

Week 1: Mindfulness Exercises

Three Minute Breathing Space

An easy way to become more calm and mindful at work is to periodically stop what you are doing and take a few minutes to yourself. At your desk, or in a quiet place, focus on your breath for three minutes. Inhale and exhale deeply, focus your full attention on your breath and then the body as a whole.

Breath Count

Notice your breath for a few minutes, watch it fill your belly and become slower, and deeper. Now count as you inhale and exhale, do this four times:

3 counts to inhale	1 count hold
5 counts exhale	1 count hold

Positive post-it notes (from Thich Nhat Hanh)

Post little notes around your office or desk that will remind you to smile (inside) and relax. You can post notes so you will see them first thing in the morning, helping to set the tone for the day. Be intentional, look at the note, notice what happens when you have an "inside" smile.

Listen To Music (from DIY)

Music may be used as background or as a tool for mindful meditation. Listen to any slow tempo music that has a calming effect for you. Focus on the sound and vibration of each note, the feelings that the music brings up within you, and other sensations that are happening "right now" as you listen. If other thoughts creep into your head, congratulate yourself for noticing, and gently bring your attention back to the current moment and the music you are hearing.

Create Your Own Mindful Exercise

Or find another one at one of the websites, below. Any activity can be a mindfulness exercise, when you focus on being present, examples:

- Light a candle and focus on the dancing flame;
- Sit quietly and listen for the most distant sound;
- Slowly eat a meal - be aware of the colors, textures and tastes of the food.

More mindfulness exercises may be found at any of these websites:

<http://www.diy-stress-relief.com/simple-mindfulness-exercises.html>

<http://franticworld.com/free-meditations-from-mindfulness/>

<http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22>

<http://www.freemindfulness.org/download>

<http://www.freemindfulness.org/apps>

Jon Kabat Zinn Mindscape Guided Meditation - YouTube (one of many)

<http://www.mindful.org/mindfulness-practice/free-mindfulness-apps-worthy-of-your-attention>