



Caregiver Support Line – Relaxation Activity

Theme: Mindfulness Meditation: Finding Calm and Acceptance in the Present Moment

Mindfulness meditation is a practice of bringing your full attention to being present in the here and now moment. While being present seems a simple task, it is remarkable to find how much the mind wanders back in the past, or spins its wheels focusing on the future. Learning to observe the wandering ways of the mind, and bringing it back to rest in the present, can provide greater clarity and calm. This practice can also assist you in noticing the stresses and strains that arise when you are fighting, resisting, attempting to change, or control, whatever is happening in your life.

Mindfulness can provide a reprieve from this approach to living, offering rather, an opportunity to rest in the acceptance of the present moment. Mindfulness encourages that you neither try to control your thoughts or feelings, nor cling to them. You will simply observe the thoughts and feelings as they arise in the moment with an attitude of kindness and compassion for yourself. This observation can bring clarity and greater perspective. Observing with a compassionate heart can soothe even the most painful emotions.

In Mindful meditation you bring your attention on a chosen focus, such as the rise and fall of your breathing, or you may choose a visual focus. Some have used mindfulness practices while walking or eating.

Focusing on your breath is a good choice for practicing mindful attention, because it is always with you. Your breath can serve as a touch stone for you in the moment, to remember to slow down, follow your breath, observe, and summon an attitude of kindness or acceptance towards yourself and the given situation. The more you practice, the more you will be able to approach each moment with greater calm, clarity, perspective, and compassion.

Simply focusing on following the unique and constant cycle of your breathing you will find your attention brought back to the present.

To begin this Mindful meditation, sit comfortably upright.

Feel your body against the chair as it supports you.



Uncross your legs and place your feet on the floor, bringing your awareness to the feel of your feet being grounded.

Relax your shoulders, resting your hands comfortably in your lap, or on your thighs.

To remove visual distractions, you may close your eyes.

Relax the jaw if it is clenched and close your mouth. You may find it helpful to rest your tongue, by lightly having it touch the roof of your mouth.

Breathe in through your nose, unless for some reason you aren't able.

Settle in to this position of support and openness.

Start by taking a deep cleansing breath, deep into your belly.

Observe your belly rising, ribs expanding, and then exhale slowly.

Again, a cleansing breath, in deeply, and exhale slowly.

Now, without trying to control your breath in any way, allow it to find its natural rhythm and depth.

Bring your attention simply to the rise and fall of your breath.

You don't have to do anything special, just observe the natural movement.

Feel the air coming into your nose, your lungs expanding, your belly rising, the gentle pause, and exhale.

You don't have to control your breathing in any way.

Just observe lovingly, your breathing in, the resting pause, and then exhale.

You may notice your mind wandering, distracting your attention from the focus on your breath. It's ok, this will happen.

Just observe and return your attention to your breath

You may find your feeling restless or preoccupied with thoughts or feelings.

When these thoughts or feelings surface simply notice them, and observe them without judgement.



Just be present to what arises, and provide a kind and compassionate witness to the thoughts and feelings that surface.

No need to cling to, or try to control anything, just observe with kindness.

Continue to gently guide your attention back to featuring the awareness of your breath.

When thoughts or feelings float through, let them pass like a wave in the ocean.

For right now, in this moment, there is nothing to do, no where you must be.

Just for this time, you can let go, and relax into the natural movement of your breath.

Drop into this place of calm and quiet.

If there are waves of thoughts that steal your attention, thoughts about what you need to get done, or problems you are trying to solve, simply observe them with kindness.

If there are waves of feelings that surface such as; restlessness, sadness, or anger, simply observe them without clinging to them.

Observe with kindness and compassion.

Beneath the surface of these waves there is a quiet place of acceptance, resting in the present moment.

There is a place of calm, as you give over to the rise and fall of your breathing.

Beneath the surface of these waves lies untroubled water in the belly of your breath.

This is a place of rest and calm.

Simply follow your breath in and out as an act of kind and loving attention to you.

There is wisdom and perspective that you invite when you quietly and compassionately attend to the thoughts and feelings that surface and pass.

There is restoration and relaxation that you invite with each breath in and out.

There is healing and comfort when you provide a kind, and compassionate witness to whatever arises in the moment.

Follow your breath.



You may return again and again if you wish, to this place of restoration.

Your breath is always available as a calming path inward and into the present moment.

Now, begin to slowly bring your attention back to your surroundings.

As you are ready, you may open your eyes.

Take a few moments to bring your mind and body back to your surroundings.

Remember this gift of attention to you is available anytime, anywhere, whenever you decide to draw your attention to the present moment and follow your breath with loving kindness.