

Practice 1: The Three Minute Breathing Space

Minute 1 – Awareness

Take a pause. If you care to, closing your eyes. Bringing your attention to your body: noticing bodily sensations (heaviness, lightness, temperature, breath rate, heart rate, ect.); then attending to your thoughts: Is your mind calm? Are your thoughts racing? What is the quality of thought? (dense, light, fleeting, ect.) Then attending to mood states: How do you feel in the moment? (peaceful, anxious, joyful, sad, ect.). Acknowledge and register your experience, even if it is unwanted.

Minute 2 – Gathering

Then, gently bring your attention to your breathing, to each in-breath and to each out-breath, as they follow, one after the other. When your attention is drawn away, noticing that, and gently bringing it back to the breath.

Minute 3 – Expanding

Expand the field of your awareness beyond the breath, back to the sensations in the body, thoughts and mood state. Checking in to how it is with you now.

This breathing space provides a way to step out of automatic pilot mode and reconnect with the present moment.

Freely adapted from Segal, Z.V. Williams, J.M.G., and Teasdale, J.D. (2002) Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for depression. A new approach for preventing relapse, new york: Guilford Press

Practice 2: Relaxing Sighs

Inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth, making a quiet, relaxing sigh as you exhale. Taking long, slow, gentle breaths that rise and lower your abdomen as you inhale and exhale. Focusing on the sound and feeling of your breath.

You can use cues throughout your daily routine to remind yourself to take three to six relaxing sighs (red lights while driving, telephone sounds, waiting for elevators, waiting in line, ect.) You may want to place stickers in areas where you look frequently, or areas that cause you stress as a reminder (computer, refrigerator, watch, cell phone, spouse's forehead). *MBSR for Professionals: presented by Jefferson-Myrna Brind Center for Integrative Medicine*