

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION (BREATH FOCUS)

This meditation involves paying close attention to your breathing. You will rest your awareness on either (1) the tip of your nose, where you'll notice the passing sensations of air as you breathe, or (2) your chest and abdomen, which will rise and fall as you inhale and exhale, respectively. Here are the basic steps:

1. **Find a quiet, comfortable place.**
2. **Sit in a relaxed, alert position.**

You might sit in a chair or in a cross-legged position on the floor. Feel free to use the support of a chair or wall, if necessary or desired. Invite yourself to sit in a position that “embodies dignity.” Typically, this simple instruction prompts you to sit upright with your head, neck, shoulders, and torso in natural alignment.

3. **Breathe gently through your nose.**

Breathe naturally without any attempt to control or regulate your breathing.

4. **Rest your attention on the sensation of breath as it enters and leaves your body.**

You might become aware of your stomach as it rises and falls with each breath. Alternatively, you can focus on the sensation of air as it enters your nostrils, perhaps feeling coolness at the tip of your nose as you inhale followed by slight warmth as you exhale.

5. **Maintain a passive, nonjudgmental attitude towards distracting thoughts.**

You will likely become distracted at various times. Our minds are prone to think about many different things, so this distraction is natural and expected. Do not follow such thoughts or judge them, however. Just let them drift by, like clouds in the sky. Then, return your attention to your breathing.

6. **Continue for 10 – 20 minutes.**