

Soothing and Mindful Exercises You Can Do Anywhere!

To begin, sit comfortably. Remember to take your time with each exercise, moving slowly and breathing deeply.

1. Breathing Technique- Whole Body Breathing

As you inhale each breath, imagine you are breathing in the air through each and every pore in your skin. Imagine your entire body as a dry sponge, soaking in the energy of the air through your pores. As you exhale, imagine you are pushing out all the impurities. As you inhale, imagine you are soaking in clean healthy energy. Do this for 5-10 minutes.

2. Breathing Technique- Breath Counting

This breathing technique involves giving each breath, both inhale and exhale, a specific count. As you inhale a deep breath, think to yourself "1". As you slowly exhale that breath, think to yourself "2". As you inhale the next deep breath, think to yourself "3". As you slowly exhale that breath, think to yourself "4". Continue this count for a few minutes, increasing the count with each inhale and exhale until you reach a count of 50 or 100.

3. Breathing Technique- Following the Breath

This is one of the easiest breathing techniques but also one of the most effective. Inhale, counting to four until you feel filled with breath. Hold this breath while counting to four. Be sure to keep your throat and chest relaxed. Exhale, counting to four until the lungs are empty. Hold the exhalation while counting to four. Aim for a relatively slow relaxing count but stick to a pace that is comfortable for you. Continue to count, following the breath, for at least 2-3 minutes. As you practice this technique each day, try to gradually increase the length of time you spend following your breath. You will find this technique enhances relaxation and improves concentration.

4. Breathing Technique-Belly Breathing

This breathing technique is designed to relax the body by making sure you are breathing as deeply as possible. Most people breathe by moving the chest rather than the diaphragm. Place a hand on your abdomen, below your navel. Inhale slowly and deeply, feeling your abdomen rise beneath your hand as you fill with air. Exhale slowly, feeling your hand sink inward as you use your

diaphragm to push the air out. Focus on using your diaphragm instead of your chest to move the air in and out of your body.

5. Coloring

Grab some crayons and a children's coloring book, plain paper, or a page of geometric designs. Sit comfortably and take a few deep breaths. Move slowly and rhythmically. Don't worry about staying within the lines, or about whether or not blue and orange look good next to each other, or about any other trivial details. Enjoy the process and don't attach yourself to the end result.

Let your mind wander freely. Continue to move slowly. Simply relax, take your time, and fill the space with color. Do this for ten or fifteen minutes.

6. Count backwards

Starting at either 100 or 1000, depending on your level of anxiety, count backwards by 7's. If alone, count aloud, if there are others around you, count in your head. When you have used this exercise multiple times, you may want to begin starting from a slightly different numbers, such as, 115 or 998

7. Body Scan

Start at the top of your head and slowly progress to your toes. What do you notice about each part of your body? (ex: slight pain on my forehead, scratchy pillow on my elbow, stomach growling). When you notice tension or unease, imagine a warm wave moving slowly back and forth over that part of your body until you feel the discomfort lessen. Then continue onto the next part of your body. Once you have reached your toes, imagine a big warm wave moving up to the top of your head and down to your toes until you are fully relaxed.

8. Senses

Starting with your sight, notice what you see around you for several minutes. Then close your eyes, and move onto your smell, touch, taste and sound senses, allowing yourself several minutes on each sense before moving onto the next.