



BREATHING MEDITATION

DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCE

INFORMAL MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUE

In this technique, we use breath as an anchor to help us orient our attention to the present moment. We use our breath as an anchor for **three** reasons:

1. Our breath is one thing that is always there with us. The pace or depth of our breath might change, however, we will always be able to notice our breath
2. Breath is an involuntary function of our body, which we can regulate. Our body has various involuntary functions like heart rate, digestion, respiratory rate, etc. However, our breath is the only one we can notice and regulate.
3. When we regulate our breath, it can activate systems in the body that respond to stress. The Sympathetic nervous system prepares our body to fight, or escape from stressful situations; and the Parasympathetic system prepares our body to recover from the stress response. Pacing our breath can signal the body to recover from a stress response

HOW DOES ONE DO A BREATHING MEDITATION?

Sit comfortably, with your back straight, however, not very rigidly. You can keep your eyes closed if that is comfortable for you; if not, you can keep them open at an angle of 45 degrees. Focus on your breath, while you inhale and exhale.

Notice how the air is entering your body through the nostrils, and moving through to your abdomen. Notice how your abdomen expands and contracts as you are breathing. Be kind and gentle to your mind if it wanders, it is natural for thoughts and emotions to cross our minds while we are focusing on our breath. Gently bring your attention back to your breath

You can practice this for five minutes, and slowly increase the time you give this, depending upon your comfort with the exercise. It is absolutely alright if you are feeling distracted, or find it difficult to do this exercise. Mindfulness based exercises are like skills that we get better at as we keep practising them.

