

MINDFULNESS EXERCISE

To begin these exercises simply read through the instructions and have a go yourself.

Mindfulness of the Breath

Find a suitable quiet place and time, adopt an alert and relaxed body posture. How long you spend doing this exercise will depend on you, what other commitments you have and what kind of lifestyle you lead.

Being mindful of the breath simply means keeping your attention on the natural process of breathing, without trying to change it in any way.

At the start it might be helpful to use counting to stay focused on the breath. After the out breath you count one, then you breathe in and out and count two, and so on up to ten, and then you start again at one. As you feel more comfortable focusing on your breath, you might choose to drop the counting and just watch the breath as it comes in and goes out.

Focus your mind on your breath, as you breathe in and as you breathe out. If it is a long breathe, notice to yourself that it is a long breathe. If it's a short breath note that it is a short breathe.

Focus your attention on the place in your body where you experience your breath most clearly. It may be you notice the rising and falling of your belly or chest with each breath. It may be at the nostrils where you feel the movement of the air as you inhale or exhale.

Whenever your attention wanders from the breath, simply notice that your attention has wandered and bring back your attention back to the natural rhythm of your breath.

Stay with your breath, noticing when you breath in...., and when you breath out.

Sometimes a breath may be longer sometimes shorter, sometimes rapid, sometimes deep. Let your attention stay with these natural changes, noticing the shifting sensations of each breath it arises.

Relax into each breath, being with it just as it is, without trying to alter it in any way.

Do this for as long as you can. This might be 5 minutes or 20 minutes. You might want to set a goal, say to be able to practice for 15-minutes. Each time you practice try and make the session a little longer until you reach your goal.