provide a sufficiently comfortable surface while hard flooring will require a yoga mat or a blanket .
If you're unable to get down on the floor you may wish to use a bed with a firm mattress .
While practicing the movements, entering into the experience of the body as deeply as you can and letting go of any judging - this is not about performing or about the body moving and positioning in some ideal way for some critical audience .
Rather, it's about connecting more closely to and better understanding the body .
So not forcing any movement - relaxing into it and breathing with it – perhaps breathing into and out of areas where a stretch or posture feels most intense .
Not taking on any movement that seems inappropriate for you. Instead, using your knowledge of your own body and its limits to guide you and to override the instructions, adapting the movements in a way that works for you .
Or skipping them entirely, and perhaps imagining yourself doing the movements .
Feeling them in stillness, which is a valuable practice in and of itself .
And resting whenever the body requires it, either on the back in resting pose, or in child's pose, both of which will be guided in the practice that follows

The practice:
And as with all mindfulness practices, yoga is about paying attention moment to moment to the sensations, thoughts, and feelings that arise in your awareness .
Noticing when the mind has wandered and noting where it has gone before letting go of it .
Cultivate an attitude of acceptance toward the wandering mind, the body and your practice of yoga as you find it moment to moment .
Beginning in resting pose, lying on the back (4 second pause) .
Allowing as much of the body to contact the ground as you are able from heels to head (6 second pause).
If you have any problem with the lower back, bending the knees instead and placing the soles of the feet on the ground as if standing (6 second pause)
Aligning the shoulders, hips, and feet so that the spine is straight, feet falling slightly outward (6 second pause)
And if you care to, gently lifting the head, tucking the chin in slightly, and setting the head back down (4 second pause)
Noticing the sense of a straight lengthened spine from the base of the head all the way down to the tail bone (6 second pause)
Arms outstretched alongside the body, and if it's comfortable for you, turning the hands to face palm up (4 second pause)

Observing toes to head where the body comes in contact with the floor and where there is a space, such as the curve under the ankles . the knees . the lower back . the neck
Noticing how the ground accepts the body - how gravity works so you don't have to
(4 second pause)
Briefly sweeping the body, feeling into the body from toes to head, noting areas of tightness and looseness (10 second pause)

Shifting the awareness to sensations of the breath in the body (3 second pause)
Aware of sensations of rising and falling (2 second pause)
expanding and contracting (3 second pause)
Following the in breath and the out breath (8 second pause)
And with each breath allowing the ground to receive more of your weight (7 second pause)
Working less, trusting, and accepting more (6 second pause)
Breathing in and out (6 second pause)

And when you're ready, on an inbreath, lifting the arms gently, and allowing them to slowly travel in an arc upwards till the fingertips are reaching toward the ceiling, noticing the sensations as the arms move through the air.
Then allowing the arms to descend to rest on the floor outstretched above the head
(7 second pause)
Reaching the fingertips toward the wall behind you and at the same time pressing the heels in the opposite direction, lengthening the entire body (5 second pause)
Then letting go and sinking into the floor (3 second pause)
On the next outbreath, allowing your arms to slowly travel back through the arc
(3 second pause)
Aware of the moment to moment sensations of movement without anticipating the return of your arms to the floor (4 second pause)
And as you lie still now noticing how the body feels after having completing one mindful stretch (5 second pause)

Once again, breathing in and allowing the arms to travel through an arc overhead
(3 second pause)
Feeling the effort involved in moving against gravity and the shift to gravity assisting once the arms begin to descend and come to rest on the floor overhead (10 second pause)
Extending the fingers in one direction and the heels in the opposite direction, feeling the stretch wherever it can be noticed in the body (5 second pause).
Now releasing the right side of the body from the stretch while maintaining it in the left side and observing the contrast in sensations side to side (6 second pause)
And releasing the left side and stretching the right side, noticing the sensations on both sides of the body (6 second pause).
Then, breathing out, allowing the arms to return through their arc to rest by your side
(8 second pause).

Aware of body and breath sensations while lying in resting pose again (6 second pause).

Repeating the **Arm Raises** again in your own time, allowing a freshness of experience as your arms travel in an arc to overhead and back again, acknowledging thoughts and emotions and as much as possible letting them go as you focus on bodily sensations right now (15 seconds)

To begin **pelvic rocks**, bring the arms to a "T" at shoulder level, palms down (4 second pause) bending the knees and bringing the soles of the feet to rest on the floor (3 second pause)
Feeling into the body in this position, aware of breathing (4 second pause).
And on an outbreath, engaging the lower abdominal muscles and pressing the lower back to the ground, noticing the tailbone lift slightly as the curve in the lower back flattens
(6 second pause)
On the inbreath, as the abdominal muscles relax, pressing the tailbone down so that the pelvis stays on the floor, noticing the lower back lifting into an arch, aware of the associated sensations (6 second pause)
On an outbreath lifting the tailbone while pressing the lower back into the floor
(6 second pause)
And on the inbreath, pressing the tailbone into the floor (6 second pause)
Now in your own time, perhaps with the rhythm of your breath, continuing this movement, rocking the pelvis up and down, noting whatever arises – body sensation, thoughts, feelings - without getting caught up in anything in particular (10 second pause)
Pausing, aware of both stillness and sensation (8 second pause)
Now, chin approaching the chest, drawing the knees up toward the chest and wrapping your arms around your legs, giving yourself a hug, perhaps breathing into the lower back (10 seconds)
And on an outbreath, seeing if you can draw the knees just a bit closer to the chest, perhaps this time raising the head and bringing the forehead toward the knees, exploring that edge between comfort and discomfort (6 second pause) while learning to accept the limitations of the moment, backing away a bit when approaching pain and strain
Knowing that limits change one way and another from moment to moment and over longer periods of time (3 second pause)
Allowing the head to rest once again on the floor, beginning with small movements, rocking gently from side to side, massaging the back (4 second pause)
How much effort does it take to get started? (4 second pause)
When does gravity take hold and begin to pull the body too far? (10 second pause)
Aware of sensations in the back (10 second pause)
Coming to stillness, while continuing to hold the left knee to the chest, letting go of the right leg and bringing the right heel to the floor and extending the right leg till it fully rests on the floor, if this is best for your body, the sole of the right foot pressing toward the wall, and at the same time hugging the left knee a bit closer . otherwise it is perfectly all right to have the right knee bent with the sole of the foot on the floor in order to protect the back (4 second pause)

noticing how much of the body is involved in this stretch (4 second pause)
Investigating the face perhaps. Is there tension generated there? (3 second pause)
Is the skin of the face smooth and soft or wrinkled, and tense? (3 second pause)
And also evaluating the need for that tension. How does this stretch feel without it? Is it possible to work with just the legs and the arms in this position? (6 second pause)
Then releasing the left leg and allowing it to stretch out along the floor while at the same time bringing the right leg up towards the chest and hugging it with the arms. Extending the left leg along the floor (4 second pause)
What combination of tension and looseness is required? (4 second pause)
And when you're ready, releasing the right leg and placing it back next to the left (3 second pause).
Now in your own time, repeating this stretch, first hugging the left leg to the chest and then the right, perhaps this time exploring the stretch while lifting the head up so that the forehead approaches the bent knee (20 seconds)
Coming to resting pose, aware of sensations in the body (7 second pause)

In your own time now, rolling over onto your belly and coming to hands and knees with the back, head and neck aligned and parallel to the floor - like a table (7 second pause) Then moving the knees outward a bit and the feet inward (3 second pause) perhaps with the big toes touching (4 second pause) and lowering your buttocks back and down into the triangle your legs hand feet have formed, allowing gravity to take over while the arms extend overhead and the forehead dropping to rest on the ground in between. Or you can bring each hand to rest on top of the opposite arm just above the elbow, and rest the forehead on the forearms (3 second pause)
This is called the **child's pose** (3 second pause)
Adjusting the body for comfort and rest (6 second pause)
Breathing into this pose and experiencing the sensations in the body in this moment (6 second pause)
Now bringing the hands beneath the shoulders, pressing into the floor, coming to hands and knees, raising the torso to return to table (6 second pause)
And on the next inbreath, pressing the palms of the hands into the floor, dropping the belly toward the ground while lifting the head, eyes and buttocks up toward the ceiling
Breathing with this sway-back cow pose (6 second pause)
And on an outbreath, moving into cat pose by imagining the belly button being pulled into the spine, arching the back towards the ceiling and dropping the head down in between the shoulders, breathing with this cat pose (6 second pause)
On the next outbreath, moving back into cow's pose (3 second pause) allowing the abdomen to relax toward the ground and the head and buttocks lift toward the ceiling (4 second pause)
And on the next inbreath moving back into cat pose - belly drawing in toward the spine and the back arching toward the ceiling like a black Halloween cat, chin dropping toward the chest (4 second pause)

And now at your own pace, moving back and forth with breath awareness between **cat and cow** (3 second pause), resting whenever is called for in child's pose (20 second pause). Coming back to a table, aware of sensations, the breath, the heartbeat perhaps (6 second pause). How far can you feel them in the body? (6 second pause).

Now from table, moving into a **balancing posture**
while focusing the eyes on a spot on the wall ahead of you, shifting the weight to the left knee, releasing the weight from the right knee and extending the right leg, pushing the heel toward the wall behind you, toes pointed toward the floor, holding the leg parallel to the floor, still breathing ((3 second pause)
Shifting the weight to the right hand, lifting the left arm to shoulder height extending the fingertips to the wall in front of you, maintaining the rest of the body in table as best you can, aware of the breath (4 second pause)
Noticing what is required to become steady in this pose (3 second pause)
What tiny motions? (3 second pause)
What shifts and adjustments? Feeling free to touch down as often as needed, willing to begin again (9 second pause)
And now with breath awareness, drawing the arm and the leg back under you to table
(7 second pause)
Now beginning the balancing pose again, on the other side
Shifting the weight to the right knee and lifting the left leg and extending the heel to the wall behind you, while at the same time pushing into the left hand and lifting the right arm, extending the fingertips toward the wall in front of you (4 second pause)
Adjusting in order to balance while the rest of the body remains in table, eyes focusing on the wall ahead (6 second pause)
Aware of how the entire body is involved at this moment (12 second pause)
Now drawing the right hand and the left knee back to the floor, coming to stillness in table
(5 second pause)
Aware of the breath and perhaps the heartbeat in this moment (4 second pause)
Perhaps sensing a flush of warmth from this exertion (4 second pause)
Tingling in the muscles that have been stretched (4 second pause)
Then repeating the balancing pose on both sides in your own time, pausing in between to observe (25 seconds)
Coming to rest on the belly on the floor, aware of gravity and the breath (10 second pause).
Noticing the movement of the breath in this position, belly pressing into the floor on the inbreath, lifting the torso (10 second pause)
Aware of other sensations. Aware of thoughts and emotions coming and going without following them, without getting attached to them (10 second pause)

And in your own time, rolling over onto your back, bending the knees and bringing the soles of the feet to the floor as if standing with the knees hip width apart with the arms extended along the sides, palms down for leg lifts (10 second pause)

On an outbreath, lifting the right leg to whatever level is right for your body today, pushing the heel toward the ceiling, observing, and when you are ready bringing the right leg back to starting position (8 seconds)
On the next outbreath, repeating the leg lift on the left side, aware of the breath, and as you are ready, coming back to starting position (10 seconds)
On the next outbreath, repeating the leg lift beginning with the right leg, this time gasping the leg with the hands somewhere above or below the knee, pulling the leg gently toward you, exploring the edge, observing the sensations of this stretch along the back of the leg as well as elsewhere in the body (6 seconds)
Repeating with the left leg on the next outbreath, observing body sensations, and as you are ready, coming back to rest in starting position (10 seconds)
On the next outbreath, repeating the leg lift beginning with the right leg, this time when gasping the leg with the hands somewhere above or below the knee and pulling the leg gently toward you, exploring the possibility of lifting your head and maybe bringing the forehead toward the knee, observing the sensations of this stretch along the back of the leg and the right side of the body (10 seconds)
Repeating this version of the leg lift on the left side on the next outbreath, and as you are ready, coming back to rest in starting position (10 seconds)

Extending the arms at shoulder level into a "T" for **spinal twists** (4 second pause) and on an outbreath, allowing both knees very slowly fall over to the right (3 second pause)
Letting gravity do the work (5 second pause)
Keeping the shoulder pinned to the ground is more important than the knees meeting the floor (3 second pause)
and lifting the head slightly, turning the head to the left and bringing the head back to the floor, eyes looking toward the left fingertips (6 second pause)
feeling into the spinal twist (5 second pause)
How far does your awareness extend? (8 second pause)
And bringing the knees slowly back to where you began and observing (8 second pause)
On the next outbreath, allowing the knees to fall slowly to the left (4 second pause)
just as far as possible while still keeping your shoulders in contact with the floor
(3 second pause)
Lifting the head slightly, turning the head to face right, bringing the head back to the floor, eyes looking toward the right fingertips (5 second pause)
Bringing the knees slowly back to where you began, observing (8 second pause)
At your own pace, repeating the spinal twist to the right and the left (14 second pause)
Allowing the knees to fall toward the floor on an outbreath (14 second pause)Aware of the sensations particularly along the back, hips and shoulders (20 second pause)
And in your own time, bringing the knees to center into stillness (10 second pause).

And on an outbreath extending the legs along the ground (4 second pause) once again in resting pose. Allowing yourself to rest as this practice comes to an end (7 seconds)

If it feels right, acknowledging the care and the kindness towards yourself that you bring in this practice (14 second pause)
Resting in this pose now as long as you care to, observing the body as a whole (9 second pause)
and perhaps coming home to the breath (9 seconds)
Whenever you're ready to get up once again slowly turning over to your left side with the left arms support the head, legs bent at the knees and stacked in (3 second pause)
resting there for a breath or two (4 second pause)
extending the right foot toward the wall you are facing and pressing the palm of the right hand into the floor, slowly bring yourself up to sitting position (3 second pause)
sitting for a few breaths before slowly and mindfully bringing yourself once again to standing.