

Tip Sheet: Finding Your Breath



Tips for Supporting:

Educators in developing mindful techniques through breath awareness

What Is Mindful Breathing?

As human beings, we know that breathing is an essential part of life as it provides our bodies the necessary oxygen needed for optimal functionality. We tend to forget, however, to appreciate this natural and, often, automatic process, which is where mindful breathing comes into play. Mindful breathing is a grounding strategy that can be used by people of all ages to sooth our minds, bodies, and emotions. While there are many benefits of mindful breathing, the only requirement is to focus completely and openly on our breath, exactly as it is.

To practice Mindful Breathing:

- **Get Comfortable:** You can sit, you can even stand or lay down. Feel welcome to close your eyes or lower your gaze, finding a point to focus on.
- **Become Aware of Your Breath:** Place the finger under your nose and see if you can feel the breath and notice the difference as you breathe in and out. Notice changes in temperature, moisture, or quality of breath.
- **Bring Awareness to the Body:** Gently note what your breath is doing and where your mind and body is in the present moment. What feelings are you experiencing? Are you pre-occupied?
- **Bring Attention Back to the Breath:** Notice the length of the in and out breaths. Try counting the seconds of each breath. Does the length differ with changing states of mind?
- **Breathe and Smile:** Try smiling a bit more with every out breath until you have a gentle smile on your face. You might even notice a sense of openness in your body.
- **Count It Out:** Try counting with each out breath and starting again with the following in breath. Each time the mind wanders to the past, to an upcoming task, or is day dreaming, you can think “No thank you I am breathing now” and come back to breath.
- **5 Minutes A Day:** Set a timer for 5 minutes. At the sound of the timer, gently bring your awareness back, flutter the eyes open, and thank yourself for your practice

Did you know?

Mindful breathing can reduce your stress, boost brain power, and positively impact you thoughts, mood, and even sleep!

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Taking Mindful Breathing to the Classroom:

Try using an Hoberman sphere to model in and out breaths with children.

- Inhale and expand the ball. Exhale and collapse the ball. Pass the ball around a circle to help regulate the group before or after a transition.



Three Breath Practice:

Here is a quick three breath practice:

Breathing in, I know I breath in

Breathing out, I know I breathe out

Breathing in I calm down

Breathing out I relax

Breathing in, I feel good

Breathing out, I smile