

## Mindful Breathing

Mindful breathing is a very basic yet powerful mindfulness meditation practice. The idea is simply to focus your attention on your breathing—to its natural rhythm and flow and the way it feels on each inhale and exhale. Focusing on the breath is particularly helpful because it serves as an anchor—something you can turn your attention to at any time if you start to feel stressed or carried away by negative emotions. It can also help you fall asleep at bedtime or return to sleep.

### Practice Breathing - Exercise (practice exercise for 2-3 minutes.)

#### 1) Posture

Find an alert, comfortable position on a chair, floor cushion, or bench.

Sit with your spine erect.

Rest your hands in your lap or wherever they feel comfortable

#### 2) Breathing

Gently close your eyes, if you feel comfortable. You can also just soften your gaze, turning it towards a wall or the floor.

Bring your attention to the natural sensations of the breath in the body.

Don't try to control your breath. It doesn't matter if it is short and shallow or long and deep.

#### 3) Attention

Try to follow the breath through full cycles, from the beginning of inhalation to the end of an exhalation, and then on to the next cycle.

#### 4) Thinking

Thoughts may enter the mind. This is natural. Simply allow them to arise and pass.

If a chain of thought hijacks your attention and you lose awareness of the breath, gently return your attention to the sensations of breathing.

#### Key Bullet Points

Discussion question # 1

·How do feel now as compared to before the exercise?

Discussion question # 2

·When might you practice mindful breathing - at work? Home?

Share examples of when you have or may plan to put this into practice.

Closing

·Practice daily. Consider at least twice a day for 5-minute sessions.

Additional meditation resources:

<https://www.helpguide.org/meditations/mindful-breathing-meditation.htm>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/breath-meditation-a-great-way-to-relieve-stress>

<https://www.calm.com/>

<https://www.mindful.org/free-mindfulness-apps-worthy-of-your-attention/>

