

Mindfulness Breathing

Aim

To explore mindfulness breathing as an effective tool for calming the mind and reducing stress.

Facilitator Resources

Facilitator script

Student Resources

Journal

Activity

- The Facilitator passes out a stone to each student.
- Students can sit at their desks or tables, or they can create a sitting circle on the floor.
- The Facilitator reads the script below, while students follow the instructions.
- **Optional:** Have student pick a stone in school field, bring from home, etc.

Facilitator Script

- Today we are going to practice mindfulness breathing.
- Mindfulness breathing is an effective tool for calming the mind and reducing stress.
- Find a comfortable place to sit; lower your eyes to the floor in front of you (you may close your eyes if you prefer).
- Sit in a way that air can flow freely throughout your body with your back straight.
- Hold your stone (if applicable) in one hand and feel the smooth surface of the stone with your other hand as we practice our mindfulness breathing.
- Now, let's bring our attention to our breath.
- Notice where your breath first makes contact with your body, either through the nose or the mouth.
- Use your mind's eye to watch the breath go down, through the nose, through the airway, into the lungs, and then up from the lungs, through the body, and out the mouth.
- Some people like to count IN to a count of four (1,2,3,4) and OUT to a count of four (1,2,3,4).



- Others prefer to imagine cool, blue air coming into the body and warm red or orange air blowing out of the body.
- Put a hand on the lower belly and feel the rise and fall as the diaphragm moves up and down allowing the lungs to fill with air and then deflate.
- While we are trying to keep the focus of our mind's eye or the spotlight of the mind on the breath coming and going, it is normal for our attention to be drawn away by distractions.
- Distractions can be outside of us, such as the ticking of the clock on the wall, or the sound of cars outside on the street.
- They can also be internal, like feelings of hunger or discomfort from sitting still. We can notice thoughts pulling our attention away and thoughts may come into our minds ... such as "what is the point of this?" or "when will this be over?"
- When you notice your mind has been pulled away by any distractions, you can congratulate yourself: that's a moment of mindfulness - you have become aware of the present moment.
- Then you can return your attention where you intended it to be; in this case on your breathing.
- Breath in... to a count of four (1,2,3,4) and out... to a count of four (1,2,3,4).
- Enjoy one more breath in... and out...
- Take some time to notice how your body feels at this moment...
- What do you notice?
- When you are ready return to your seat.

Reflection Questions/Journal Prompts

- What did you think of this activity?
- What helped you focus on this activity?
- Were you thinking about anything else while following this activity?
- What part of this activity did you like best?
- What feelings and emotions did you have while doing this activity? How did you feel?
- How does your body feel now that you have done mindful breathing?
- When do you think it would be helpful for you to practice mindful breathing?