



## Mindful Moments Quick Reference Cards: Awareness of Breath Practice

The Awareness of Breath practice develops your attention skills and self-awareness. It can also settle the mind and help with focus and concentration.



"Use the breath as an anchor to tether your attention to the present moment. Your thinking mind will drift here and there, depending on the currents and winds moving in the mind until, at some point, the anchor line grows taut and brings you back."

Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD

"With mindfulness — the practice of peace — we can begin by working to transform the wars within ourselves. Conscious breathing helps us do this."

Thich Nhat Hanh



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# The STOP Practice

Try this practice to help you press pause, come into the present moment and create some space for introspection, and to get a better sense of what you are experiencing and what your options are for responding. This can be helpful in challenging moments at work or at home.



**Stop for a moment.** Take a pause from whatever you are doing.



**Take a few breaths.** Don't try to control your breath; let your body breathe naturally as you follow the in-breath and out-breath with kind attention.



**Observe your thoughts, emotions and body sensations.** Try to notice what you are thinking without getting caught up by your own thoughts or perceptions. They may feel real, but they aren't necessarily true. Notice what emotions are present and try naming them. Identifying emotions can have a calming effect. Bring awareness to any body sensations, without trying to change them or push them away.



**Proceed with something that will support you in the moment,** whether that is talking to a friend or just rubbing your shoulders.

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"Mindfulness has helped me succeed in almost every dimension of my life. By stopping regularly to look inward and become aware of my mental state, I stay connected to the source of my actions and thoughts and can guide them with considerably more intention."

**Dustin Moskovitz (co-founder, Facebook & Asana)**

"Now and then it's good to pause in our pursuit of happiness, and just be happy."

**Guillaume Apollinaire**



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# Breathing Space Practice

The Breathing Space practice provides a pause to check in with what is happening in any given moment. In this practice, we pause to notice what we are experiencing with our thoughts, emotions and body sensations. We then turn to the breath for a few moments before widening our awareness to the entire body, and welcome any body sensations that are present.

The guidance for this practice is simple and easy to remember (AGE):



## Acknowledge

what is present for you now in both mind and body.



## Gather

your attention towards the breath sensations at your belly.



## Expand

your attention and bring a more open awareness to your experience.

## Detailed instructions

(spend one minute, or as long as is comfortable in each part)

Begin by taking stock of your internal landscape, bringing mindful attention to all thoughts, emotions and body sensations that are present.

Next, narrow the focus of your attention by honing in on your breath, feeling the sensations of breathing in and out at the level of the abdomen.

Then, widen the field of your awareness to take in the entire body, bringing an open, accepting and kind attention to whatever sensations are arising and passing from moment to moment.

"Mindfulness is a pause – the space between stimulus and response: that is where choice lies."

Tara Brach, PhD

"Directing attention where it needs to go is the primal task of leadership."

Daniel Goleman, PhD

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## Additional Resources

- 1 Sara Lazar, TEDxCambridge, How Meditation Can Reshape Our Brains (9 minutes)
- 2 Dan Harris, How I Went from Skeptic to Meditator (7 minutes)
- 3 Dr. Dan Siegel, Discussing the Science of Mindfulness (21 minutes)

### Mindfulness centres across Canada

If your city or town is not listed, please contact your nearest mindfulness centre for more information.

#### Alberta

The Mindfulness Institute  
12603 63 Ave., Edmonton, AB  
[mindfulnessinstitute.ca](http://mindfulnessinstitute.ca)

#### British Columbia

BC Association for Living Mindfully  
PO Box 39001, Station James Bay, Victoria BC V8V 4X8  
[bcalm.ca](http://bcalm.ca)

Mindful Living Stress Reduction and Counselling Services  
203A-2678 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6K 2G3  
[mindful-living.ca](http://mindful-living.ca)

#### Manitoba

Canadian Mental Health Association of Manitoba and Winnipeg  
Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Course  
930 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3G 0P8

#### New Brunswick

Canadian Mental Health Association of New Brunswick  
Mindfulness  
403 Regent St. (Suite 202), Fredericton, NB E3B 3X6

#### Newfoundland and Labrador

MBSR St. John's  
[mbsrstjohns.wordpress.com](http://mbsrstjohns.wordpress.com)

#### Nova Scotia

Breathe Mindfulness Centre  
46 Portland St., Dartmouth, NS  
[breathemindfulness.ca](http://breathemindfulness.ca)

Living Well Integrative Health Centre  
2176 Windsor St., Halifax, NS  
[livingwellihc.ca/mindfulness](http://livingwellihc.ca/mindfulness)

#### Ontario

The Centre for Mindfulness Studies  
180 Sudbury St., Toronto, ON M6J 0A8  
[mindfulnessstudies.com](http://mindfulnessstudies.com)

Mindfulness Thunder Bay  
126 May St. S., Thunder Bay, ON P7E 1B3  
[mindfulnessthunderbay.ca](http://mindfulnessthunderbay.ca)

The Ottawa Mindfulness Clinic  
595 Montreal Rd., Ottawa, ON K1K 4L2  
[ottawamindfulnessclinic.com](http://ottawamindfulnessclinic.com)

#### Prince Edward Island

University of Prince Edward Island  
Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Course 550  
University Ave., Charlottetown, PEI C1A 4P3

#### Québec

The Mindspace Clinic  
1117 Sainte-Catherine St. W,  
Suite 514, Montreal, QC H3B 1H5  
[mindspaceclinic.com](http://mindspaceclinic.com)

Montreal Institute of Applied Mindfulness  
6000 Ch de la Côte-des-Neiges,  
Suite 110-115, Montreal, QC H3S 1Z8  
[mpcmontreal.org](http://mpcmontreal.org)

#### Saskatchewan

Prairie Centre for Mindfulness  
2106 Lorne St., Regina, SK S4P 2M5  
[prairiemindfulness.ca](http://prairiemindfulness.ca)