

Pause for Five

Find a place that is quiet.

You may sit in a chair, on the floor, or on your bed, whichever is best for you.

Place your hands in your lap in a comfortable position.

You may close your eyes, look down or look straight ahead.

Taking a breath in, feel your breath flowing inward gently to the back of your skull.

Breathe out slowly so that you are breathing out about twice as long as when you took your breath in.

You may wish to focus on the breath around your nostrils, or the area falling between your eyes, or perhaps around your core, whichever is best for you.

As you breathe in, and then out, push the breath out allowing for the final expenditure to settle in around your core.

As you breathe in and out, breathe slowly, but breathe at your own pace.

You may notice as you breathe that you are beginning to feel relaxed or more attentive. Whatever you feel is just fine. The process is different for everyone. The desired outcome is just to breathe. Nice and steady.

If, at any time, during this exercise you become aware of distracting thoughts or feelings, simply observe them, then bring your attention back to your breath. You may also put the thoughts on a cloud and let them float away, or place the thought on a leaf, and let it float down a stream.

A simple way to engage in this practice of Mindful Breathing is to breathe, in this way, taking 5 steady breaths.

Breathing in, and now out, count 1.

In and out count 2.

In and out count 3.

In and out count 4.

In and out count 5.

Now, that you have taken 5 steady breaths you may bring this practice of Mindful Breathing to a close or you may wish to continue for awhile. When you decide to bring this exercise to a close, allow your final breath to center you, peacefully, resting in around your core. Rooted to the earth. Solid.

When you are ready and fully alert, bring yourself slowly to a standing position, ready to move on with your day.

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